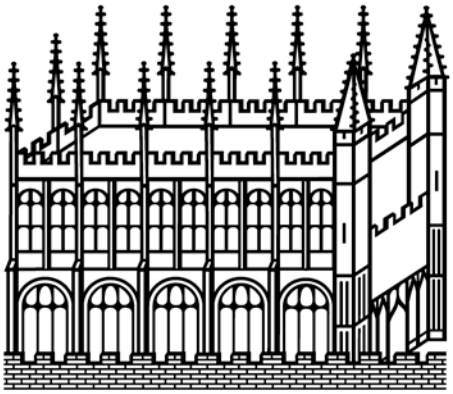

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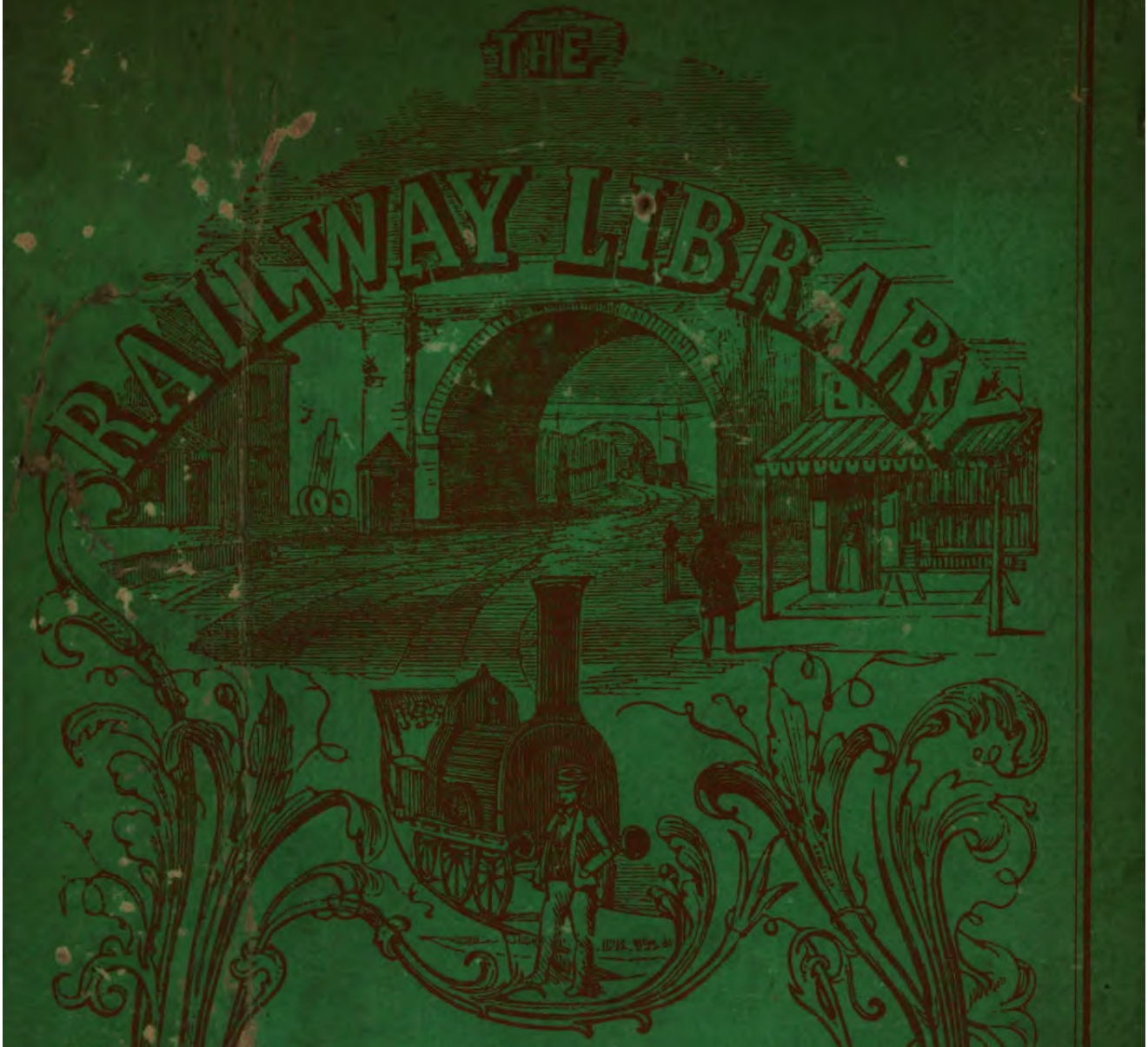

CINQ MARS

OR THE

CONSPIRACY.

By ALFRED DE VIGNY

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

LONDON:
G. ROUTLEDGE & CO., SOHO SQUARE.

Fig. 2752 f. 1009

CINQ-MARS:

OR,

THE CONSPIRACY.

BY

COUNT ALFRED DE VIGNY,

OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LAST PARIS EDITION,

BY

WILLIAM BELLINGHAM, ESQ.

OF LINCOLN'S INN.

LONDON:

GEORGE ROUTLEDGE & CO., SOHO SQUARE.

1850.

CINQ-MARS.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

FAREWELL!

KNOW you that country which has been called the garden of France—that land where one breathes pure air in verdant plains watered by a great river? If, in the months of summer, you have traversed fair Touraine, you will have long followed the peaceful Loire with enchantment, you will have regretted your inability to determine on which of the two banks you would choose your dwelling, to forget mankind near one beloved object. Following the slow and golden ripple of the beautiful river, one is incessantly lost in the contemplation of the smiling details of the right bank. Valleys studded with pretty white houses, surrounded by thickets, cottages gilded by vines or whitened by cherry-blossoms, old walls covered by growing honeysuckles, gardens of roses, from whence some tower rears itself aloft—all announce the fruitfulness of the earth or the antiquity of its monuments, and all interests us in the works of its industrious inhabitants. Nothing has been useless to them; it seems as if, in their love for so beautiful a country, the only province of France which the foreigner has never occupied, they had not wished to lose the smallest spot of its earth, its lightest grain of sand. Believe you that yon old demolished tower is inhabited but by hideous night birds? No; at the noise of your horses, the laughing face of a young girl is thrust forth from the powdered ivy, whitened by the dust of a great road; if you climb a hill bristling with vines, a little smoke suddenly warns you that a chimney is at your feet; that the very rock is inhabited, and that families of vine-dressers breathe in its deep caverns, sheltered in the night by the fostering earth which they cultivate laboriously during the day. The good Tourainers are simple as their life, mild as the air they breathe, and strong as the soil they till. One sees in their sun-burnt countenances neither the cold stoicism of the North, nor the grimacing vivacity of the South; their face, like their character, has some of the candour of the true people of St. Louis; their auburn hair is still long and twisted round the ears, as in the stone statues of our old kings; their language is the purest French—without slowness, without quickness, without accent; there is the cradle of the language, near the cradle of the monarchy.

But the left bank of the Loire is more serious in its aspect: here is Chambord, which one sees at a distance, and which, with its blue domes and little cupolas, resembles a city of the East; there is Chanteloup, rearing in mid-air its elegant pagoda. Near them, however, a more simple building attracts the eye of the traveller by its magnificent position and its imposing massiveness: this is the castle of Chaumont. Erected upon the highest hill of the bank, it encompasses that large summit with its high walls and enormous towers; tall slated steeples raise themselves to the eye, and give the whole edifice that convent-like air, that religious form of all our old castles, which impresses a grave character on most of our provinces. Black and bushy trees on all sides environ this old domain, and at a distance resemble the feathers which surrounded the hat of King Henry; a pretty village lies at the foot of the hill, upon the bank of the river, and it might be said that its white houses peep forth from the golden sand; it is connected with the castle, which protects it, by a narrow pathway which winds in the rock; a chapel is in the middle of the hill; the lords descend and the villagers ascend to its altar: a land of equality, placed like a neutral town between misery and grandeur, which are too often waging war.

It was here that, one morning in the month of June, 1639, the bell of the castle having, according to custom, tolled mid-day, the dinner-hour of the family which inhabited it, there passed in this ancient dwelling very unusual things. The numerous domestics had remarked that in saying the morning prayer to the assembled household, the Maréchale d'Effiat had spoken tremulously and with tears in her eyes, and that she had appeared clothed in deeper mourning than was customary. The household and the Italians of the Duchess of Mantua, who had then retired for a short time to Chaumont, saw with surprise the sudden preparations made for departure. The old domestic of Marshal d'Effiat, who had been dead six months, had betaken himself to his boots, which he had previously sworn to abandon for ever. This brave man, named Grandchamp, had everywhere followed the chief of the family in the wars, and in his labours of finance; he had been his squire in the former, and in the latter his secretary; he had been some time returned from Germany, to inform the mother and her children of the particulars of the death of the marshal, whose last sighs he had received at Luzzelstein; he was one of those faithful retainers examples of whom have become so rare in France, who suffer the misfortunes of the family and rejoice at its joys, who desire that it may form marriages in order that they may have to bring up young masters, who scold the children and sometimes the fathers, expose themselves to death for them, in revolutions serving them without wages, working to feed them, and in times of prosperity following them about, and saying, "Behold *our* vines," on returning to the castle. His countenance was remarkably severe, a copper complexion, silver-grey hair, some locks of which, still black as his thick eyebrows, gave him, at first sight, a harsh appearance; but

a mild eye softened this first impression. Yet, the sound of his voice was rude. He was busied that day in hastening the dinner, and in commanding the people of the castle, clothed in black like himself.

"Go," said he, "serve up the dinner, while Germain, Louis, and Stephen are saddling their horses; M. Henri and we must be far from here ere eight to night. And you, gentlemen Italians, have you warned your young princess of our departure? I'll wager she is gone to read with her ladies in the park, or on the banks of the river. She always comes in after the first course, to make every one rise from the table."

"Ah! my dear Grandchamp," said a young waiting woman, in a low voice, as she stopped an instant, "think not thus of the Duchess; she is very sad, and I think she will remain in her apartment. Holy Mary! to think of travelling to-day! to depart on Friday, the 13th of the month, and on the day of St. Gervais and St. Protais, the day of two martyrs! I have been telling my beads all the morning for M. Cinq Mars; but in truth, I could not help thinking of what I have told you; my mistress thinks of it as well as I, great lady as she is; so you have no cause to laugh."

So saying, the young Italian flew like a bird across the great dining hall, and disappeared in a corridor, frightened at the opening of the folding doors of the hall.

Grandchamp had scarcely understood what she had said, and seemed occupied only with the preparations for dinner; he fulfilled the important duties of major-domo, and cast the severest looks upon the domestics, to see if they were all at their posts, placing himself behind the chair of the deceased Marshal's eldest son, when all the inhabitants of the castle successively entered the hall: eleven persons, male and female, placed themselves at the table. The maréchale had entered last, giving her arm to a fine old man, magnificently attired, whom she placed on her left. She sat in a great gilded arm-chair, in the middle of the table, the form of which was oblong. Another seat, a little more ornamented, was on her right, but it remained empty. The young Marquis d'Effiat, placed opposite his mother, helped to do the honours; he was not more than twenty years old, and his countenance was somewhat insignificant; gravity and polished manners announced, however, a sociable nature, but nothing more. His young sister of fourteen, two gentlemen of the province, three young Italian lords, in the suite of Marie de Gonzaga, (Duchess of Mantua,) a companion, the governess of the marshal's young daughter, and an abbé from the neighbourhood, old and very deaf, composed the assembly. A place on the left of the eldest son still remained vacant.

The maréchale, before seating herself, made the sign of the cross, and said grace in a loud voice: every one answered by making the whole sign, or upon the breast only. This custom was preserved in France, in many families, until the revolution of 1789; some use it still, but more in the provinces than in Paris, and not without some

embarrassment, and some preliminary discourse upon the weather, accompanied by a smile of excuse, when a stranger is present, for it is too true that goodness also has its blush.

The maréchale was a woman of imposing stature, with large blue eyes of remarkable beauty. She did not appear to have attained her forty-fifth year; but worn down by sorrow, she walked slowly, and spoke with pain, closing her eyes, and letting her head fall upon her bosom, after she had exerted herself by raising her voice. Then her hand, pressed to her heart, showed that she felt a gnawing grief. Thus she saw with satisfaction, that the person placed upon her left seized unsolicited the thread of conversation, and held it with imperturbable self-possession during the whole repast. This was the old Marshal Bassompierre; he had preserved, in spite of time, an air of vivacity and youth not often seen; his noble and polished manners had something of a gallantry as superannuated as his costume, for he wore a ruff of the time of Henry IV., and sleeves cut in the manner of the last reign, unpardonably ridiculous in the eyes of the court-gallants. He did not, however, appear more singular than anything else in the apartment; for it belongs to the new century to laugh at the dress of its father, and I see few, save the Easterns, who may not be attacked by this misfortune.

One of the Italian gentlemen had hardly put a question to the marshal upon what he thought of the manner in which the cardinal treated the daughter of the Duke of Mantua, than the latter exclaimed in his own language:—

"Zounds, sir! to whom speak you? for I understand nought of this new system which governs France. We old companions in arms of the late king understand not the language spoken by the new court, and it knows not ours. Language?—no, we do not even speak in this sad country, for all are silent before the cardinal; that proud vassal looks upon us as old family portraits, and from time to time he cuts off a head; but fortunately the device always remains. Am I not right, my dear Puy-Laurens?"

This guest, who was very nearly the same age as the marshal, but graver and more circumspect, answered by some vague words, and signed to his fellow in years to make him remark the disagreeable emotion which he had caused the mistress of the house, by recalling to her the recent death of her husband, and by speaking thus of the minister, his friend; but this was vain, for Bassompierre, content with the sign of semi-approbation, emptied at a draught a large glass of wine, a remedy which he vaunts in his Memoirs as perfect against plague and reserve, and, lolling back to receive another from his attendant, sat himself more firmly than ever in his chair, and gave vent to his favourite ideas.

"Yes, we are all in the way here: the other day I told my dear friend the Duke of Guise so, whom they have ruined. They count the minutes of life remaining to us, and shake our hour-glass to hasten its sands. When the cardinal-duke sees in a corner three or four of

our great figures, which quitted not the side of the late king, he feels that he cannot move those iron statues, and that it needs the hand of a great man; he passes quickly and dares not meddle with us, who fear him not. He thinks that we are always conspiring, and, old as I am, they say that he is thinking of putting me in the Bastille."

"Wherefore delay your departure, marshal?" said the Italian; "I know but Flanders where you could be sheltered."

"Ah! sir, you scarcely know me; instead of flying, I sought the king before his departure, and told him I did so in order that they should not have the trouble to seek me, and that if I knew where he wished to send me I would go by myself without being dragged. He was as good as I expected: 'What, old friend, didst thou think I should do to thee?' said he; 'thou knowest well that I love thee.'"

"Ah! my dear marshal, I congratulate you," said Madame d'Effiat, in a sweet voice; "I recognise the king's goodness in those words; he remembers the affection that the king his father had for you; it seems that he has granted all which you wished for yours," added she, insinuatingly, in order to set him in the way of eulogy, and draw him from the discontent which he had expressed so loudly.

"Truly, madam," replied he, "none knows better how to acknowledge his virtues than François de Bassompierre; I shall be faithful to him unto the end, because I gave myself, body and goods, to his father at a ball, and I swear that, with my consent at least, none of my family shall fail in his duty towards the King of France. Though the *Bestein* be foreigners and Lorrains, gadsdeath! a shake of the hand of Henry IV. has conquered us for ever; my greatest grief has been at my brother having died in the service of Spain, and I have written to my nephew that I will disinherit him if he pass over to the emperor, as the rumour runs."

One of the gentlemen who had not yet spoken, and who was remarkable for the profusion of bows and ribbons and points which covered his dress, and by the order of St. Michael, the black ribbon of which ornamented his neck, bowed, saying, that it was thus every faithful subject should speak.

"Egad, Monsieur de Launay, you deceive yourself," said the marshal, returning to the memory of his ancestors; "men of our blood are subjects from the heart, for God has sent us into the world as much lords of our land as the king is of his. When I came into France, it was to take my pleasure, and be followed by my gentlemen and my pages. I perceive that the further we go, the more we lose that idea, and especially at court. But here is a young man who comes very opportunely—listen to me. . . ."

The door opened in fact, and there entered a young man of handsome exterior; he was pale, his hair was auburn, his eyes black, his appearance sad and unsociable: this was Henry d'Effiat, Marquis of Cinq-mars (a name taken from a family estate); his costume and short cloak were black; a lace collar fell from his neck half way down his breast; small strong boots, very wide at the top; and his spurs

made noise enough on the hall floor to make him heard from a distance. He walked straight to the Maréchale d'Effiat, saluting her profoundly, and kissing her hand.—"Well, Henry," said she, "are your horses ready? At what hour do you depart?"—"Immediately after dinner, madam, if you will permit," said he to his mother, with the ceremonious respect of the time; and passing behind her, he saluted M. de Bassompierre, before seating himself on the left of his elder brother.

"Well, my child," said the marshal, still eating heartily, "you are about to leave us; you are going to court, a slippery region now-a-day. For your sake I am sorry it is not what it used to be. The court formerly was quite another thing to the king's drawing-room, where he received his natural friends, the nobles of the great houses, his peers, who visited him to show their devotion and their friendship, playing with him for their money, and accompanying him in his pleasure parties, but receiving nothing from him but permission to lead their vassals to get their heads broken in his service. The honours which a man of quality received never enriched him, for he paid for them out of his purse; for every grade that I have risen I have sold a territory; the title of colonel-general of the Swiss Guards cost me four hundred thousand crowns, and the baptism of the present king caused me to purchase a dress at the price of a hundred thousand francs."

"But you will admit," said the mistress of the house, smiling, "that on this occasion, at least, you were not obliged: we have heard speak of the magnificence of your dress, trimmed with pearls; but I should be very sorry if it were still the fashion to wear a like costume."

"Oh, madam, be not uneasy, that time of magnificence will never return. We committed folly, no doubt, but it proved our independence; it is clear, therefore, that love alone attached to the king servants whose coronets of duke or marquis had in them as many diamonds as the crown. It is apparent, also, that all classes could not be seized with ambition, since such expenses could only be dispensed by rich hands, and gold comes only from mines. The great houses, which they destroy so bloodily, were not ambitious, and often, desiring no government employment, held their place at court by their own weight, existing by their own right, and saying, as one of them has said: '*The prince stoops not, for I am Rohan.*' It was the same in every noble family whose nobility was its only boast, and which the king himself related in writing to one of my friends: '*Money is not a common thing between gentlemen like you and I.*'"

"But, marshal," coldly, and with excessive politeness, interrupted M. de Launay, who perhaps designed to enrage him, "this independence has produced as many civil wars and revolts as that of M. de Montmorency."

"Zounds! sir, I cannot hear you speak thus," said the fiery marshal, starting from his chair. "These revolts and these wars, sir, were nothing to the fundamental laws of the state, and could no more

overturn the throne than could a duel. Of all those great party chiefs, there is not one who would not have laid his victory at the king's feet if he had succeeded, well knowing that all the other lords, as great as he, would have abandoned the enemy of the legitimate sovereign. They were armed only against a faction, and not against the sovereign authority, and, this accident destroyed, all returned to order. But what have you done in crushing us? you have broken the arms of the throne, and will put nothing in their place. Yes, I now no longer doubt that the cardinal-duke will accomplish his design entirely, the great nobility will quit and lose their lands, and, ceasing to be the great proprietary, will cease to be a power; the court is already nothing but a palace where men beg: presently it will become an antechamber, when it will be composed only of people of the king's suite; great names will begin by ennobling vile trusts; but, by a terrible reaction, these trusts will end in the abasement of the great names. Foreign to its homes, the nobility will exist only in the offices it shall have received, and the people, whom it will no longer influence, will long to revolt——"

"You are inauspicious to-day, marshal!" interrupted the maréchale. "I hope that neither I nor my children will see those times. I do not recognise you in the midst of all this policy; I expected to hear you give advice to my son. Henry! what ails you? you seem very absent."

Cinq-Mars, his eyes fixed upon the great window of the dining-hall, regarded with sadness the magnificent landscape which was spread beneath his eyes. The sun shone in all its splendour, and coloured the sands of the Loire, the trees and turf, with gold and emerald; the sky was azure, the waves of a transparent yellow, the isles of a brilliant green; behind their rounded heads were seen aloft the great sails of the merchant vessels, like a fleet in ambuscade. "Oh, Nature, Nature!" thought he, "lovely Nature, farewell! Soon my heart will not be simple enough to feel thee, and thou wilt no longer please mine eyes; this heart is already burned by a deep passion, and the recital of the interests of men causes it an unknown trouble: it must therefore enter into that labyrinth; perchance I shall lose myself, but for Marie. . . ."

Rousing himself at his mother's words, and fearing to show too childish a regret for his beautiful country and his family—"I was thinking, madam, of the road I am going to take for Perpignan, and also of that which will bring me back to you."

"Forget not to take that of Poitiers, and go to Loudun to see your old tutor, our good Abbé Quillet; he will give you useful advice about the court; he is intimate with the Duke de Bouillon; and besides, though it be not very necessary, it is a mark of deference which you owe him."

"Is it, then, to the siege of Perpignan that you are going, my friend?" inquired the old marshal, who began to find that he had been long silent. "Ah, it is fortunate for you! Confound it! a

siege is a pretty place for a first appearance: I would have given much to have had the like chance with the late king on my arrival at his court; I would rather have been wounded there than at a tournay, as I was. But we were at peace, and I was obliged to go and have a shot at the Turks with Rosworm of the Hungarians, to save my family from being afflicted at my want of work. However, I wish that his majesty may receive you in as amiable a manner as his father received me. The king is indeed brave and good; but they have unfortunately accustomed him to that cold Spanish etiquette which stops all the emotions of the heart; he contents himself and others by this unapproachable manner and frigid aspect; for myself, I declare that I always await the moment of thaw, but in vain. We were accustomed to other manners from the lively and simple Henry, and we had at least the liberty of telling him we loved him."

Cinq-Mars, his eyes fixed upon those of Bassompierre, as if to compel himself to pay attention to his discourse, asked him what was the manner of the late king's speech.

"Lively and frank," said he. "Some time after my arrival in France, I played with him and the Duchess of Beaufort at Fontainebleau; for he wished, he said, to win my golden pieces and my fair Portugal coins. He asked me what had brought me into this country? Faith, sire, said I, frankly, I came not with the design of embarking in your service, but to pass some time at your court, and in that of Spain; but you have so charmed me, that without going further, if you desire my service, I will devote myself to you until death. Thereupon he embraced me, and assured me that I could never have found a better master, or one who loved me more. Alas! I have found it out; and I have sacrificed all to him, even my love, and I should have done more, if it had been possible to do so, than renounce Mademoiselle de Montmorency."

The eyes of the good marshal were suffused with tears; but the young Marquis d'Effiat and the Italians, looking at one another, could not help smiling at the thought that the Princess of Condé was anything but young and pretty. Cinq-Mars perceived these signs of intelligence, and smiled also, but bitterly.—"Is it then true," said he, "that the passions have the same destiny as the fashions, and that a few years may strike with the same ridicule dress and love? Happy is the man who outlives not the illusions of his youth, and who carries its treasures to the tomb!"

But, with an effort, again breaking the melancholy course of his ideas, and wishing that the good marshal should find nothing displeasing upon the countenances of his guests:

"They spoke then with much freedom to King Henry?" said he. "Perhaps also at the beginning of his reign it was necessary for him to use this tone; but did he change it when he became master?"

"Never! no, never did our great King cease to be the same to his last day; he blushed not at being a man, and spoke to men forcibly and sensibly. Great Heaven! I think I see him now embracing the

Duke of Guise in his carriage on the very day of his death. He had uttered one of his lively sallies, and the Duke said to him: 'You are to my mind one of the most agreeable men in the world, and our destiny made us for each other; for, had you been but an ordinary man, I should have taken you into my service, at whatever price it had cost; but since God has made you a great King, I must serve you.' Ah! great man! well saidst thou," cried Bassompierre, with tears in his eyes, and perhaps a little animated by the frequent bumpers he had imbibed, "'*When you lose me, you will know that I am gone.*'"

During this outburst, the different persons at the table had taken various attitudes, according to their parts in public affairs. One of the Italians affected to chat and laugh lowly with the maréchale's young daughter; the other took care of the old deaf abbé, who, putting one hand behind his ear to hear better, was the only one who seemed attentive; Cinq-Mars had again betaken himself to his melancholy distraction, after having cast a sidelong glance at the Marshal, as one looks at a tennis-ball, when it is struck, until it returns. His elder brother did the honours of the table with the same calmness; Puy-Laurens carefully regarded the mistress of the house—he was devoted to the Duke of Orleans, and feared the cardinal; as to the maréchale, she wore an afflicted and uneasy air; often had rude words recalled to her either the death of her husband, or the departure of her son; oftener still had she feared that Bassompierre would compromise himself, and had signed to him several times, looking at M. de Launay, of whom she knew little, and who, she had some reason to believe, was devoted to the prime minister; but, to a man of his character, such warnings were useless: he appeared to pay no attention to them; and, on the contrary, crushing that gentleman with his bold looks, and the sound of his voice, he affected to turn towards and address to him all his discourse. As to De Launay, he wore an air of indifference and consenting politeness, which never quitted him until the moment when the folding doors opened, and *Mademoiselle the Duchess of Mantua* was announced.

The desultory conversation, which we have transcribed at length, passed with rapidity, and dinner was not half over, when the arrival of Marie of Gonzaga caused every one to rise. She was little, but very well formed, and though her eyes and her hair were very black, the freshness of her complexion was as dazzling as the beauty of her skin. The maréchale rose, to acknowledge her rank, and kissed her forehead in consideration of her youth and goodness.

"We have long awaited you to-day, dear Marie," said she to her, placing her near her; "happily you remain to replace one of my children who is about to depart."

The young duchess blushed, and lowering her head to hide her confusion, said timidly: "You do indeed, madam, stand to me in the place of a mother!" And a look blanched the cheek of Cinq-Mars at the other end of the table.

This arrival changed the conversation; it ceased to be general, and

each spoke lowly to his neighbour. The marshal alone continued to say some words on the magnificence of the old court, of his wars in Turkey, of the tournays, and of the avarice of the new court; but, to his great regret, no one attended to his words, and they arose from the table, when, the clock having struck two, five horses appeared in the court: four only were mounted by domestics, cloaked, and well armed; the other horse, black and restless, was held by old Grandchamp: it was his master's.

"Ah! ah!" cried Bassompierre; "behold our warhorse saddled and bridled; let us go, young man; you must say, with our old Marot:"—

Farewell court, and farewell ladies!
Farewell daughters, farewell wives!
Fare you well for some time;
Farewell your pleasant pastime;
Farewell the ball, farewell the dance,
Farewell measure and cadence,
Tambourines and violins,
Since to the war we go.

These old verses, and the air of the marshal, set all the table laughing, except three persons.

"By Jove!" continued he, "it seems to me that I am, like him, but seventeen; he will return braided from head to foot, madam; his seat must be left vacant."

At these words the maréchale turned suddenly pale, arose from the table bathed in tears, and all arose with her; she made but two steps, and fell back exhausted into another chair. Her sons, her daughter, and the young duchess, surrounded her with anxiety, and wiped away the tears she wished to restrain. "Forgive me, my friends!—it is foolish—it is childish—but I am so weak at present that I am not mistress of myself. We were thirteen at table, and it is you who were the cause, my dear duchess. But it is wicked in me to show before him so much weakness. Farewell, my child; let me kiss your forehead, and may God be with you! May you be worthy of your name, and of your father."

Then, as Homer has expressed it, *smiling through her tears*, she arose, and pushing him from her, said—"Go, that I may see you mounted, fair squire!"

The silent traveller dropped his mother's hand, and afterwards bowed to her profoundly; he bent slightly before the duchess; then embracing his elder brother, shaking the hand of the marshal, and kissing the brow of his young sister nearly at the same time, he departed, and in an instant was on horseback. All crowded to the windows which looked upon the court, except Madame d'Effiat, still seated and suffering.

"He gallops off; that is a good sign," said the marshal, smiling.

"Oh, God!" cried the young princess, withdrawing from the casement.

"What is it?" said the mother.

"It is nothing—it is nothing," said M. de Launay: "your son's horse stumbled under the gateway; but he soon recovered himself: see, he salutes us from the road."

"Another fatal presage!" said the maréchale, retiring to her apartments.

All imitated her, by being silent, or speaking low.

The day was sad, and the supper silent, in the castle of Chaumont.

At ten in the evening, the old marshal, conducted by his valet, withdrew to the northern tower, near the gate, and opposite the river. The heat was extreme; he opened the window, and, wrapping himself in a large gown, placed a heavy torch upon a table, and desired to be left alone. His window looked upon the plain, which the moon, in her first quarter, lit with uncertain light; the sky was hidden by thick clouds, and all things disposed the mind to melancholy. Though Bassompierre was not of a dreamy nature, the turn which the conversation had taken at dinner recurred to his memory, and he passed his whole life in review, and the sad changes which the new reign had brought with it, a reign which seemed to have breathed upon him with the breath of misfortune—the death of a cherished sister, the misconduct of the heir to his name, the losses of his lands and his favour, the recent end of his friend, the Marshal d'Effiat, whose chamber he occupied,—all these thoughts drew from him an involuntary sigh; he went to the casement to breathe the air.

At this moment he thought he heard on the woodside the march of a troop of horse; but the wind, which had increased, removed this first thought, and as the noise ceased suddenly, he forgot it. He still looked at the lights in the castle, which were successively extinguished, after having descended from floor to floor into the court and stables; then falling back upon his great embroidered chair, his elbow resting upon the table, he gave himself up to his reflections; and soon after drawing from his breast a medallion, suspended by a black ribbon—"Come, my good old master," said he; "come, talk with me as thou hast done so often; come, great king, forget thy court to laugh with a true friend; come, great man, consult me upon ambitious Austria; come, inconstant knight, speak to me of the good fellowship of thy love, and of the sincerity of thy faithlessness; come, heroic soldier, still cry to me that I hide thee in the fight; ah! what did I in Paris, that I received not thy wound! With thy blood the world has lost the benefits of thy interrupted reign. . . ."

The marshal's tears dimmed the glass of the large medallion, and he was wiping them away with respectful kisses, when his door opening quickly, made him place his hand upon his sword.

"Who goes there?" cried he, in surprise. It was even greater when he recognised M. de Launay, who, hat in hand, advanced towards him, and said with embarrassment:—

"Sir, it is with a heart broken with sorrow, that I am compelled to tell you that the king has commanded your arrest. A carriage awaits you at the gate, with thirty of the cardinal's musqueteers.

Bassompierre had not risen, and still had the medallion in his left hand, and the sword in his right; he tendered it disdainfully to this man, and said,—

"Sir, I know that I have lived too long, and it is as I thought; it is in the name of the great Henry that I peaceably give up this sword to his son. Follow me."

He accompanied these words with so firm a look, that de Launay was startled, and followed him with downcast eyes, as if he himself had been arrested by the noble old man, who, seizing a torch, entered the court, and found all the doors opened by mounted guards, who had frightened the people of the castle, in the name of the king, and commanded silence. The carriage was prepared, and departed rapidly, followed by many horsemen. The marshal, seated by the side of M. de Launay, began to sleep, rocked by the motion of the vehicle, when a loud voice cried to the driver, "*Hold!*" and as he continued his course, a pistol was fired. The horses were stopped. "I declare, sir, that this is done without my participation," said Bassompierre. Then putting his head out of the window, he saw that they were in a little wood, and that the road was too narrow for the horses to pass either right or left of the carriage, a very great advantage for the aggressors, since the musqueteers could not advance. He endeavoured to see what passed, when a cavalier, having in his hand a long sword, with which he parried the blows dealt at him by a guard, approached the door, exclaiming: "*Come, come, marshal, descend!*"

"What! is it you, giddy-headed Harry, who play these pranks? Gentlemen, gentlemen, leave him alone, he is a child."

"And de Launay having bade the musqueteers to quit him, they had time to recognise each other.

"What the devil brought you here?" asked Bassompierre; "I thought you were at Tours, and even further, if you had done your duty; and lo, you are returned to play the fool!"

"It was not for you alone that I returned; it is upon a secret affair," said Cinq-Mars in a low tone; "but, as I think they are carrying you off to the Bastille, I am sure you will say nothing; it is the temple of discretion. However, if you had desired it," continued he aloud, "I would have delivered you from these gentlemen in this wood, where a horse could not stir; but now is not the time. A peasant had informed me of the insult done to us more than to you, by this breaking into my father's house."

"It is by order of the king, my child, and it becomes us to respect his wishes; keep this warmth for his service—I heartily thank you, however, for your good intention; shake hands, and let me continue this delightful journey."

De Launay interposed: "I am only permitted to say, M. Cinq-Mars, that I am charged by the king himself to assure the marshal that he is much afflicted at this; but it is for fear of his being driven to evil that his Majesty prays him to remain a few days at the Bastille."*

* He remained there twelve years.

Bassompierre replied, laughing loudly:—"You see, my friend, how they ward us young men; therefore take care of yourself."

"Well! so be it; let us part," said Henry; "I shall not again perform the knight-errant for men against their inclination." And re-entering the wood, while the carriage departed at a gallop, he took by a winding footpath his way to the castle.

He stopped at the foot of the eastern tower. He alone was in advance of Grandchamp and his little escort, and he remained on horseback; but, approaching the wall, so that his boot touched it, he raised the blind of a window on the ground floor, made in the form of a portcullis, as we still see in some old buildings.

A minute elapsed, and the moon was hidden; none but the master of the house could have found his way in so great an obscurity. The towers and roofs formed but a black mass, hardly distinguishable from the scarcely less transparent sky; no light burned throughout the sleeping mansion. Cinq-Mars, concealed under a broad-brimmed hat and large cloak, waited with anxiety.

"Why tarries he? what has he returned to seek?" said a low voice from behind the casement.

"Is it you, M. Cinq-Mars?"

"Alas! who should it be? who returns like a robber to his paternal house without entering, and without bidding another farewell to his mother? who returns to complain of the present, without expecting anything of the future, if it were not I?"

The sweet voice trembled, and it was easy to hear that tears accompanied its answer. "Alas! Henry, wherefore do you complain? have I not done more, much more than I ought? is it my fault if misfortune willed that my father should be a sovereign prince? can we choose our cradles? Would that I were a shepherdess; for you know well the misfortunes which attend a princess: her heart is removed at her birth, the whole land is informed of her age; a treaty gives her up like a town, and she may never weep. Since I have known you, what have I not done to cling to happiness, and estrange myself from thrones! For two years I have vainly struggled against the bad fortune which separates me from you—and against you, who turn me from my duty. You know how I wished them to think me dead. Dead, said I? I have almost longed for revolutions! I should perhaps have blessed the blow which had robbed me of my rank, as I thanked God when my father was overthrown; but the court is astonished; the queen demands my presence; our dreams are at an end. Henry, our sleep has been too long; let us awake courageously. Think no more of these sweet years: forget all in the remembrance of our great resolution; have but one sole thought: be ambitious—ambitious for me!"

"Must I, then, forget all, Marie," said Cinq-Mars, sorrowfully.

She hesitated.

"Yes, all that I have myself forgotten," replied she. A moment afterwards she continued with vivacity——

"Yes; forget our happy days, our long evenings, and even our walks by the lake and in the wood; but bethink yourself of the future. Go," she said, "your father was a marshal; be more, lord constable, prince. Go, you are young, brave, noble, rich, beloved. . . . . "

"For ever?" said Henry.

"For life, and to eternity."

Cinq-Mars started, and seizing her hand, exclaimed—

"I swear by the Virgin, whose name you bear, that you shall be mine, Marie, or my head shall roll upon the scaffold."

"O Heaven! what said you?" cried she, withdrawing her hand, which she had suffered to be retained without the window. "No, your efforts will never be guilty, swear it; you will never forget that the King of France is your master; love him above all, as he for whom you will sacrifice all, and endure it patiently. Take this little golden cross, press it to your heart, it has been ofttimes bathed in my tears. Think that if ever you are guilty towards the king, that I shall shed many more bitter tears. Give me that ring you wear on your finger. O God! our hands are red with blood!"

"What matters it? it was not spilled for you. Heard you nought within the last hour?"

"No; but hear you nothing now?"

"No, Marie; 'tis but an owl in the tower."

"Surely I heard voices near. But whence comes this blood? tell me quickly, and let us part."

"Yes, I go, while the cloud obscures us in darkness. Farewell, heavenly being, I shall call upon thy name. Love has poured ambition into my heart like a burning poison; yes, I feel it for the first time, ambition may be ennobled by its object. Farewell, I go to the fulfilment of my destiny.

"Farewell; but think of me!"

"Can they separate us?"

"Never!" exclaimed Marie, passionately, "but by death."

"I fear absence more," said Cinq-Mars.

"Farewell! I tremble; farewell!" said the much-loved voice; and the window slowly fell—and thus parted two whose hearts were eternally united.

Yet the black horse ceased not to paw the ground and neigh as if impatient of his stay; his uneasy master permitted him to set off at a gallop, and they were soon at the town of Tours, which the bells of St. Gratian announced afar off.

Old Grandchamp had not awaited his master without murmuring, and he grumbled on finding that he wished not to retire to rest. The whole escort departed, and five days after entered the old city of Loudun, in Poitou, in silence, and without having encountered any adventure.

CHAPTER II.

THE STREET.

THIS reign, a few years of which we wish to paint, a reign of weakness, like an eclipse of the crown between the splendours of Henry IV. and Louis the Great, afflicts the eye of the beholder by its bloody stains. They were not all the work of one man, great bodies took part in them. It is sad to see that in this still unruly age, the clergy, like a great nation, had its populace as well as its nobility; its ignorant and criminal as well as its learned and virtuous prelates. Since that time, what barbarism remained was polished by the long reign of Louis XIV., and its remnant of corruption was washed out in the blood of the martyrs which it offered up at the revolution of 1793. Thus, by a wholly peculiar destiny, perfected by the monarchy and the republic, softened by the one, chastened by the other, it has become what it now is, austere and rarely vicious.

We have thought it necessary to give utterance to this thought before entering on the recital of the facts offered to us by the history of those times, and despite this consoling observation, even after having removed those odious details, we cannot help shuddering at the guilty actions which remain; as in relating the life of a virtuous old man, we weep over the transports of his impassioned youth, or the corrupt propensities of his riper age.

When the cavalcade entered the narrow streets of Loudun, strange noises were heard; they were filled with an immense crowd; the bells of the church and of the convent were ringing furiously, as if to warn the inhabitants that the whole town was in flames; every one, without attending to the travellers, pressed towards a great building adjoining the church. It was easy to distinguish upon their faces traces of impressions very different from and often opposed to each other. Groups and numerous mobs were formed; the buzz of conversation suddenly ceased, and only one voice was heard, which seemed exhorting or reading; then furious cries, mingled with pious exclamations, broke out on all sides; the group dispersed, and the orator was seen to be a Capuchin or Recollite friar, who, holding in his hand a wooden crucifix, showed the crowd the great building towards which it was hastening. "*Jesu Maria!*" cried an old woman, "who would ever have thought that the evil spirit would have chosen our good town for a dwelling?"

"And that the good Ursulines had been possessed!" said another.

"They say that the demon which possesses the superior is named *Legion*," said a third.

"What say you, my dear?" interrupted a monk; "there are seven in her poor body, of which doubtless she was too careful because of its great beauty; now it is the receptacle of fiends; the prior of the Carmelites, in exorcising them yesterday, brought from her mouth the demon *Eazas*, and the reverend father Lactantius has driven out,

also, the demon *Beherit.* But the five others would not depart, and when the holy exorcists, whom God uphold, summoned them in Latin to withdraw, they said they would not do it until they had proved their power, which the Hugonots and heretics have the impudence to doubt; and the demon *Elemi,* who is the wickedest you know, has to-day pretended that it will raise the cap of M. de Laubardemont, and suspend it in the air during a *Miserere.*"

"Holy Virgin!" replied the first, "I tremble from head to foot. And then to think that I have been several times to ask masses of the magician Urban!"

"And I," said a young girl, crossing herself; "I who have confessed myself to him this ten months, I should surely have been possessed if it had not been for the relic of St. Geneviève, which I fortunately had under my gown, and——"

"And, without reproach, Martine," interrupted a fat merchant, "you remained long enough for that, alone with the handsome sorcerer."

"Well, beauty, you were dispossessed a month since," said a young soldier, who had mixed with the group, smoking his pipe.

The young girl blushed, and drew over her pretty face the hood of her black cloak. The old women darted a look of contempt upon the soldier, and as they were then near the door, which was shut, they took up their conversation with more warmth than ever, seeing that they were sure to enter among the first, and seating themselves upon the stone posts and benches, they prepared themselves by their tales for the pleasure they were going to taste of being spectators of something strange, of an apparition, or at least of a punishment.

"Is it true, aunt," said the young Martine to the elder, "that you have heard these demons speak?"

"True as that I now see you, and all the assistants can say as much, niece; it is for the edification of your soul that I have brought you with me to-day, and you will know the real power of the wicked spirit."

"What sort of voice has it, dear aunt?" continued the young girl, delighted to arouse a conversation which diverted from her the thoughts of those by whom she was surrounded.

"His voice is none other than the voice of the superior, to whom Our Lady be merciful. This poor young woman, I was near her yesterday for a long time: it was hard to see her tear herself, and twist her feet and arms and join them suddenly behind her back. When the holy father Lactantius arrived and pronounced the name of Urban Grandier, foam came from her mouth, and she spoke Latin as if she were reading the Bible. As I did not very well understand her, I only recollect '*Urbanus magicus rosas diabolica;*' that is to say, that the magician Urban had bewitched her with roses given him by the devil, and there came from her ears and neck flame-coloured roses, which smelt so strongly of sulphur that the crown deputy cried out to each to shut his eyes and nose, for the demons were about to issue forth."

"See there!" exclaimed, with a shrill voice and a triumphant air, all the assembled women, turning towards the crowd, and particularly towards a group of men, dressed in black, among whom was the young soldier who had cursorily apostrophised them.

"Look at those old fools, who think themselves at a Sabbath," said he, "and who make more noise than if they had ridden here on a broomstick."

"Young man, young man," said a burgess, in a mournful tone, "make not these jests in the open air; the wind will scorch you up ere you have done."

"'Faith, I always mocked exorcists!" replied the soldier; "I call myself Grand-Ferré, and there are not many who have such a holy-water sprinkler as mine."

And taking the handle of his sabre in one hand, with the other he turned up his sandy moustache, and looked around him with a frown; but as he saw in the crowd no look which braved his own, he departed slowly, left foot foremost, and walked into the narrow and dingy streets with that perfect unconcern of a military aspirant, and a profound contempt for all who wore not the cloth.

Yet, eight or ten reasonable inhabitants of this little town walked together and in silence through the agitated crowd; they seemed in consternation at this astonishing and sudden rumour, and they questioned one another regarding each new spectacle of folly which met their eyes. This mute discontent depressed the people, and the numerous peasants who had left their fields, who all based their opinions on their respect for the proprietary, for the most part their patrons; they saw that something grievous was preparing, and had recourse to the only remedy which can be taken by the ignorant and deceived subject, resignation and firmness.

Nevertheless, the peasantry of France has in its character a certain mocking simplicity, which it often uses with equals, and always with its superiors. He puts questions as embarrassing for power, as are those of childhood for ripe age; he bows himself to the dust in order to embarrass him whom he interrogates with his very elevation; he redoubles his clumsiness and vulgarity, the better to see the secret ends of your thoughts; but in spite of him, however, all he says takes an insidious and repulsive air, which betrays him; and his sardonic smile, and the affected dulness with which he leans upon his long stick, indicate but too well to what hopes he gives himself up, and what is the support upon which he counts.

One of the oldest advanced, followed by ten or twelve young peasants, his sons and nephews; they all wore the large hat and blue blouse, the ancient dress of the Gauls, and which the people of France yet put over all their other clothes, and which is so well suited to its rainy climate and its laborious customs. When he was within reach of the persons of whom we have spoken, he doffed his hat, and all his family did likewise: he then displayed his dark complexion, and his bare and wrinkled forehead, crowned with long grey hair; his shoulders

were doubled by age and labour. He was received with an air of satisfaction, and almost of respect, by a very grave man of the black group, who, without uncovering, held out to him his hand.

"Well, father William Leroux," said he to him, "why have you also quitted our farm of La Chênaie for the town, though it be not market-day? It is as if your oxen had unyoked themselves to go on some wild-goose chase, and abandoned their labour to hunt a poor hare."

"Faith, Count Lude," replied the farmer, "sometimes the hare throws herself before them; I am told that they wish us to enjoy ourselves, and I have come to see how."

"Hold there, my friend," replied the count; "here is M. Fournier, the advocate, who will not deceive you, for he was dismissed from his office of public prosecutor yesterday evening, and henceforth his eloquence will serve only his noble thoughts; you will perhaps hear him to-day, but I fear his presence among them for his own sake as much as I desire it for the sake of the accused."

"No matter, sir, truth is all to me," said Fournier.

This was a young man, extremely pale, but whose countenance was full of nobleness and expression; his flaxen hair, his clear blue eyes, and the extreme slightness of his figure, made him at first sight appear younger than he really was; but his thoughtful and impassioned face announced a superiority and that precocious maturity of mind which is given by study and natural energy. He wore a dress and a cloak of black, rather short, according to the fashion of the time, and under his left arm he carried a roll of paper, which, in speaking, he clutched convulsively in his right hand, as an angry warrior seizes the hilt of his sword. It appeared as if he wished to unrol it and hurl therefrom the thunders of his eloquence on those whom he followed with his indignant looks. Those who attracted his attention were three Capuchins and a Recollite, who passed in the crowd.

"Father William," continued M. du Lude, "why have you brought with you only your young men, and wherefore these staves?"

"Faith, sir, it is because I like not that our girls should learn to dance like these nuns; and because, as the times go, the men know better how to bestir themselves than the women."

"Better not *bestir* ourselves, old friend, believe me," said the count; "put yourselves in order rather, to see the procession, and remember that you are seventy years old."

"Ah! ah!" said the old man, ranking his twelve children like soldiers, "I have made war under the late King Henry, and I know how to play at pistoling as well as the *leaguers* did;" and shaking his head, he seated himself upon a post, his knotty stick between his legs, his hands crossed upon it, and his white-bearded chin resting upon them. With half-shut eyes, he gave himself up to the memory of his childhood.

His dress, striped as in the time of the Bearnese king, and his resemblance to him in the decline of his life, were regarded with

astonishment, though the monarch's hair had been deprived by the assassin's dagger of that whiteness which that of the peasant had peaceably acquired. But a loud ringing of bells drew attention towards the extremity of the principal street of Loudun.

Then appeared at a distance a long procession bearing a banner and pikes raised above the crowd, which silently opened to make way for this ridiculous pageant.

Archers with pointed beards, wearing large plumed hats, and carrying long halberds, marched first, in two columns, then dividing into two files on each side of the street, shut up within this double line two parallel lines of gray penitents; at least we shall give that name, known in some provinces of the south of France, to some men clothed in long robes of that colour, which entirely covered their heads in the form of a hood, and a mask of the same stuff terminated in a point under their chins like a long beard, and with three holes for the eyes and nose. Even in our day, some funerals are followed and honoured by like costumes, especially in the Pyrenees. The penitents of Loudun had enormous tapers in their hands, and their slow march, and their eyes, which looked fiery from under their masks, gave them an unearthly appearance, which involuntarily saddened the beholder.

Murmurs of various kinds burst from the people.

"There's many a knave concealed under those masks," said a burgess.

"Ay, and whose face is uglier than his mask!" responded a young man.

"They frighten me," cried a young woman.

"I am afraid for my purse," rejoined a peasant.

"Ah! Jesus! here are our holy fathers of Penitence," said one old woman, removing her black hood. "See you what banner they bear? how lucky that it is with us! it will certainly save us: see you underneath the devil in the flames, and a monk tying a chain about his neck? See, see, the judges are coming: ah! the honest men! see their red robes, how beautiful! Ah! holy Virgin, but they are well chosen!"

"These are the personal enemies of the curé," said the Count of Lude to the Advocate Fournier, who took a note.

"Know you them all?" continued the old woman, distributing cuffs and pinches on the ears and arms of her neighbours until she brought blood, to excite their attention: "look at good M. Mignon, who speaks so lowly to the presidential counsellors of Poitiers; may God spread his holy blessing on them all!"

"There are Roatin, Richard. and Chevalier, who wished to dismiss him a year since," continued to whisper M. du Lude to the young advocate, who continued to write under his cloak, surrounded and hidden by the black group of burgesses.

"Ah! see, see, clear the way! here is M. Barré, the curé of St. Jacques de Chinon," said the old woman.

"He is a saint," said another.

"He is a hypocrite," said a man's voice.

"See how thin the fast has made him."

"How pale remorse has rendered him."

"It is he who has put to flight the devils, now that he has no further use for them."

This dialogue was interrupted by a general cry: "How beautiful she is!"

The Superior of the Ursulines advanced, followed by all her nuns; her white veil was raised, in order that the people might see the features of the possessed; so were those of six other sisters. She was not distinguished by her dress from the rest, but an immense rosary of black beads fell from her neck to her feet, terminating in a golden cross; but the shining whiteness of her face, which was relieved by the brown colour of her hood, at first attracted all attention; her black eyes seemed to bear the impress of a deep and burning passion; they were covered by the perfect arches of her eyebrows, which Nature had designed with as much care as the Circassians who paint them upon their faces; but a slight wrinkle between them revealed a strong and habitual agitation of mind. Yet she affected great calmness in all her movements, and in her general demeanour; her steps were slow and measured, her two beautiful hands were joined as white and as motionless as those marble statues which are eternally praying over tombs.

"Oh! see you, aunt," said the young Martine, "sister Agnes and sister Clara, who weep with her?"

"Niece, they are desolate at being the prey of the demon."

"Or they repent," said the same manly voice, "of having played with heaven."

Still a profound silence reigned around, and no movement agitated the people; it seemed suddenly frozen as by enchantment, when in the train of the nuns appeared in the midst of four penitents, who held him in chains, the curé of the church of St. Croix, clothed in the gown of a pastor; the nobleness of his features was remarkable, and nothing could equal the mildness of his countenance; without affecting an insulting calmness, he looked benignly around him, and seemed to seek right and left to encounter the welcome of a friendly glance; he did encounter it, he acknowledged it; he even heard sobs; he saw hands extended towards him, and some were not without weapons; but he answered by no sign; he lowered his eyes, unwilling to involve those who loved him, or to communicate by a glance of the eye the contagion of misfortune. This was Urban Grandier.

Suddenly the procession stopped at a sign from the man who commanded its movements. He was tall, spare, pale, clothed in a long black robe, and his head was covered with a cap of the same colour; he had the figure of a Basil, with the look of a Nero. He signed to the guards to surround him, when he saw with affright the black group of which we have spoken, and that the peasants pressed near

him to listen; the canons and capuchins placed themselves around him, and he pronounced in a shrill voice this singular decree:

"We, Sieur de Laubardemont, member of the Council of State, being sent and subdelegated, clothed with a discretionary power relative to the trial of the magician *Urban Grandier*, to judge him upon all the points of accusation, assisted by the reverend fathers *Mignon*, canon, Barré, curé of St. Jacques de Chinon, by father Lactantius, and all the judges summoned to judge the aforesaid magician, have preliminarily decreed as follows: *Firstly*, the self-styled assembly of proprietary nobles, burgesses of the town, and of the surrounding territory, is broken up, as tending to popular sedition; its acts are declared null, and its so-called letter to the king against us, judges, intercepted and burned in the market-place, as calumniating the good Ursulines, and the reverend fathers and judges. *Secondly*, it will be forbidden to say publicly or in private that the nuns are not possessed of an evil spirit, and to doubt the power of the exorcists, on pain of a fine of twenty thousand livres and corporal punishment.

"The bailiffs and magistrates will conform themselves hereto. This 18th of June, in the year of grace, 1639."

Hardly had he finished reading, than a discordant braying of trumpets cut off the last syllable of his words, and smothered, though imperfectly, the murmurs which followed it; he hastened the march of the procession, which precipitately entered the great building attached to the church, an old convent, whose walls only remained; they were proper for the use to which it was about to be turned. Laubardemont thought himself in security when he had entered, and heard its heavy and double doors shut with a grating noise upon the still yelling crowd.

CHAPTER III.

THE GOOD PRIEST.

Now that this diabolical procession has entered its hall of exhibition, and whilst they arrange the bloody representation, let us see what Cinq-Mars was doing among the spectators. He was naturally endowed with much tact, and felt that he would not very easily gain his end of finding the Abbé Quillet at the moment when the agitation of the people's minds was at its height. He remained mounted, therefore, with his two domestics, in a small and very obscure lane, which led into the high street, and whence he could easily see all that was passing. People at first paid no attention to him; but when the public curiosity had no other nourishment, he became the object of all their attention. Tired of so many exciting scenes, the inhabitants looked upon him with some discontent, and demanded of him in no very gentle tone whether he were an exorcist come among them; some peasants even began to find out that he blocked up the

street with his five horses: he felt that it was time to depart, and, unhesitatingly choosing those who looked most friendly, as one is apt to do under such circumstances, he advanced with his retinue, hat in hand, towards the black group of whom we have spoken; and addressing the person who appeared to him most distinguished, said:—"Sir, may I ask to be directed to the residence of the Abbé Quillet?"

At this name every one looked at him with as much terror as if he had pronounced that of Lucifer. Yet no one appeared offended; it seemed on the contrary that this demand caused a favourable opinion of him to spring up in their minds. As it happened, chance had favoured his choice. Count Lude approached his horse, and saluting him, said:—"If you will dismount, sir, I may be able to give you some useful information concerning him."

After having spoken very low, they separated with the ceremonious politeness of the time. Cinq-Mars mounted his gray horse, and passing through several little streets, he and his retinue were soon out of the crowd.

"How happy I feel!" said he, musingly; "I shall see at least for a few moments that good and mild abbé who brought me up; I still remember his features, his calm air, and his voice full of goodness."

As he thought thus tenderly, he found himself in a little dark street, which had been pointed out to him; it was so narrow that the tops of his boots touched the two walls. At the end of it he found a wooden house of only one story, and in his eagerness he struck it several blows.

"Who goes there?" cried a furious voice; and almost immediately the door was opened by a man, short, stout, and red-faced, wearing a black cap, an immense white frill, riding boots, in the immense depths of which his short legs were entirely concealed, and two horse pistols in his hand.

"I will sell my life dearly!" cried he, "and——"

"Softly, softly, abbé," said his pupil, taking him by the hand; "these are your friends."

"Ah! my poor child, is it you?" said the good man, dropping his pistols, which were removed by a servant also armed to the teeth. "Eh! what do you here? confusion is abroad, and I only await the night to depart. Enter quickly, my friend, with your people; I took you for Laubardemont's archers, and in faith I was about to play a part foreign to my character. You see these horses; I am going to rejoin our friend, the Duke of Bouillon, in Italy. John, John, shut fast the great gate behind these brave domestics, and recommend them not to make too much noise, though there is no house near this."

Grandchamp obeyed the intrepid little abbé, who, for the fourth time, embraced Cinq-Mars, raising himself upon the points of his toes to reach the middle of his breast. He quickly led him into a narrow chamber, which seemed an abandoned granary, and seating himself near him, upon a black leathern trunk, he said with warmth:—

"Ah! my child, where go you? What made your mother think of telling you to come here? see you not well, that when all goes against an unfortunate man that he must lose? Good God! was this the first spectacle that should meet the eyes of my dear pupil? and you behold it at that charming age, when friendship, when tender affection, and mild confidence, ought to surround you, and when everything should give you a good opinion of your species, on your entrance into the world! how unfortunate! Alas! wherefore came you here?"

When the good abbé had thus affectionately bewailed his misfortune, he seized the two hands of the young traveller in his own red and shrivelled members, whilst his pupil had time to say:—"But can you not guess, my dear abbé, that it is because you were at Loudun that I am come? As to these spectacles, of which you speak, they appear to me ridiculous, and I declare to you, that I have no less love for the human species on their account, of which your virtues and your good lessons have given me an excellent idea, concerning the five or six foolish women! . . . ."

"Let us lose no time; I will tell you of this folly; I will explain it to you. But answer, where are you going? upon what business are you?"

"I am going to Perpignan, where the cardinal is to present me to the king."

Here the good and lively abbé jumped from his trunk, and walked, or rather ran along the chamber, striking his foot. "The cardinal! —the cardinal!" repeated he, gasping, his face turning red, and the tears starting to his eyes. "Poor child! they will lose him! O God! what part would they make him play? what want they with him? Oh! who will watch over you, my friend, in that dangerous land?" said he, reseating himself, and taking the two hands of his pupil in his own with paternal solicitude, and seeking to read it in his looks.

"I, too, am ignorant of it," said Cinq-Mars, looking at the ceiling. "I think that it will be the same Cardinal Richelieu who was the friend of my father."

"Ah! my dear Henry! you make me tremble, child: he will destroy you if you are not his passive instrument. Ah! why cannot I go with you? why have I shown myself conspicuously in this unfortunate affair? . . . . . Alas! no, I should be dangerous to you; on the contrary, I must hide myself. But you will have M. de Thou near you, my son, will you not?" said he, seeking to calm himself; "he is the friend of your childhood, a little older than you: listen to him, my child; he is a wise young man; he is considerate, and has a good notion of things."

"Oh yes! my dear abbé, depend upon my tender attachment to him; I have never ceased to love him." . . . . .

"But you have surely ceased to write to him, have you not?" replied the good abbé, smiling.

"I beg your pardon, my good abbé; I wrote to him some time since, and again yesterday, to announce to him that the cardinal had summoned me to court."

"What! he himself has wished to see you?"

Whereupon Cinq-Mars showed him the letter of the cardinal to his mother, and by degrees his old tutor became calm and softened.

"Come," said he, in a low tone, "come, it is not bad, it is promising: captain in the guards at twenty is not so bad;" and he smiled.

And the young man, transported at finally seeing this smile, which so well agreed with all his thoughts, threw himself on the neck of the abbé, and embraced him as if he were himself possessed of a whole future of pleasure, of glory, and of love.

However, disengaging himself with difficulty from this warm embrace, the good abbé betook himself again to his walk and his reflections. He hemm'd often, and shook his head; and Cinq-Mars, without daring to take up the conversation, followed him with his eyes, and became sad on seeing him become serious.

The old man at last reseated himself, and gravely began the following discourse:—

"My friend, my child, I gave myself up like a father to your hopes; I ought therefore to tell you, and it is not to distress you, that they seem to me excessive and unnatural. If it were the aim of the cardinal to testify to your family attachment and gratitude only, he would not go so far in his favours; but it is probable he has cast his eyes on you. Perhaps some one has told him that you seem fit to play such and such a part, impossible to guess at, and which lies buried in the innermost recesses of his thoughts. He wishes to raise you, to train you—forgive this expression, in favour of its justice, and think seriously when the time shall come. But no matter; I think that, as far as that goes, you will do well to follow this vein; it is thus that great fortunes have commenced; it is necessary only not to allow yourself to be blinded and governed. Beware that favours do not render you giddy, my poor child, and that elevation does not turn your head; be not offended, it has happened to older men than you. Write to me often, as well as to your mother; see M. de Thou, and we will try to give you good advice. My son, have the goodness to shut that window, for the wind comes through it upon my head, and I must relate to you what is passing here."

Henry, hoping that the moral part of the discourse was finished, and seeing nothing in the second but a tale, shut the old window, curtained with cobwebs, and resumed his place in silence.

"On second thoughts, perhaps, your having passed through here will not have been useless, though you have obtained some sad experience; but it will supply what I have not yet told you of the perversity of men; I hope, besides that, it will not end in blood, and the letter which we have written to the king will have arrived in time."

"I have heard say that it was intercepted," said Cinq-Mars.

"It is all over, then," said Abbé Quillet; "the curé is lost; but listen to me.

"God forbid, my child, that it should be I, your old instructor,

who should attack my own work, and undermine your faith. Preserve at all times, and in all places, that honest sincerity of which your noble family has set you the example, which our forefathers had more of than ourselves, and for which the greatest captains of our times need not blush. While wearing your sword, remember that it is consecrated to God. But when you are among men, let them not deceive you by their hypocrisy; it will surround you—will attack you, my son, on the weak side of your simple heart, by speaking to your religion; and, testifying the extravagance of its affected zeal, you will believe yourself lukewarm in comparison with it; you will believe that your conscience speaks against yourself; but it will not be its voice you will hear. What cries it will utter; how it will rise against you, if you contribute to the loss of innocence by calling Heaven itself to bear false witness against it."

"Oh, father! is it possible?" said Henry d'Effiat, joining his hands.

"But too true," continued the abbé; "you have partly seen it in practice this morning. God grant that you may not witness greater horrors! But listen: whatever you see passing, whatever crime they dare to commit, I conjure you, in the name of your mother, and all you hold most dear, speak not a word, make not a gesture which manifests your opinion upon the event. I know your hasty character—you inherit it from the marshal, your father; moderate it, or you are lost; these ebullitions of feeling produce little satisfaction, and draw down great reverses; I have seen you too much inclined to them; if you knew how much superiority calmness gives one over men! The ancients engraved it upon the forehead of their Divinity, as his finest attribute, since it shows that he is superior to our fears and our hopes, to our pleasures and our pains. Remain, therefore, immovable in the scenes you are about to witness, my dear child; see them you must; be present at this fatal juncture; for me, I am about to submit to the consequences of my schoolboy foolishness. I will explain it to you: it will show you that, with a bald head, one can be as much a child as under your chestnut locks."

Here Abbé Quillet placed his hands upon the young man's head, and continued thus:—

"I was as curious as the rest, my dear son, to see the devils of the Ursulines; and knowing that they were announced as speaking all languages, I was imprudent enough to quit Latin, and ask them some questions in Greek. The superior is very pretty, but she was unable to reply in that language. Duncan, the physician, loudly observed, that he was surprised that the demon, who was ignorant of nothing, should make barbarisms and solecisms, and be unable to answer in Greek. The young superior, who was then upon her show-bed, turned her face to the wall to weep, and said lowly to father Barré: '*Sir, I can hold out no longer.*' I repeated this aloud, and put all the exorcists in a fury. They cried out, that I ought to know that there were demons more ignorant than peasants, and their power and

physical strength we could not doubt, since the spirits named *Grésil des Trônes, Aman des Puissances,* and *Asmodeus,* had promised to raise the cap of M. de Laubardemont. They were preparing, when the surgeon, Duncan, who is a learned and honest man, but somewhat of a mocker, took upon him to pull a thread which he discovered attached to a column, like a bell-rope, and which hung very near the member of the council, upon which they called him a Hugonot, and, I believe, that if Marshal Brézé were not his protector, it would have gone badly with him. Count Lude then advanced with his ordinary coolness, and prayed the exorcists to act before him. Father Lactantius, that capuchin, whose face is so dark, and his look so stern, takes care of Sister Agnes and Sister Clara; he raised his two hands, looking at them as a serpent looks upon two doves, and cried, with a terrible voice:—'*Quis te misit, Diabole,*—Who sent thee, devil?' and the two girls said perfectly together:—'Urbanus.' He was continuing, when M. du Lude, taking from his pocket, with an appearance of compunction, a little golden box, said, that it contained a relic left by his ancestors, and that, not doubting the veracity of the possessed, he wished to prove it. Father Lactantius, delighted, seized the box, and hardly had he touched the foreheads of the two girls, than they made prodigious leaps, twisting their feet and hands. Lactantius hurled forth his exorcisms; Barré threw himself on his knees with all the old women; Mignon and the judges applauded. Laubardemont, unabashed, made (without being withered up!) the sign of the cross. Then, M. du Lude, taking back his box, the nuns remained quiet:—'*I believe,*' said Lactantius boldly, '*that you doubt not the truth of your relics.*'"

"'*No more than that of the nun's possession,*' replied M. du Lude, opening his box; it was empty.

"'Gentlemen, you mock us,' said Lactantius.

"I was indignant at these mummeries, and said to him:

"'Yes, sir, as you mock God and man.' It is for that you now see me, my dear friend, with long pistols, and in seven-league boots, so heavy and so big, which makes me clumsy footed; for our friend Laubardemont has commanded the taking of my body, and I cannot let him seize it, old as it is."

"But," cried Cinq-Mars, "is he, then, so powerful?"

"More than is believed, more than is believed; I know that the possessed abbess is his niece, and that he is furnished with a decree from the council which gives him power to judge, notwithstanding all the petitions cast at the feet of parliament, which the cardinal has prohibited from taking up the cause of Urban Grandier."

"And what are his wrongs?" said the young man, already powerfully interested.

"Those of a strong mind and a superior genius, an inflexible will, which has irritated power against him, and a deep passion, which has led away his heart, and which makes him commit the only mortal sin for which I believe he can be reproached; but this is no excuse for violating the secresy of his papers, which were torn from Jeanne

Estièvre, his octogenarian mother, by which they have known and published his love for the beautiful Madeleine de Brou; this young lady had refused to marry him, and wished to take the veil. May this veil have hidden her from the spectacle of to-day! The eloquence of Grandier and his angelic beauty have often exalted the women, who came from afar off to hear him speak; I have seen them faint away during his sermons; others cried that he was an angel, touching his garments, and kissing his hands when he descended from the pulpit. It is certain that if it be not his beauty, nothing equals the sublimity of his ever-inspired discourses; the pure honey of the gospel flows from his lips like the sparkling flame of the prophecies, and one feels at the sound of his voice a heart full of holy pity for the evils of man, and swelling with tears even to overflowing."

The good priest stopped; for his voice trembled, and the tears were in his eyes; his round and naturally gay features wore a more touching expression than a countenance habitually more serious would have done, for sadness seemed out of place there. Cinq-Mars, now much moved, silently held out his hand to him, fearful of interrupting him. The abbé drew forth a red handkerchief, and wiping his eyes and mouth, replied:

"This is the second frightful attack of Urban's enemies; he had already been accused of having bewitched the nuns, and examined by holy prelates, by enlightened magistrates, and learned doctors, who had absolved him, and who had indignantly imposed silence on these demons of human manufacture. The good and pious Archbishop of Bordeaux was content to choose himself the examiners of these pretended exorcists, and his ordinance put these prophets to flight, and silenced their hell. Humiliated by the publicity of the debates, ashamed at seeing Grandier received by our good king, when he threw himself at his feet in Paris, they learnt that if he triumphed they would be lost and regarded as impostors; the convent of the Ursulines seems to be but a theatre of unworthy comedies; the nuns the shameless actresses; more than one hundred persons enraged against the curé were compromised in the hope of destroying him; their conspiracy, far from being dissolved, has gathered strength from its first check; these are the means which his implacable enemies have put in play.

"Know you a man called his Gray Eminence, that formidable capuchin whom the cardinal employs in everything, consults often, and despises always? it is he to whom the capuchins of Loudun have addressed themselves. A woman of this country and of mean origin, named Hamon, having had the good fortune to please the queen when she passed through here, that princess took her into her service. You know the hatred which separates her court from that of the cardinal; you know that Ann of Austria and Richelieu have sometimes disputed the king's favour, and that France never knows in the evening which of its two suns will rise on the morrow. During a temporary eclipse of the cardinal a satire appeared, which sprang from the planetary system of the queen; it was called, *The Queen Mother's Shoemaker;*

it was vulgarly written and conceived, but it contained things so insulting about the birth and person of the cardinal, that the enemies of that minister seized it and gave it a publicity, at which he was irritated. It revealed, they say, many intrigues and mysteries which he thought impenetrable; he read this anonymous work, and wished to know the author. It was at that very time that the capuchins of this little town wrote to father Joseph that a continual correspondence between Grandier and Hamon, left no doubt that he was the author of this diatribe. It was in vain to say that he had previously published religious books of prayer and meditations, of which the style alone ought to absolve him from having put his hand to a libel written in the language of a fisherwoman; the cardinal, long prepossessed against Urban, wished to find him guilty. They reminded him, that when he was only prior of Coussay, Grandier disputed priority, and succeeded; I am much deceived if that priority will not hasten him to the tomb. . . . ."

A sorrowful sigh accompanied these words from the breast of the good abbé.

"What! think you that they will follow him even to death?"

"Yes, my child, yes, even to death; they have already carried off all the documents and sentences of absolution which could serve him for his defence, despite the opposition of his poor mother, who preserved them as her son's permission to live; they have already affected to regard a work against the celibacy of priests, found among his papers, as intended to propagate schism. He is very blameable, undoubtedly, and the love which has dictated it, however pure it may be, is an enormous fault in a man who is consecrated to God only; but this poor priest was far from wishing to encourage heresy, and they say it was to appease the remorse of Mademoiselle de Brou that he had composed it. They so well see that his true faults are insufficient to condemn him to death, that they have awakened the accusation of sorcery, long since asleep, and that feigning to believe it, the cardinal has established in this town a new tribunal, and, in fine, put Laubardemont at its head—that is a sign of death. Ah! would to heaven that you may never know what the corruption of governments calls *statesmanship*."

At this moment a horrible cry sounded from across a little wall of the court; the frightened abbé sprung to his feet, Cinq-Mars did likewise.

"It is a woman's cry," said the old man.

"It is heart-rending!" said the young man. "What is it?" exclaimed he to his people, who had all run out into the court.

They answered that they heard nothing.

"It is well, it is well!" cried the abbé, "make no more noise."

He shut down the window, and covered his eyes with his hands.

"Ah! that cry! my child," said he, (he was very pale,) "that cry! it pierced me to the soul: it is some misfortune. Ah! my God! it has troubled me. I cannot continue to speak to you. And I heard

it when I spoke to you of your destiny! My dear child, may God bless you! fall on your knees."

Cinq-Mars did as he wished, and he was warned by a kiss upon his forehead, that the old man had blessed him. He then raised him, saying:

"Go quickly, my friend, time flies; they will find you with me; depart; leave your people and your horses here; wrap yourself up in a cloak and depart. I have much to write ere the hour when the obscurity of night will permit me to take the road for Italy." They embraced a second time, promising to write to each other, and Henry quitted him. The abbé, following him with his eyes from the window, cried to him: "Be wise, something may happen;" and he once more sent him his paternal benediction, saying—"Poor child!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE TRIAL.

Despite the custom of secret sittings, then so much favoured by Richelieu, the judges of the Curé of Loudun had desired that the hall should be open to the public, and they repented not until too late. But at first they believed that they had sufficiently imposed upon the multitude by their jugglery, which had lasted nearly six months; they were all interested in the destruction of Urban Grandier, but they wished that the indignation of the country should, as it were, sanction the sentence of death which they had prepared, and which they were ordered to carry into execution, as the good abbé had informed his pupil.

Laubardemont was a kind of bird of prey whom the cardinal always sent when his vengeance desired an agent safe and prompt, and on this occasion the event justified his choice. He committed but one fault, that of making the sitting public, contrary to custom; his intention was to intimidate and affright: he affrighted, but he struck with horror.

The crowd which we left at the door, remained there two hours, during which the dull sound of hammers announced that they were making in the great hall unknown and hasty preparations. The archers with difficulty turned the heavy gates upon their hinges, and in rushed the eager multitude. Young Cinq-Mars was carried into the interior of the edifice with the second wave, and, placed behind a broad pillar, supporting the building, and whence he could see without being seen. He observed with displeasure that the black group of burgesses was near him; but the closing of the great doors had left all that space occupied by the people in such obscurity, that they were not able to recognise him. Though it was only mid-day, torches lit up the hall; but they were nearly all placed at the extremity where the bench of the judges was raised, fronted by a very long table; the seats, the tables, and the steps were all covered with black

cloth, and threw a livid hue upon the countenances of those present. A bench reserved for the accused was placed upon the left, and upon the crape which covered it was embroidered in relief flames of gold, figurative of the cause of the accusation. The prisoner was seated upon it, surrounded by archers, and his hands bound by chains, which two monks held with affected terror, pretending to start away at his slightest movements, as if they were holding a tiger or a savage wolf, or that the flame was about to catch their clothes. They also carefully hindered the people from seeing his countenance.

The undisturbed visage of M. de Laubardemont appeared to rule his chosen judges; nearly a head taller than they, he was placed upon a seat more elevated than theirs; each of his spiritless and uneasy looks conveyed them an order. He was clothed in a long flowing red robe, a black cap covered his head; he seemed occupied in arranging some papers, which he passed to the judges to circulate from hand to hand. The accusers, all ecclesiastics, were seated on the right of the judges; they were clad in albs and stoles; father Lactantius was distinguished by the simplicity of his capuchin's habit, by his tonsure, and by the austerity of his features. In a gallery was hidden the Bishop of Poitiers; other galleries were filled with veiled women. At the feet of the judges, a crowd of men and women, from the dregs of the people, tossed to and fro behind six young Ursuline nuns, who were disgusted at having to approach them; these were the witnesses.

The rest of the hall was filled with an immense crowd, gloomy, silent, supporting themselves against the doors and the beams, and full of terror at the aspect of the judges, for they felt an interest in the accused. Numerous archers, armed with long pikes, framed this lugubrious picture in a manner worthy of it.

At a gesture from the president, the witnesses retired, an usher opening a narrow door for them. It was remarked that the Superior of the Ursulines, on passing before M. de Laubardemont, advanced, and said, rather loudly:—"You have deceived me, sir." He remained undisturbed: she went out.

Deep silence reigned throughout the assembly.

Rising gravely, but with a troubled countenance, one of the judges, named Houmain, crown-deputy of Orleans, read a kind of indictment in a very low voice, and so hoarse that it was impossible to catch a word. Yet he made himself heard when what he had to say struck the minds of the people. He divided the counts of the indictment into two kinds: the one resulting from the depositions of seventy-two witnesses, the other and more certain, from the exorcisms of the reverend fathers then present; saying which, he made the sign of the cross.

Fathers Lactantius, Barré, and Mignon bowed profoundly, also repeating that sacred sign. "Yes, my lords," said Houmain, addressing the judges, "they have acknowledged and deposed before you, this nosegay of white roses and this manuscript, signed with the

blood of the magician, a copy of the compact which he has made with Lucifer, and which he was forced to carry about him to preserve his power. It is with horror that one finds words like these written at the bottom of the parchment: *The draft is in hell, in the cabinet of Lucifer.*"

A burst of laughter, which seemed to proceed from some broad-chested individual in the crowd, followed this announcement. The president reddened, and signed to the archers, who vainly attempted to find out the disturber. The speaker continued:—

"The demons have been forced to declare their names by the mouths of their victims. These names and their deeds are deposited upon this table: they call themselves Astaroth, of the order of Seraphs; Easas, Celsus, Acaos, Cedro, Asmodeus, of the order of the Thrones; Alex, Zabulon, Cham, Uriel, and Achas, of the Principalities, &c.; for the number was infinite. As to their actions, who has not witnessed them?"

A long murmur burst from the assembly: they demanded silence; some halberdiers advanced, and all was hushed.

"We have seen with grief the young and respectable Superior of the Ursulines tear her bosom with her own hands, and roll in the dust, the other sisters, Agnes, Clara, &c., quit the modesty of their sex for impassioned gestures or immoderate laughter. When the impious wished to doubt the presence of the demons, and we ourselves felt our conviction shaken because they refused to explain before unknown persons, whether in Greek or Arabic, the reverend fathers have strengthened us, by deigning to explain that the malice of evil spirits being extreme, it was not surprising that they had feigned that ignorance, in order to be less pressed with questions, that they had even made in their answers some barbarisms, solecisms, and other faults, in order that they might be despised, and that out of disdain the holy doctors would leave them at rest: their hatred was so strong that upon the point of performing one of their miraculous acts, they had suspended a cord from the ceiling in order that such reverend persons might be accused of witchcraft, whilst it had been affirmed under oath by respectable persons that there had never been a cord in that place.

"But, gentlemen, whilst heaven thus miraculously explains itself by its holy interpreters, another light has come to us in good time: at the very instant when the judges were plunged into deep meditation, a great cry was heard near the council hall; and we, proceeding to the spot, found the body of a young girl of high birth; she had just breathed her last in the public way, in the arms of the reverend Father Mignon, canon, and we have learned from this same priest here present, and from several other grave persons, that suspecting this damsel to be possessed, because of the long-existing rumour of Urban Grandier's admiration for her, he happily thought of proving it, and said to her suddenly, *Grandier has been put to death;* upon which she uttered but a single cry, and fell down dead, deprived by

the demon of the time necessary for the help of our holy mother, the Catholic church."

A murmur of indignation arose from the crowd, wherein the word *assassin* was pronounced; the ushers imposed silence in a loud voice; but the reader re-established it by continuing his words, or rather the general curiosity triumphed.

"Infamous to tell! my lords," continued he, seeking to strengthen himself by exclamations, "they found upon her this work, written by the hand of Urban Grandier;" and he drew from his papers a book covered with parchment.

"Heavens!" cried Urban, from his seat.

"Take care!" cried the judges to the archers who surrounded him.

"The demon is doubtless about to manifest himself," said Father Lactantius, in a sinister voice; "tighten his bonds." They obeyed.

The crown-deputy continued:—"She is named Madelaine de Brou, aged twenty-nine years."

"Oh heaven! oh heaven! this is too much," cried the accused, falling insensible to the floor.

The assembly was agitated in different ways; there was a momentary tumult;—"Unhappy man! he loved her," said some.—"A damsel so good!" cried the women. Pity began to preponderate. They threw cold water on Grandier, without reviving him, and they therefore bound him to the bench. The reader continued.

"He enjoins us to read the preface of this book at court. And he read the following:

"It is for thee, sweet and beautiful Madelaine, it is to tranquillize thy troubled conscience that I have depicted in this book the thoughts of my soul. They are all for thee, heavenly girl, because they return to thee as the end and aim of my whole existence; but the thought I send thee as 'twere a flower, comes from thee, exists but by thee, and returns to thee alone.

"Be not sad because thou lovest me; be not afflicted because I adore thee. The angels of heaven, what do they? and the souls of the happy, what is promised them? are we less pure than the angels? are our souls less detached from the earth than after death? Oh, Madelaine! what is there in us unworthy of the regard of the Lord? Is it when we pray together, and with faces prostrated in the dust before his altars we beg for a speedy death to seize us during youth and love? is it at the time when, dreaming under the sombre yew trees of the cemetery, we seek one tomb, laughing at death, and weeping over life? will it be when thou comest to kneel down before me at the tribunal of penitence, and that speaking in the presence of God thou wilt find no evil to reveal to me, so well have I sustained thy soul in the pure regions of heaven? What could, then, offend our Creator? perhaps—yes, perhaps some spirit of heaven may have envied my felicity, when on Easter-day I saw thee prostrated before me, purified by long austerity from the little stain which the original spot had been able to leave on thee. How beautiful thou wast! thy

look sought thy God in heaven, and my trembling hand bore his image to thy pure lips, which human lip had never dared to touch. Angelic being! I alone was to share the secrets of the Lord, or rather the one secret of the purity of thy soul; I united thee to thy Creator, who descended into my breast also. O God of love! who wast thyself our priest, you alone were permitted between the Virgin and the pastor; our greatest joy was the sight of an eternity of happiness commencing for each other, and the thought of breathing together the perfumes of heaven, of listening to its concerts, and of being sure that our souls are unveiled to God only and to ourselves, being worthy of adoring him together.

"What scruple weighs still upon thy soul, O my sister? Thinkest thou I have rendered too great a worship to thy virtue? fearest thou that so pure an admiration has turned me from that of the Lord? . . . ."

Houmain was at these words, when the door by which the witnesses had gone out opened suddenly. Laubardemont, uncertain, signed to the fathers to know if this were some scene executed by their order; but being placed at some distance from him, and themselves surprised, they could not make him understand that it was not they who had prepared this interruption. However, before their looks had been interchanged, they saw, to the great stupefaction of the assembly, three women, in their shifts, with naked feet, a cord about their necks, and a taper in their hands, advance into the middle of the stage. This was the superior, followed by sisters Agnes and Clara, both the latter weeping; the superior was very pale, but her carriage was firm, and her looks fixed and bold: she fell on her knees; her companions imitated her; all were so disturbed that none thought of arresting her, and in a clear and firm voice she pronounced these words, which were re-echoed from all corners of the hall.

"In the name of the Holy Trinity, I, Jeanne de Belfiel, daughter of Baron Cosa, I, unworthily Superior of the convent of Ursulines of Loudun, ask pardon of God and man for the crime which I have committed in accusing the innocent Urban Grandier. My possession was false, my words suggested, remorse overwhelms me. . . ."

"Bravo!" cried the people, clapping their hands. The judges arose, the archers, uncertain, looked towards the president; his whole body shook with passion, but he stirred not.

"Let each be silent," said he, in a harsh voice: "archers, do your duty!"

This man felt himself upheld by so powerful a hand, that nothing frightened him, for he never thought of heaven.

"Fathers, what think you of this?" said he, signing to the monks.

"That the demon would save his friend . . . . *Obmutesce, Satanas!*" cried Father Lactantius, in a terrible voice, still appearing to exorcise the superior.

Never did spark applied to powder produce a more sudden effect than that of these words. Jeanne de Belfiel rose suddenly, in all the beauty of twenty, which her terrible nudity even augmented; one

would have said it was a soul escaped from hell appearing to her seducer; she turned her black eyes upon the monks, Lactantius lowered his; she made two steps towards him with her naked feet, the heels of which made the scaffolding resound; her taper seemed in her hand the sword of the Destroying Angel.

"Peace, impostor!" she cried, with energy: "you were the demon who possessed me: you have deceived me—you said he was not to be judged; to-day only was I aware of his trial; this day do I foresee his death; I will speak."

"Woman, the demon disorders thee."

"Say that repentance enlightens me: daughters, as unhappy as I, arise! is he not innocent?"

"We swear it," said the two young sisters, still kneeling, bathed in floods of tears, because they were not animated with so strong a resolution as the superior. Agnes had hardly said these words than she turned towards the people:—"Succour me," cried she; "they will punish me, they will kill me!" And, dragging her companions, she threw herself into the crowd, which received them with open arms; thousands of voices swore to protect them, imprecations burst from them, the men struck their sticks upon the ground; they dared not hinder the people from passing them from hand to hand out into the street.

During this novel scene the judges whispered together in amazement, and Laubardemont, looking at the archers, pointed out to them the part where they ought to act, often directing them with his finger to the black group. The accusers cast their eyes towards the gallery of the Bishop of Poitiers, but they found no expression upon his apathetic features. He was one of those old men who are seized by death ten years before motion ceases altogether; his sight seemed veiled by a half sleep; his gaping mouth muttered some vague and customary words of piety, which had no meaning; he still retained, however, sufficient intelligence to distinguish the most powerful of men, and to obey him, without thinking a moment at what price. He had therefore signed the sentence of the doctors of Sorbonne, which declared the nuns possessed, without seeing that it could end only in the death of Urban; the rest seemed to him one of those ceremonies, longer or shorter, to which he paid no attention, accustomed as he was to see and live in the midst of them, being part of them, and an indispensable piece of their furniture. He showed, therefore, no sign of life on this occasion, preserving only a noble and vacant air.

Meanwhile, Father Lactantius, having been for a moment thrown off his guard, turned towards the president, and said:

"Behold, a clear proof of the possession, sent us by heaven, for never had the superior forgotten the modesty and severity of her order."

"O, that the whole world were here to see me!" said Jeanne de Belfiel, with continued firmness. "I cannot be sufficiently humiliated on earth, and heaven will repulse me, for I have been your accomplice."

The perspiration trickled down Laubardemont's forehead. Yet, trying to collect himself, he said — "What an absurd relation! and what obliges you to this, sisters?"

The voice of the young girl became sepulchral; she gathered up all her strength, leaned her hand upon her heart, as if she had wished to pluck it out, and looking at Urban Grandier, she replied — "Love."

The multitude trembled: Urban, who since his swoon had remained with his head drooping, as if in death, slowly raised his eyes to her, and returned to life to feel a new grief. The young penitent continued:

"Yes, the love which he has rejected, which he has never entirely known, which I have breathed in his discourse, which my eyes have imbibed from his celestial looks, which his very advice has increased. Yes, Urban is pure as an angel, but good as a man who has loved; I knew not that he had loved! It is you," said she, more animatedly, pointing towards Lactantius, Barré, and Mignon, and quitting the tone of passion for that of indignation, "it is you who have taught me that he loved, you who have this morning too cruelly avenged me by killing my rival with a word! Alas! I wished but to separate them. It was a crime; but my mother was an Italian; I burned, I was jealous; you permitted me to see Urban, to have him for a friend, and to see him every day. . . ." She stopped; then cried aloud, "People, he is innocent! martyr, forgive me, I embrace thy feet!"

She fell at the feet of Urban, and finally poured forth torrents of tears.

Urban raised his tightly-bound hands, and, giving her his blessing, said, in a sweet but weak voice:

"Go, sister, I forgive you in the name of Him with whom I shall soon dwell; I have told you before, and you now see it, the passions cause much evil when we seek not to turn them towards heaven."

The colour, for the second time, mounted to the brow of Laubardemont. "Unhappy man!" said he, "thou pronouncest the words of the church."

"I still repose upon her bosom," said Urban.

"Away with this girl," said the president.

When the archers stepped forward to obey, they perceived that she had so strongly tied the cord about her neck, that she was red in the face and almost lifeless. Fright drove forth all the women in the assembly, several were carried out fainting; but the hall was as full as ever, the ranks pressed close to each other, and those who were before in the street edged into the interior.

The terror-stricken judges arose, and the president attempted to clear the hall; but the people, strong in their unity, remained frightfully immoveable; the archers, not being numerous enough, were obliged to give way, and Laubardemont, in a disturbed voice, said that the council would retire for half an hour. He broke up the sitting; the sullen public remained standing in the hall.

CHAPTER V.

THE MARTYR.

THE unsuspended interest of this half-trial, its garb and its interruptions, had all kept the public mind so attentive, that there had been no particular conversation. Some cries had been uttered, but simultaneously, and without any spectator heeding his neighbour's impressions, or seeking even to guess them, or to communicate his own. However, when the public was left to itself, it gave vent to an explosion of noisy words. In this chaos, several voices were distinguishable, which overcame the general hubbub, as a flourish of trumpets rises above the general sounds of an orchestra.

The people still retained enough of their primitive simplicity to be persuaded by the mysterious tales of the agents who worked upon them, even to the point of not daring to judge according to the evidence, and the greater part of them awaited with affright the re-entering of the judges, talking together in a kind of loud whisper, with a certain air of mystery and importance, which ordinarily stamps timorous folly. "One knows not what to think, sir!"—"Really, madam, these are very extraordinary things!"—"We live in strange times!"—"I should be inclined to doubt at least a half of all this; but I shall not be positive, I shall not do it yet!"—"Well, what will be, will be," &c.; the senseless prattle of the crowd, which serves to show that first impressions seize it most strongly. These were the general remarks; but on the side of the black group other things were heard:—"Let them do thus? what! push their audacity so far as to burn our letter to the king! If the king knew it!"—"The barbarians! the impostors! with what skill their plot is formed! Will the murder be accomplished under our eyes? shall we fear these archers?"—"No, no, no."

Distinguished from the rest was the young advocate, who, mounted upon a bench, began by tearing a roll of paper into a thousand pieces; then, raising his voice:

"Yes," cried he, "I tear and throw to the winds the pleading I had prepared in favour of the accused; they have suppressed debate, I am not permitted to speak for him; I can speak only to you, O people! and I am proud of the right; you have seen these infamous judges: which of them can yet hear the truth? which is worthy of listening to a good man? which shall dare to undergo his glance? what say I? they know it to be the whole truth, they wear it in their guilty breasts, it writhes in their hearts like a serpent; they tremble in their stronghold, where they doubtless devour their victim; they tremble because they have heard the cries of three abused women. Ah! what was I about to do? to speak for Urban Grandier! what eloquence could equal that of these unfortunates? what words could have better shown you his innocence? Heaven has armed itself for

him: by calling them to repentance and devotion, heaven will achieve its work. . . ."

"*Vade retro, Satanas!*" pronounced some voices, heard through a rather high window.

Fournier stopped a moment.

"Heard you," continued he, "those voices parodying the divine language? I am much deceived if these instruments of an infernal power prepare not by this song some new witchery."

"But," cried all those who surrounded him, "guide us: what shall we do? what have they done to him?"

"Remain here; be firm, be silent," replied the young advocate; "the inert force of a people is all powerful—there lies its wisdom, there lies its strength. Remain silent, and you will make them tremble."

"Doubtless, they dare not reappear," said Count Lude.

"I should like to see that great red rascal again," said Grand-Ferré, who had lost nothing of what he had seen.

"And that good curé," murmured old father William Lerou, looking at all his irritated children, who were speaking softly, measuring and counting the archers, ridiculing their dress, and beginning to direct the attention of the other spectators to them.

Cinq-Mars, still leaning behind a pillar where he had first placed himself, wrapped in his black cloak, watched eagerly all that passed, and lost not a word that was said; his heart was filled with gall and bitterness; a violent desire for vengeance seized him despite himself—this is the first impression which evil produces upon the mind of a young man; afterwards sorrow replaces anger; that, in its turn, is replaced by indifference and contempt; after that, a calculating admiration for the unprincipled wretches who have succeeded, but this is only when, of the two elements of man, the flesh is victorious over the spirit.

Meanwhile, to the right of the hall, and near the platform raised for the judges, a group of women seemed deeply occupied with a child about eight years old, who had mounted upon a cornice by the aid of the arm of his sister, Martine, whom we have seen jested with completely out of countenance by the young soldier, Grand-Ferré. This child having nothing to see after the court had retired, had climbed to a little dormer window, which admitted but a very feeble light, and which he thought contained a swallow's nest, or some other youthful treasure: but when he had firmly fixed his feet upon the moulding of the wall, and taken hold of the bars of an old shrine of St. Jerome, he wished himself away again, and cried out—

"Oh! sister, sister, give me your hand to get down!"

"What is it you see, then?" cried Martine.

"Oh! I dare not say; but I want to get down;" and he began to cry.

"Stay, stay!" said all the women; "stay, child, do not fear, and tell us all you see."

"Oh dear! they have laid the curé between two great planks, which squeeze his limbs, and there are cords around the planks.

"Ah! that's the torture," said a townsman. "Look again, my little friend, what seest thou now?"

The child, re-assured, looked through the window with more confidence, and withdrawing his head, replied:—

"I do not see the curé, because all the judges surround him, to look at him; and their great robes hinder me from seeing; there are also some capuchins, who are leaning forward, whispering to him."

Curiosity attracted more people to the boy's feet, and each in silence awaited in anxiety his first word, as if on it the life of every one depended.

"I see," continued he, "the executioner, who drives four pieces of wood between the cords, after the capuchins have blessed the hammer and nails. . . . . Ah! my God! sister, they are angry with him because he speaks not. . . . . Mother! mother! help me! I must get down!"

Instead of his mother, the child, on turning round, saw none but male faces, who looked upon him with sad avidity, and signed him to continue. He dared not descend, and he went to the window trembling.

"Oh! I see Father Lactantius and Father Barré are themselves thrusting in other pieces of wood which squeeze his limbs. Oh! how pale he is! he seems to pray to God; but see, his head falls back as if he were dead. Ah! take me away. . . . . ."

And he fell into the arms of the young advocate, M. du Lude, and of Cinq Mars, who had run to assist him.

"*Deus stetit in synagoga deorum: in medio autem Deus dijudicat.* . . . . ." chanted the strong and nasal voices which were heard through this little casement. They continued a long time chanting psalms, interspersed with the blows of a hammer; the infernal work which marked the measure of the heavenly songs. It seemed as if there was a forge near; but the blows were dull, and it was plain that the anvil was the body of a man.

"Silence!" said Fournier; "he speaks; the songs and blows are suspended."

A feeble voice, in fact, said slowly:—"O fathers! soften the rigour of your torments, for you reduce my soul to despair, or I shall kill myself."

The pent-up indignation of the people burst forth; one vast explosion rang through the vaulted building; the men threw themselves furiously upon the platform, and carried it by assault; the unarmed crowd drove the astonished and hesitating archers roughly against the walls, and held their motionless arms; its waves dashed against the doors which led to the torture chamber, and making them crack beneath their weight, threatened to burst them open; curses resounded from a thousand formidable voices, and scared the judges without.

"They are departed; they have carried him off," cried a man.

All stopped immediately, and changing the direction of their attack, the crowd fled from this detestable place, and spread rapidly through the streets. Singular confusion reigned there.

Night had come on during the long sitting, and torrents of rain fell from the clouds. The darkness was terrific; the cries of the women slipping on the pavement, or driven back by the moving of the mounted guards; the loud and simultaneous cries of the furious multitude; the continual tolling of bells, which announced the punishment; the rolling of distant thunder,—all joined in the disorder. If the ear was stunned, the eye was dazzled; some funeral torches illumined the corners of the streets, and cast about a fitful light, showing some men, armed and on horseback, that were passing at a gallop, and treading the crowd under foot; they drew up upon the Place de St. Pierre; stones were sometimes thrown at them as they passed; but not being able to reach the guilty, they fell upon the innocent, who were less distant. The confusion was extreme, and became even greater when, hurrying through all the streets towards this place, called St. Pierre le Marché, the people found it barricaded on all sides, and filled with mounted guards and archers, carts placed at the ends of the streets prevented entrance, and sentinels armed with arquebusses guarded them. In the midst of the place was raised a pile composed of enormous beams laid one upon another, so as to form a perfect square; they were covered with a lighter and whiter wood; an immense post was raised in the centre of this scaffold. A man, clothed in red, and holding a lowered torch, stood near this kind of post, which was perceptible at a distance. An enormous chafing-dish, covered with sheet-iron because of the rain, was at his feet.

At this spectacle, terror spread profound silence; for an instant, nought was heard save the noise of the rain, which fell in torrents, and the approaching thunder.

Meanwhile Cinq-Mars, accompanied by Count Lude and Fournier, and all the more important personages, had taken shelter from the storm under the peristyle of the Church of St. Croix, raised upon twenty stone steps. The pile was in front of them, and at this height their eye could range over the whole extent of the place. It was entirely empty, and the water alone traversed it in large streams; but all the windows of the houses were illuminated by degrees, and showed the heads of the men and women who pressed to the balconies. Young d'Effiat contemplated this threatening spectacle with sadness; brought up in sentiments of honour, and far above those dark thoughts which hatred and ambition cause to germinate in the heart of man, he could not understand that so much evil should be done without some powerful and secret motive; the audacity of such a condemnation seemed to him so incredible, that its very cruelty began to be justified in his eyes; the same secret horror that shot through his mind hushed the people; he almost forgot the interest which the unhappy Urban had inspired in him, in thinking if it were

not possible that some secret intelligence from the infernal regions had justly provoked such excessive rigour; and the public revelations of the nuns, and the recital of his respected tutor, grew weak in his memory, so powerful is success, even in the eyes of discriminating individuals! The young traveller already asked if it were not probable that the torture had torn some monstrous avowal from the accused, when the obscurity into which the church was thrown suddenly ceased; its two great doors were thrown open, and in the light of an infinite number of torches appeared all the judges and ecclesiastics, surrounded by guards; in the midst of them came Urban, sustained, or rather carried, by six men, clothed as black penitents, for his limbs, tied together by bloody bandages, seemed broken, and incapable of supporting him. It was but two hours since Cinq Mars had seen him, and yet he could hardly recognise in his features those which he had observed at the audience; all colour, all roundness had disappeared; a death-like pallor overspread a yellow skin, smooth as ivory; the blood appeared to have quitted all his veins; no sign of life remained but in his dark eyes, which seemed to have doubled in size, as he cast them around him; his chesnut hair fell upon his neck, and upon a white shirt with which he was covered; this kind of robe, with large sleeves, had a yellowish cast, and smelt of brimstone; a long and strong cord was tied about his neck, and fell upon his breast. He resembled a phantom, but it was the phantom of a martyr!

Urban stopped, or rather was stopped, upon the peristyle of the church; the capuchin, Lactantius, placed in his right hand, and held there, a burning torch, and said to him with unbending harshness—"Ask pardon of God for the crime of witchcraft."

The unhappy man with difficulty raised his voice, and said, turning his eyes towards heaven:—

"In the name of the living God, I summon thee in three years, Laubardemont, prevaricating judge! They removed my confessor, and I have been reduced to pour out my faults into the breast of God himself, for my enemies surrounded me. I call that merciful God to witness that I have never been a magician; I have known no other mysteries than those of the Catholic Apostolic and Roman religion, in which I die; I have sinned much against myself, but never against God and our Lord . . . . ."

"End it not!" cried the capuchin, pretending to shut his mouth before he had pronounced the name of the Saviour; "hardened wretch, return to the demon who sent thee!"

He signed to four priests, who drew near with asperges brushes in their hands, to exorcise the air which the magician breathed, the earth he touched, and the wood with which he was to be burned. During this ceremony, the crown deputy read aloud the decree, which is still found in the records of this trial, dated the 18th of August, 1689, *declaring Urban Grandier duly attainted and convicted of*

the crime of magic, witchcraft, and possession, in the persons of some Ursuline nuns of Loudun, and other secular persons, &c.

The reader, dazzled by a flash of lightning, stopped an instant, and turning towards M. de Laubardemont, asked him if, "seeing the state of the weather, the sentence could not be executed on the morrow." The latter replied—

"The decree ordains execution within twenty-four hours: fear not this unbelieving people—they are nearly convinced . . . . ."

All the most considerable persons, and many strangers, were under the peristyle, and now advanced, Cinq-Mars among them.

. . . . "The magician has never been able to pronounce the name of the Saviour, and repels his image."

Lactantius came at this moment from the midst of the penitents, having in his hands an enormous iron crucifix, which he seemed to hold with caution and respect; he put it to the lips of the prisoner, who, collecting all his strength, gave it a blow which caused it to fall from the hands of the capuchin.

"You see him," cried the latter; "he has thrown down the crucifix."

A murmur arose, of uncertain meaning.

"Profanation!" cried the priests.

They advanced towards the pile.

However, Cinq-Mars, gliding behind a pillar, had observed all with a greedy eye; he saw with astonishment, that the crucifix, on falling upon the steps, which were more exposed to the rain than the platform, smoked and hissed like molten lead. While the public attention was turned elsewhere, he advanced and touched it with his hand, which was burned severely. Seized with indignation, and filled with the fury of an honest heart, he took the crucifix in the folds of his cloak, and advancing towards Laubardemont, struck him on the forehead.

"Wretch!" cried he; "bear the mark of this reddened iron!"

The crowd heard these words, and rushed forward.

"Arrest that madman," vainly cried the unworthy magistrate.

He was himself seized by the hands of men, who cried, "Justice! justice! in the name of the king!"

"We are lost!" said Lactantius; "to the pile! to the pile!"

The penitents dragged Urban towards the place, whilst the judges and archers entered the church, and struggled with the furious citizens; the executioner, without having time to tie up the victim, hastened to lay him on the wood and fire it. But the rain fell in torrents, and the beams only smouldered and smoked. In vain Lactantius and the other canons themselves stirred the fire; nothing could conquer the waters which fell from the heavens.

Meantime the tumult, which had arisen in the peristyle of the church, had extended all around the place. The cry of *justice* was repeated, and circulated with the story of what was discovered; two

barricades had been forced, and despite three volleys, the archers were driven back gradually towards the centre of the place. In vain they made their horses dash into the crowd: it bore them back with its increasing waves. Half an hour passed in this struggle, when the guard retired towards the pile, which they concealed, as it were, within a circle.

"Forward! forward!" shouted a man; "we will deliver him! strike not the soldiers, but drive them back: see, God wills not that he shall die. The pile is extinguished! friends, a last effort!—Good! strike down that horse. Now! another struggle, and he is ours!"

The guard was broken and overthrown on all sides. The crowd rushed upon the pile; but there was no light there; all had disappeared, even the executioner. They tore up and scattered the planks; one of them still burned, and its light showed, under a mass of ashes and clotted blood, a blackened hand, preserved from the fire by an enormous iron manacle and chain. A woman had the courage to open it; the fingers clutched a little ivory cross, and an image of the holy Magdalen.

"Behold his remains!" said she, weeping.

"Say the relics of a martyr!" exclaimed a citizen.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DREAM.

Meanwhile Cinq-Mars, in the midst of the contest which his hot-headed zeal had provoked, felt his left arm seized by an iron hand, which, dragging him through the crowd, and down the steps, pushed him behind the wall of the church, and then displayed to him the dark figure of old Grandchamp, who said in a rough voice:—"It was nothing, sir, to attack thirty musqueteers in a wood at Chaumont, because we were at hand, although unknown to you; and besides, you were dealing with men of honour; but here it is different. Your people and horses are at the end of the street; and I must beg you to mount and quit this town, or send me back to Madame la Maréchale, for I am responsible for your life and limbs, which you expose so freely."

Cinq-Mars, though somewhat offended at this rough manner of rendering him service, was not displeased to get out of the affair thus, having had time to reflect how disagreeable it would be for him to be recognised, after having struck the chief of the judiciary authority, and the agent of the very cardinal who was going to present him to the king. He observed also, that he was surrounded by a crowd composed of the very dregs of the people, among whom he blushed to find himself. He therefore followed his old servant without further argument, and found his other attendants. Despite the wind and rain, he mounted his horse, and was soon on the road with his escort, galloping off in case of pursuit.

Fairly out of Loudun, the darkness of the way, furrowed by deep ruts, which were entirely filled with water, compelled him to slacken his pace. The rain continued to fall in torrents, and his cloak was nearly saturated. He felt a thicker one thrown over his shoulders; this also was the act of his old valet, who rode up to him and tendered these motherly cares.

"Well, Grandchamp! now that we are out of this brawl, tell me why you came there," said Cinq-Mars, "when I ordered you to remain with the abbé?" "Zounds, sir!" replied the old servant, grumblingly, "think you that I should obey you more than the marshal? When my late master told me to remain in his tent, and saw me behind him in the midst of the battle, he did not complain, because he had a fresh horse in readiness, when his own was killed, and he scolded me only on reflection. It is true that, for the forty years which I served him, I saw him do nothing like that which you have done in the fifteen days that I have been with you. Ah!" added he, sighing, "we go on well; and if this continues, it seems I am destined to see fine things!"

"But knowest thou, Grandchamp, that these knaves had heated the crucifix, and that there was no honest man who would not have been as enraged as myself?"

"Except the marshal, your father, who would not have done as you have done, sir."

"And what would he have done, then?"

"He would have left this curé very quietly to have been burned by the other curés, and would have said to me, 'Grandchamp, take care that my horses have oats, and that they do not take them away;' or, perhaps, 'Grandchamp, take care that the rain does not rust my sword in the scabbard, nor wet the priming of my pistols;' for the marshal thought of all things, and never mixed himself up with what did not concern him. That was his great principle; and as he was, by God's mercy, as good a soldier as general, he always took care of his arms, as does the first lansquenet; and he would not be alone among thirty young gallants with a little rapier."

Cinq-Mars felt strongly the weighty epigrams of the good man, and feared he had followed him further than the woods of Chaumont; but he did not wish to inquire for fear of having to give explanations, to tell a lie, or to order silence, which would have been at once an avowal on the subject.

He therefore spurred his horse, and passed his old domestic; but the latter had not finished, and instead of riding to the right of his master, he returned to his left, and continued the conversation.

"Think you, sir, for example, that I can permit you to go where you will without following you?—no sir, I have too much respect for the marchioness to put myself into a position for them to say to me: 'Grandchamp, my son has been killed by a ball or a sword-cut, why were you not before him?' or perhaps: 'He has been stabbed by the stiletto of an Italian, because he went in the night under the window

of a great princess; why have you not arrested the assassin?' This would be very disagreeable to me, sir, and never have I been reproached with anything of the kind; once, the marshal sent me with his nephew, the count, to make a tour in the Low Countries, because I knew Spanish. Ah! well, I am not tired of honour, so I always do thus:—when the count received a bullet in his body, I took back by myself his horses, his mules, his tent, and all his equipage, without his wanting so much as a pocket handkerchief, sir; and I declare to you that the horses were as well groomed and harnessed on coming to Chaumont, as if the count had been ready to go a hunting. For this I have received nothing but compliments and favours from all the family, as I love to hear them tell me."

"That is all very well, my friend," said Henry d'Effiat; "I shall perhaps one day have horses to take back, but, in the meantime, take this great purse of gold, which I have been afraid of losing two or three times, and thou shalt pay for me everywhere; this wearies me so much! . . . . ."

"The marshal did not so, sir. As he had been superintendent of the finances, he counted the money with his own hands; and I believe your lands would not have been in so good a state, nor would you have had so much gold to count yourself, if he had done otherwise; have the goodness therefore to keep your purse, of which you know not the exact contents."

"In faith, no!"

Grandchamp gave vent to a deep sigh at this disdainful explanation of his master.

"Ah! marquis, marquis! when I think that the great King Henry, before my eyes, put his chamois-skin gloves into his pocket for fear the rain should spoil them; when I think that M. de Rosori refused him money when he was too extravagant; when I think . . . . ."

"When thou thinkest thou art wearisome, my friend," interrupted his master, "thou wilt do better to tell me what is that black figure which seems to walk in the mud behind us."

"It is very likely some poor peasant who comes to ask alms; she can follow us easily, for we go slowly through this sand, into which the horses plunge up to the hocks. We shall perhaps go to Landes some day, sir; and you will see in a country like this nothing but sand and great black pine-trees; it is one long cemetery right and left of the road, and here is a good sample. Hold, now that the rain has ceased, and one can see a little, look at all this heath, and this great plain, without a village or a house. I know not, either, where we shall pass the night; but if, sir, you will take my advice, we shall cut down some branches, and encamp here; you will see, I know how to make a barrack with a little heath; it is as warm under it as in a good bed."

"I had rather continue till we reach that light which I see in the horizon," said Cinq-Mars; "for I begin to feel a little feverish,

and am thirsty. But go behind, I wish to ride alone; rejoin the others, and leave me to myself."

Grandchamp obeyed, and consoled himself by giving Germain, Louis, and Stephen, lessons upon the manner of recognising places at night.

But his young master was overwhelmed with fatigue; the violent emotions of the day had sunk deeply into his soul, and this long journey on horseback, the two latter days nearly without nourishment, because of the hurried events, the heat of the sun, the icy coldness of the night, all contributed to augment his illness, to break down his delicate constitution. For three hours he marched silently before his people, without their appearing to approach the light which appeared in the horizon; at last he no longer followed it with his eyes, and his head, becoming heavier, fell upon his breast; he abandoned the reins to his tired horse, which kept the road unguided, and, folding his arms, he allowed himself to be rocked by the monotonous movement of his travelling companion, which often stumbled against the great stones thrown on the road. The rain had ceased, as well as the voices of the domestics, whose horses followed, one after the other, that of their master. This young man abandoned himself freely to the bitterness of his thoughts; he asked himself, if the brilliant end of his hopes would not flee from him, as that phosphoric light in the horizon fled from him step by step. Was it probable that this young princess, recalled almost by force to the gallant court of Ann of Austria, would always refuse the hands, perhaps royal hands, which might be offered to her? What appearance was there that she was resigned to renounce the throne, and to wait until some caprice of fortune should realize romantic hopes, and elevate a youth, almost in the lowest ranks of the army, to such a height, before the age of love was passed! who would assure him that the very vows of Marie of Gonzaga had been sincere? "Alas!" said he, "perhaps she has herself shaken off her feelings; the solitude of the country had prepared her mind to receive deep impressions. I appeared; she thought that I was he of whom she had dreamed; our age and my love have done the rest. But when at court she will be taught better, by intimacy with the queen, how to contemplate the greatness to which I aspire, and which I see as yet but very dimly; when she shall find herself suddenly possessed of what she now but dreams of; and when she shall measure with a glance the path I have trodden to obtain it; when she shall hear around her, oaths like mine, pronounced by voices which have but to utter a word to cause my destruction, to annihilate him whom she expects for a husband, a lord,—ah! idiot that I have been!—she will see all her folly, and will be angered at mine!"

Thus did the greatest mischance of love—doubt—begin to tear his sickened heart; he felt his burning blood rush to his head and weigh it down; he often fell upon the neck of his wearied steed, and sleep hung upon his eyelids; the black firs which bordered the way,

appeared like gigantic corpses passing by his side; he saw, or thought he saw, the same woman clothed in black, whom he had shown to Grandchamp, come near enough to him to touch his horse's mane, twitch his cloak, and then retreat with a sneer; the sand of the road appeared to him a running river, to the source of which he wished to ascend; this grotesque vision dazzled his weak eyes; he shut them and slept upon his horse.

Soon he felt himself stop, for the cold had seized him. He dimly saw peasants, torches, ruins, a great chamber, whither he was carried, a large bed, the heavy curtains of which were drawn by Grandchamp, and he fell asleep, dizzy with the fever which hummed in his ears.

Dreams passed before him more rapidly than dust driven by a furious whirlwind; he could not stop them, and he tossed restlessly upon his couch. Urban Grandier tortured, his mother in tears, his tutor armed, Bassompierre loaded with chains, signed him a last farewell, and passed onwards; he placed his hand upon his sleeping head, and fixed the reverie, which seemed unfolded under his eyes like a picture of moving sand.

A public square filled with a strange people, a people of the north, which uttered cries of joy, but also cries of wildness; a row of guards—of fierce soldiers; these were French.

"Come with me," said the sweet voice of Marie of Gonzaga, taking him by the hand. "Thou seest I have a diadem; here is thy throne—come with me."

And she led him, the people still shouting.

He walked on and on, for a long time.

"Wherefore are you sad, if you be queen?" said he, tremblingly. But she was pale, and smiled in silence. She ascended some steps, and seated herself upon a throne. "Ascend," said she, pulling his hand forcibly.

But the heavy steps sank beneath his feet, and he could not ascend.

"Return thanks to love," continued she.

And the hand, with increasing power, raised him on high. The people shouted.

He bent to kiss that helping and adored hand . . . .; it was that of the executioner!

"Oh, heaven!" cried Cinq-Mars, sobbing deeply, as he opened his eyes: a flickering lamp illumined the dilapidated chamber of the inn; he closed his eyelids, for he saw seated upon his bed a female, a nun, so young, so beautiful! He thought he still dreamed, but she seized him tightly by the hand. He again opened his burning eyes, and fixed them upon a woman.

"Oh, Jeanne de Belfiel, is it you? The rain has drenched your veil and black hair: what would you here, unhappy woman?"

"Peace, be still, awaken not my Urban; he sleeps in the next chamber. Yes, my head is wet, and my feet—look at them—my feet, once so white! see, they are covered with mud. But I have vowed

that I will not wash them before I have seen the king and he shall have granted me Urban's pardon. I go to the army in search of him; I will speak to him as Grandier has taught me to speak, and he will pardon him; but listen: I will ask him also to pardon thee; for I have read in thy face that thou art condemned to death. Poor child! thou art yet young to die; but still thou art condemned, for thou hast upon thy forehead a line which never deceives. The man whom thou hast struck will kill thee. Thou hast too well used the cross, it is that which will do thee mischief; thou hast struck with it, and thou wearest it around thy neck. . . . Hide not thy head beneath the clothes! have I said aught which afflicteth thee? or is it that you love, young man? Ah! be at rest, I shall not tell all this to your love; I am mad, but I am harmless, very harmless, and three days since I was very beautiful. Is she also beautiful? Oh, how she will one day weep! Ah! if she can weep, she will be very happy."

And Jeanne suddenly began to recite the prayers for the dead, in a monotonous voice, with incredible volubility, still seated on the bed, running through her fingers the beads of a long rosary.

Suddenly the door opened; she saw it, and fled by an entry made in a partition.

"What the devil's that? is it an elf or an angel which says the dead mass over you, sir? and you wrapped in your clothes as in a winding sheet."

It was the deep voice of Grandchamp, who was so astonished that he dropped a glass of lemonade which he was carrying. Seeing that his master answered him not, he was still more alarmed, and raised the bed-clothes. Cinq-Mars was very red, and seemed asleep; but his old servant, thinking that the blood which was rushing to his head might suffocate him, seized a jug of cold water, and threw it over his forehead. This military remedy rarely fails, and Cinq-Mars instantly came to himself.

"Ah! is it thou, Grandchamp? with what frightful visions I have been beset!"

"Confound it, sir! on the contrary, your visions are very pleasing: I saw the tail of the last, and I think you chose very well."

"What are you talking of, old fool?"

"I am not a fool, sir; I have good eyes, and I will believe them. But certainly being ill, as you are, the marshal would not . . . ."

"Thou dotest, man! give me some drink, for I am burnt up with thirst. Oh, heaven! what a night! I still see all those women."

"All those women, sir? how many had you here, then?"

"I speak to thee of a dream, idiot! And thou standest stock still instead of giving me some drink!"

"It is enough, sir; I will ask for some more lemonade."

And going to the door, he cried out—"Ho! Germain! Stephen! Louis!"

The innkeeper entered, and removing his cotton cap, said, with

respect—"It is nothing, monsieur le marquis; it is an insane person, who arrived here, on foot, last night, and whom they have placed in a room near this; but she has escaped, and they have been unable to catch her."

"Why, I have not dreamed, then?" said Cinq-Mars, returning to himself, and drawing his hand across his eyes. "And my mother, where is she? and the marshal, and .... Ah! it is a frightful dream! Leave me!"

Then turning towards the wall, he again drew the clothes over his head.

The innkeeper, completely nonplused, tapped his forehead with the tip of his forefinger, looking at Grandchamp, as if to ask him if his master also were delirious.

The latter signed him to leave the room in silence; whilst he watched during the rest of the night near Cinq-Mars, now fast asleep; and, seating himself in a great tapestry-covered arm-chair, he squeezed lemons into a glass of water, with as much gravity and severity as Archimedes calculating the inflammable strength of his mirrors.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CABINET.

Let our young traveller sleep. He will soon follow peacefully a great and beautiful road. Since we are at liberty to cast our eyes on all parts of the map, let us stop over the town of Narbonne.

Observe the Mediterranean, which, not far from here, throws its blue waves upon the sandy banks. Penetrate into this city, so like Athens; but to find who reigns there, follow this tortuous and gloomy street, ascend the steps of the old episcopal palace, and enter the first and largest of its halls.

It was very long, but lighted by a series of high and pointed windows, of which only the upper part had preserved their blue, yellow, and red panes, which spread a mysterious gloom over the apartment. An enormous round table filled it on the side of the great chimney; around this table, covered with a motley cloth and loaded with papers and portfolios, were seated, bending over their pens, eight secretaries, occupied in copying some letters which they took from a smaller table. Other men were arranging the papers on the shelves of a bookcase, which the black-bound books did not entirely fill, and walked cautiously over the carpet with which the hall was furnished.

Despite the number of persons assembled, you might have heard the tread of a mouse. The only noise was made by the pens running rapidly over the paper, and a shrill voice dictating what should be written, occasionally breaking off to cough. It came from an immense chair, with great arms, placed near the fire, which was burning, notwithstanding the heat of the season and of the country. It was one of those chairs which may still be seen in some old mansions, and

which seem made to read yourself to sleep in, whatever the book may be, so well is each compartment stuffed: a crescent of feathers sustains the loins; if the head leans back, it sinks up to the ears in silk, and the cushion of the seat so far overlaps the elbows, that it makes one believe that our forefathers' upholsterers wanted to save the book from making a noise on its fall.

But let us quit this digression to speak of the man who was seated there, and who never slept. He had a large forehead, and very white hair, eyes large and mild, a pale, thin countenance, to which a little white and pointed beard gave that air of refinement which may be remarked in all the portraits of the age of Louis XIII. An almost lipless mouth, (and we are forced to avow the reasonableness with which Lavater regarded this sign as indicating wickedness;) a pinched-up mouth, we say, was encircled by two little grey moustaches and a *royale*, an ornament then fashionable, and which bore some resemblance to a comma in its form. This old man had a red cap upon his head, he was wrapped in a large morning gown, his legs were covered with stockings of purple silk; he was no less a personage than Armand Duplessis, Cardinal Richelieu.

He had near him, around the smaller table we have mentioned, four youths, about fifteen years of age: they were pages, or domestics, according to the expression of the time, which then signified familiar, friend of the house. This custom was a remnant of feudal patronage, remaining in French manners. The young gentlemen of the highest families received *wages* of the great lord, and devoted themselves to him on all occasions, calling out the first comer to fight, at the slightest desire of their patron. The pages of whom we speak put into form the letters of which the cardinal had given them the substance; and, after the inspection of the master, they passed them to the secretaries, who fair copied them. The old duke, too, wrote upon his knee secret notes upon little papers, which he slipped into nearly all the packets before closing them with his own hand.

He had been writing some minutes, when he perceived in a glass placed before him the youngest of the pages tracing some broken lines upon a sheet much shorter than the ministerial paper; he hastened to write some words thereon, then rapidly slipped it under the great folio which, to his regret, he was charged to fill; but, placed behind the cardinal, he hoped that the difficulty of turning would prevent the discovery of the little manœuvring which he seemed to exercise with so much skill. Suddenly Richelieu, addressing him sharply, said:—"Come here, M. Olivier." These words were like a thunderbolt to the poor child, who appeared not older than sixteen years. He rose quickly, however, and stood before the minister with hanging arms and lowered head.

The other pages and secretaries were no more affected than are soldiers when one of their body falls struck with a ball, so much were they accustomed to this sort of summons. This, however, was announced in a quicker manner than others.

"What were you writing there?"

"My lord .... that which your eminence dictates."

"What!"

"My lord .... the letter to Don Juan de Braganza."

"To come to the point, sir, you were doing something else."

"My lord," said the page, with tears in his eyes, "it was a note to one of my cousins."

"Let me see it."

He trembled in every limb, and was obliged to support himself upon the way, saying lowly:—"It is impossible."

"Viscount Olivier d'Entraigues," said the minister, without showing the least emotion, "you are no longer in my service." And the page went out; he knew that that was not the place to reply; he slipped his note into his pocket, and opening the folding-door just wide enough to admit his body, slipped out like a bird escaped from its cage.

The minister continued tracing his notes upon his knee.

The secretaries continued their writing with silence and increased ardour, when the folding-doors, suddenly opening, showed a capuchin, who, bowing and crossing his arms upon his breast, seemed to await alms, or an order to withdraw. He had an olive-coloured countenance, deeply pitted with the small-pox; eyes rather mild, but slightly squinting, and still covered by eyebrows which joined in the middle of the forehead; a mouth, the smile of which was cunning, malevolent, and sinister; a flat beard, red at the extremity, and the dress of the order of St. Francis, in all its horror, with sandals and naked feet, which appeared unworthy of walking upon a carpet.

Whatever he was, this personage appeared to cause a great sensation throughout the hall; for without finishing the sentence, the line, or even the word which they had commenced, each writer arose and went out by the door which he still held in his hand,—some saluting him as they passed by, others turning away their heads; the young pages put their fingers to their noses—but behind him, for they seemed to have a secret dread of him. When every one had gone out, he, at last, entered, making a deep reverence, because the door was yet open; but so soon as it was shut, striding forward unceremoniously, he seated himself near the cardinal, who, having recognised him by the commotion which he caused, made him a sharp and silent nod, looking fixedly at him as if expecting news, and unable to hinder a frown, as at the sight of some criminal or disagreeable animal.

The cardinal had been unable to resist this movement of displeasure, because he felt obliged, by the presence of his agent, to enter into his deep and painful conversation, from which he had been relieved for some days in a country, the air and the calmness of which were favourable to him, and had a little relaxed the pain caused by his sickness: it was changed into a slow fever, but its intervals were sufficiently long for him to forget, during its absence, that it would return. Giving, then, a little rest to his—until then—inde-

fatigable imagination, he awaited without impatience, for the first time in his life, perhaps, the return of the couriers whom he had sent in all directions, like the rays of a sun, which alone gave life and motion to France. He had not expected the visit which he then received; and the sight of one of those men, whom, according to his own expression, he *steeped in crime*, rendered all the customary uneasiness of his life more present, without entirely dissipating the cloud of melancholy which obscured his thoughts.

The commencement of his conversation was impressed with the sombre colour of his last reveries; but soon it became more lively and stronger than ever, when the vigour of his mind entered forcibly into the real world.

His confidant, seeing that he ought to break the silence first, did so rather abruptly:

"Well, my lord, of what are you thinking?

"Alas! Joseph, of what we ought all to think,—of our future happiness in a better life than this. I have thought for many days, that human interests have too much turned me from that one thought; and I repent of having employed some leisure moments in profane works, such as my tragedies of *Europe* and *Mirama*, in spite of the glory which I have already attained among our choicest wits; a glory which will extend into the future."

Father Joseph, full of what he had to say, was at first surprised at this opening; but he knew his master too well to testify it to him, and knowing how to bring him back to other ideas, he entered into his own without hesitation.

"The merit is so much the greater," said he, with an air of regret, "and France will lament that those immortal works were not followed by similar productions."

"Yes, my dear Joseph, it is in vain that such men as Boisrobert, Claveret, Colletet, Corneille, and above all, the celebrated Mairet, have proclaimed these tragedies the finest of all that present and past times have produced; I reproach myself for them, I declare to you, as if it were a sin; and I occupy my hours of rest with my *Method of Controversies*, and my *Perfection of a Christian*. I feel I am fifty-six years old, and labour under a sickness which is incurable."

"These are calculations which your enemies make, as exactly as your Eminence," said the Father, whom this conversation began to make ill-humoured, and who was anxious to proceed to other subjects.

The colour mounted to the cardinal's face:

"I know it,—I know it well," said he; "I know all their perfidy, and I expect it all. But what, then, is the news?"

"We were already agreed, my lord, on replacing Mademoiselle d'Hautefort; we have banished her like Mademoiselle de La Fayette; that is very well, but her place is not filled—and the king . . . ."

"Well?"

"The king has ideas which he never entertained before."

"Really? and which come not from me? It is mighty well," said the minister, ironically.

"Why then, my lord, leave the place vacant for six whole days? Permit me to say that it is not prudent."

"He has ideas—ideas!" repeated Richelieu, with a sort of fright; "and what are they?"

"He speaks of recalling the Queen Mother; of recalling her from Cologne."

"Marie de Medicis!" cried the cardinal, striking the arms of his chair with both hands. "No, by the living God! she shall not enter upon the soil of France, from whence I have driven her, step by step! England dares not receive her, exiled by me; Holland fears to sink under her, and my kingdom will receive her! No, no! he has not taken this idea of himself. Recall my enemy! recall his mother —what perfidy! No, he would never have dared to think of it...."

Then, after having thought an instant, he added, fixing upon Father Joseph a penetrating look, still full of the fire of his anger:

"But.... in what terms has he expressed this desire? tell me his precise words."

"He said rather publicly, and in the presence of Monsieur, 'I am convinced that one of the first duties of a Christian is to be a good son, and I will not long resist the murmurs of my conscience.'"

"Christian! Conscience! These are not his expressions; it is Father Cousin; it is his confessor who has betrayed me," cried the cardinal. "Perfidious Jesuit! I forgave thy intrigue with La Fayette; but I will not pass over thy secret counsels. I will drive out this confessor, Joseph; he is the enemy of the state, I see it well. But yet I have acted negligently for some days; I have not sufficiently hastened the arrival of this little d'Effiat, who will undoubtedly succeed: he is well formed and witty, they say. Ah! what a fault! I richly deserve disgrace myself. To leave near the king that fox of a Jesuit, without having given him my secret instructions; without having a hostage, a pledge of his fidelity to my orders—what forgetfulness! Joseph, take a pen, and write this quickly for the other confessor, whom we shall choose better. I think, to Father Sirmond...."

Father Joseph seated himself before a great table, ready to write, and the cardinal dictated to him these duties of a new nature, which shortly afterwards, he dared to send to the king, who received them, respected them, and learned them by heart, as the commandments of the Church. They remain to us as a faithful monument of the empire which a man may seize by force of circumstances, intrigue, and audacity.

I. A prince should have a prime minister, and that prime minister three qualities:—1st. That he love none but his prince; 2nd. That he be skilful and faithful; 3rd. That he be an ecclesiastic.

II. A prince ought to love his prime minister perfectly.
III. He ought never to change his prime minister.
IV. Ought to tell him all things.
V. To give him free access to his person.
VI. To give him sovereign authority over the people.
VII. Great honours and large property.
VIII. A prince has no richer treasure than his prime minister.
IX. A prince ought not to place faith in what is said against his prime minister, nor be pleased to hear him slandered.
X. A prince ought to reveal to his prime minister all that is said against him, *even when it shall be exacted that the prince shall keep the secret.*
XI. A prince ought not only to prefer the good of his State, but his first minister to all his relations.

Such were the commandments of the god of France, less astonishing even than the terrible simplicity which made him bequeath them to posterity, as if it also ought to believe in him.

Whilst he dictated his instructions, reading from a written paper in his hand, a profound sadness appeared to seize him at each word; and when he had ended he sank into his chair, his arms crossed, and his head bent upon his breast.

Father Joseph, breaking off writing, arose, and asked him if he felt ill, when he heard him mutter these affecting and memorable words:

"What continued wearisomeness! What interminable uneasiness! If ambition saw me, it would fly to a desert. What is my power? A miserable reflection of the royal power; and what labour to fix upon my star that incessantly moving ray! For twenty years I have attempted it uselessly. I understand not this man! He dares not fly me; but they carry him off from me: he slips through my fingers ..... What could I not have done with his hereditary rights! But to employ so much calculation merely to keep my balance! What genius remains for enterprise! I have Europe in my hand, and I am but suspended by a trembling hair. Why do I carry my eyes over maps of the world, if all my interests be confined within this narrow cabinet? Its six feet of space give me more trouble to govern than the whole earth. Behold, then, what is a prime minister! Now envy me, my guards, if you will."

His features were so distorted as to give reason to fear some accident; and he was taken by a long and violent fit of coughing, which ended in a slight spitting of blood. He saw that Father Joseph, in a fright, went to seize a golden bell which stood upon the table, and, suddenly raising himself with the vivacity of a young man, he stopped him, and said—

"'Tis nothing, Joseph; I sometimes allow myself to be discouraged; but these moments are short, and I quit them stronger than before. As to my health, I know its state perfectly well; but that does not concern us now. What have you done at Paris? I am content to see the king arrive in Bearn as I desired; but we will

watch him better. What have you shown him to make him set out?"

"A battle at Pergignan."

"Well, that is not bad; we can arrange it so—this will occupy him as well as any other way at present. But the young queen—the young queen—what said she?"

"She is still enraged against you. Her correspondence being discovered; the questioning to which you subjected her——"

"Bah! a madrigal and a moment's submission will make her forget that I have separated her from her House of Austria, and from the country of her Buckingham. But what does she?"

"Other intrigues with Monsieur; but as he confides in us, here are daily reports of them."

"I will not take the trouble to read them. As the Duke of Bouillon will be in Italy, I have nothing to fear in that quarter: he can dream of petty conspiracies with Gaston, beside the fire: he never had anything but good intentions, and has executed nothing but quitting the kingdom; this is the third time. I will find him another opportunity when he wants it: he is not worth the shot you fired at the Count of Soissons. That poor count, however, had scarcely more energy than himself."

Here the cardinal, seating himself in his chair, began laughing, gaily enough for a statesman.

"I shall laugh all my days at their expedition to Amiens. They both had me there. Each was surrounded by at least five hundred men, armed to the teeth, and all ready to despatch me like Concini; but the great Vitry was not there; they let me pass an hour in quiet conversation with them about the hunt and the Corpus Christi, and neither of them dared make a sign to all the cut-throats. We have since learned, through Chavigny, that they had awaited this happy moment for two months. For my part, I remarked nothing at all—save that little robber, the Abbé de Gondi,* who rode round me, and seemed to conceal something under his cloak; that was what made me get into a carriage."

"Speaking of Gondi, my lord, the queen absolutely wishes to make him a coadjutor."

"She's mad! His attachment will be her destruction: he's a would-be musqueteer—a devil in a cassock. Read his *History of Fiesco*, and you will read him. He will be nothing whilst I live."

"And why, judging so truly, do you send for another ambitious man of his age?

"How different! This will be a puppet, my friend—a real puppet—this young Cinq-Mars: he will think of nothing but his lace and his tags. His handsome exterior answers my purpose, and I know that he is mild and weak; therefore I have preferred him to his elder brother; he will do what we desire."

"Ah! my lord," said the father, doubtfully, "I never trust people

* Afterwards the Cardinal de Retz.

who are so calm outwardly; the inward flame is the more dangerous. Remember Marshal d'Effiat, his father."

"But, again, this is a child, and I shall bring him up; whereas the Abbé de Gondi is already a factious accomplice, whose boldness nothing stops. He has dared to dispute Madame la Meilleraie, with me—what think you of that? Is it credible? A petty priestling, who has no other merit than a rather lively, puny prattle, and an off-hand manner. Happily, her husband himself has taken care to start him."

Father Joseph, who liked his master no better when he spoke of his good fortune than of his verses, made a face which he thought fine, but which was dull and ungainly. He imagined that his wry and apish mouth, expressed: *Ah! who could resist, my lord!* But my lord read in it: *I am a vulgar pedant, who knows nothing of the world,* and then plunged at once into another subject, by taking from the table a despatch:—

"The Duke of Rohan is dead, that is good news; now the Huguenots are lost. He has been fortunate: I had made the Parliament of Toulouse condemn him to be pulled to pieces by four horses, and he dies quietly on the field of battle of Rhinfeld. But what matters it? the result is the same. There's another great head laid low! How they have fallen since the Montmorency's! I see scarcely one which does not bend before me. We have already punished nearly all our dupes of Versailles; certes, they cannot reproach me. I exercise against them the law of retaliation, and I treat them as they wished to treat me—by the advice of the queen-mother. The old dotard, Bassompierre, will be let off with perpetual imprisonment, as well as the assassin, Marshal Vitry, for they had voted that punishment for me. As to Marrillac, who advised death, I reserve him for the first false step, and recommend thee, Joseph, to remind me of him—one must be just with everybody. There still remains standing this Duke of Bouillon, whom the possession of Sedan puffs up with pride; but I will give a good account of him. Their blindness is wonderful! They all think themselves free to conspire, and see not that they only jump at the end of threads which I hold in my hand, and which I sometimes loosen to give them air and space. And for the death of their dear duke, did not the Huguenots cry out as one man?"

"Less than for the affair of Loudun, which is however terminated happily."

"What! *Happily?* I hope Grandier is dead."

"Yes; that is what I meant. Your eminence ought to be satisfied—all was finished in twenty-four hours; they thought of him no longer. Only Laubardemont was a little stupid in making the sitting public: it caused a little tumult, but we found out the ringleaders."

"That is well—that is well. Urban was too superior a man to be left there; he was turning Protestant. I would wager he would have abjured at last. His work against the celibacy of pri ests makes

me conjecture this; and when there's a doubt—mark this, Joseph—it is always better to cut the tree before the fruit appears. These Huguenots, look you, are a real republic in the state. If once they had the majority in France, the monarchy would be lost; they would establish some popular government, which might be durable."

"And what deep pain they daily cause our holy father, the pope," said Joseph.

"Ah!" interrupted the cardinal; "I see thou wouldst recall to me his intention of giving thee the hat. Rest assured I will speak to-day to the new ambassador whom we send. Marshal d'Estrées will, on his arrival, obtain that which has been in train these two years—thy nomination to the cardinalate. I also begin to find that the purple will become thee, for the spots of blood will not be seen."

And both began to laugh; the one as a master who heaps his contempt upon the hired assassin whom he pays; the other as a slave, resigned to all the humiliations by which he elevates himself.

The laughter excited by the sanguinary pleasantry of the old minister still lasted, when the door of the cabinet opened, and a page announced several couriers, who had simultaneously arrived from different parts. Father Joseph arose, and, standing with his back against the wall, like an Egyptian mummy, expressed upon his countenance only stupid contemplation. Twelve messengers entered successively, clothed in different disguises. One seemed a Swiss soldier; another, a sutler; a third, a master mason. They entered the palace by a secret stair, and quitted the cabinet by a door opposite that at which they had entered, unable to meet or to communicate any part of their despatches. Each of them deposited a roll or packet of papers upon the great table, spoke an instant with the cardinal in the embrasure of a window, and departed. Richelieu had raised himself briskly at the entrance of the first messenger, and took care to do all himself: he received them all, listened to them, and shut the door after them with his own hand. He signed to Joseph when the last had departed, and, without speaking, both opened, or rather tore open, the packets of despatches, saying in a few words the subject of the letters.

"The Duke of Weimar pursues his advantages; Duke Charles is beaten; our general's spirits are tolerably good; here are some of the good things he said at dinner. I am satisfied."

"My lord the Viscount of Turenne has taken back the towns of Lorraine; here are his private conversations . . . . "

"Ah! pass that, pass that; they can't be dangerous. He will always be a good and honest man, not mixing in politics. Provided they give him a little army to dispose like chessmen, no matter against whom, he is content. We shall always be very good friends."

"The long parliament still lasts in England. The commons pursue their project. There are massacres in Ireland. . . . . The Earl of Strafford is condemned to death."

"To death! How horrible!"

"I will read:—His Majesty Charles I. has not had courage to sign the warrant, but he has appointed four commissioners . . . . ."

"Weak king, I abandon thee. Thou shalt have no more of our money. As thou art ungrateful, fall! . . . . . O unhappy Wentworth!"

And a tear appeared in the eyes of Richelieu. This same man, who played with the lives of so many others, wept for a minister abandoned by his prince. The likeness of this situation to his own struck him, and in this stranger he wept for himself. He ceased to read aloud the despatches which he opened, and his confidant imitated him. He overran with scrupulous attention all the detailed reports of the most minute and secret actions of every personage of the least importance; reports which he always coupled with the news of his most skilful spies. He then took the king's despatches, which he carefully revised, as he wished the prince to read them. The private notes were all carefully burned by the father when the cardinal had learned their contents. The latter, however, did not appear satisfied; he walked backwards and forwards in the apartment with uneasy gestures, when a thirteenth courier entered. This one had the appearance of a child of scarcely fourteen years of age; he held under his arm a packet sealed with black for the king, and gave to the cardinal only a little note, of which Joseph could catch but four words. The duke started, tore it into a thousand pieces, and stooping to the child's ear, spoke to him some time unanswered; all that Joseph heard was, when the cardinal put him out of the room,—*Pay great attention, not before twelve hours after this.*"

During this *aside* of the cardinal, Joseph was occupied in hiding from him an infinite number of libels which came from Flanders and Germany, and which the minister wished to see, however bitter they might be against him. He affected in this respect a philosophy he was far from having; and to delude those who surrounded him, he sometimes pretended to think that his enemies were not altogether wrong, and to laugh at their pleasantries; yet those who had a deeper knowledge of his character, discovered a profound rage under this apparent moderation, and knew that he would not be satisfied until he had condemned his enemy's libels to be burned in the Place de Grève, as *injurious* to the king in the person of his minister, the most illustrious cardinal, as one sees it in the warrants of the time, and that his only regret was, that the author was not in the place of the work. A satisfaction which he gave himself when he could, as in the case of Urban Grandier.

It was his colossal pride which he thus avenged, without avowing it to himself, and laboured long, sometimes a year, to persuade himself that the interest of the state was engaged therein. Ingenious in attaching his private affairs to those of France, he had convinced himself that she bled from the wounds which he received. Joseph, very attentive not to provoke his ill-humour at this moment, hid a

book entitled, *Political Mysteries of the Cardinal of Rochelle.* Another, attributed to a monk at Munich, the title of which was, *Quibbling Questions, adjusted to the present times, and bloody impiety of the god Mars.* The honest advocate, Aubery, who has transmitted to us one of the most faithful histories of the *most eminent* Cardinal, is transported with fury at the title alone of the first of these books, and exclaims, that the *great minister had good reason to glorify himself that his enemies, unwillingly inspired with the same enthusiasm which had rendered Balaam's ass, Caiaphas, and others, who seemed most unworthy of the gift of prophecy, oracular, properly styled him Cardinal of Rochelle, since he had, three years after their writings, reduced that town, the same as Scipio has been named Africanus, from having subjugated that* PROVINCE. There was little reason why father Joseph, who necessarily had the same ideas, should not express his indignation in the same terms; for he mournfully recalled the ridiculous part he had taken at the siege of Rochelle, which, not being a *province* like Africa, had dared to resist *the most eminent* cardinal, though father Joseph had proposed to send some troops through a drain, piquing himself upon being rather skilful in the art of besieging. However, he contained himself, and still had time to conceal the scoffing libel in the pocket of his brown robe, before the minister had bowed out his young courier, and returned from the door to the table.

"Our departure, Joseph, our departure!" said he. "Open the doors to all this court which besieges me, and let us go and find the king, who expects me at Perpignan. This time I have him for ever."

The capuchin withdrew; and the pages, opening the gilded doors, successively announced the greatest lords of that epoch, who had obtained the king's permission to quit him to salute the minister. Some, even under pretext of illness or matters of business, had departed secretly, so as not to be the last in the cardinal's ante-chamber, and the sad monarch found himself almost alone, as other kings generally find themselves on their death-bed; but it seems that the throne was his funeral couch in the eyes of the court, his reign a continual agony, and his minister a threatening successor.

Two pages, of the highest houses of France, stood near the door when the ushers announced each of the personages whom father Joseph had found in the adjoining saloon. The cardinal, still seated in his great chair, remained motionless towards the common courtiers, made an inclination of the head to the more distinguished, and towards princes only did he raise himself slightly by the aid of his two arms. Each courtier saluted him profoundly, and standing before him near the fire-place, waited while he addressed a word to him; then, according to the cardinal's sign, he continued to walk across the saloon, to go out at the same door at which he had entered; remained a moment to salute father Joseph, (who aped his master, and who

had for that reason been called his Gray Eminence,) at last quitted the palace, or stood behind the chair, if the minister wished it, which was a mark of the greatest favour.

. . . . . At first he let pass some persons who were either insignificant or of useless merit, and did not stop this procession till Marshal d'Estrées, who was going as ambassador to Rome, came to bid him farewell. All who followed stopped. This sudden cessation showed that a longer conversation was going on; and father Joseph, making his appearance, exchanged with the cardinal a look, which seemed to say, on the one part—Remember the promise you have made me; on the other—Rest assured. At the same time, the wily capuchin let his master see that he held by the arm one of his victims, whom he was preparing to be a docile instrument. This was a young gentleman, who wore a very short green cloak, a vest of the same colour, very tight red breeches, with brilliant garters of gold—the dress of the pages of Monsieur. Father Joseph spoke very secretly to him, but not as the cardinal imagined, for he thought of being his equal, and was preparing other compacts in case of defection on the part of the prime minister.

"Tell Monsieur not to trust to appearances, and that he has not a more faithful servant than I. The cardinal is declining; and it is my duty to warn of his faults him who may inherit the royal power during a minority. To give your great prince a proof of my fidelity, tell him that they want to arrest Puy Laurens, and that he must conceal him, or the cardinal will put him in the Bastile." Whilst the servant thus betrayed his master, the master, not to be behindhand, betrayed the servant. His self-love, and a remnant of respect for the church, made him shrink from the idea of seeing this contemptible agent covered with the very hat which was his crown, and seated as high as himself, except as to the transient employment of minister. Speaking, therefore, in a low tone to Marshal d'Estrées, he said:—

"It is not necessary to solicit Urban VIII. any longer in favour of that capuchin you see yonder. It is enough that his majesty has deigned to nominate him to the cardinalate. We conceive the repugnance of his holiness to cover this mendicant with the Roman purple."

Then passing from this to things in general,—

"I really know not what has cooled the holy father towards us; what have we done which was not for the glory of our holy mother the Catholic church? I myself said the first mass at Rochelle, and you see with your own eyes, marshal, our habit is everywhere, even in your armies, where the cardinal of La Valette has commanded gloriously in the palatinate."

"And has made a very fine retreat," said the marshal, slightly emphasizing the word *retreat*.

The minister, without noticing this word of professional jealousy, raised his voice, and continued:—

"God has shown that he disdains not to send victory to his chosen,

for the duke of Weimar was not more powerfully assisted in his conquest of Lorrain than this pious cardinal; and never was navy better managed than by our archbishop of Bordeaux at Rochelle."

It is well known, that at this very time, the minister was seriously angry at this prelate, whose haughtiness and frequent impertinence had led to two very disagreeable affairs at Bordeaux. It was four years since the duke of Epernon, then governor of Guyenne, followed by all his retinue, met him surrounded by his clergy in procession, called him insolent, and struck him twice with his cane; thereupon the bishop excommunicated him: and still more recently, in spite of that lesson, he had quarrelled with marshal Vitry, who had struck him *twenty blows with a cane or stick, as you please,* writes the cardinal-duke to the cardinal of Vallette, and *I think he will fill France with the excommunicated.* In fact, he excommunicated the very baton of the marshal, remembering that the pope had formerly obliged the duke of Epernon to beg his pardon; but Vitry, who had assassinated marshal Ancre, was too high in favour for that, and the archbishop was beaten and abused by the minister.

M. d'Estrées rightly thought that there might be a little irony in the manner in which the cardinal vaunted the warlike and naval talents of the archbishop, and answered with easy carelessness—

"In short, my lord, none can say that he has been beaten upon sea."

His eminence could not help smiling; but, seeing that the electrical impression of this smile had created others in the hall, and whispers and conjectures, he immediately resumed his original gravity, and taking the marshal familiarly by the hand,—

"Come, come, ambassador," said he, "you are good at repartee. With you, I fear not cardinal Albornos, nor all the Borgias in the world, nor all the efforts of Spain with the holy fathers."

Then raising his voice, and looking around him, as if to address the silent and captivated assembly,—

"I hope," continued he, "that we shall not be again persecuted for having made an honest alliance with one of the greatest men of our time; but Gustavus Adolphus is dead, the catholic king will no longer have a pretext for soliciting the excommunication of the most Christian king. Are you not of my opinion, my dear lord?" said he, addressing cardinal Vallette, who drew nigh, and had fortunately heard nothing about himself. "M. d'Estrées, stay near our chair; we have still much to say to you, and you are not one too many in any of our conversations, for we have no secrets: our policy is free and open; all is centred in the interest of his majesty and the state."

The marshal made a low bow, took up a position behind the minister's seat, and left his place to the cardinal of Vallette, who, with unceasing prostrations, and flattering, and swearing devotion and entire obedience to the cardinal, so as to expiate the roughness of his father, the duke of Epernon, had also a dissolute and uninteresting conversation, during which he ceased not to watch the door for the

appearance of the person who was to succeed him. He even had the vexation of being interrupted abruptly by the minister, who exclaimed, in the midst of his most flattering speech,—

"Ah! you are come at last, my dear Fabert! how I have longed to see you, to speak of the siege!" The general saluted the cardinal in a somewhat blunt manner, and presented to him the officers he had brought from the camp; he spoke some time on the operations of the siege, and the cardinal seemed, as it were, to make his court to him now, in order to prepare him to receive his orders on the field of battle. He spoke to the officers who followed him, called them by their names, and put questions to them respecting the field.

They all stood aside to make way for the duke of Angoulême. This Valois, after having struggled against Henry IV., prostrated himself before Richelieu. He solicited a command which had placed him in the third rank at the siege of Rochelle. Afterwards came young Mazarin, ever pliant and insinuating, but already confident in his fortune.

The duke of Halluin came after them: the cardinal broke off his compliments to address this noble in a high tone:—"My lord duke, I have the pleasure to announce that the king has created in your favour the office of marshal of France; you will sign Schomberg—is it not so? At Leucate, delivered by you, they think so. But forgive me, here is M. Montauron, who has doubtless something important to tell me."

"Indeed, my lord, I wish only to tell you, that this poor young man, whom you have deigned to regard as in your service, is dying of hunger."

"Ah! why do you choose this moment to speak to me of these things? Your little Corneille will do nothing good; we have seen only *the Cid* and *les Horaces* yet; however, since you interest yourself in him, I will give him a pension of five hundred crowns from my privy purse."

And the thrifty treasurer retired, charmed with the minister's liberality, and was the means of his receiving, with becoming gratitude, the dedication of *Cinna*, wherein the great Corneille compares his soul to that of Augustus, and thanks him for bestowing alms on *The Muses*.

The cardinal, disturbed by this importunity, arose, saying that the morning was advanced, and that it was time to depart to find the king.

At this same moment, and as the greatest lords approached to help him to walk, a man in the gown of a sub-councillor of state advanced towards him, saluting him with a confident smile, which astonished every one accustomed to the aristocratic world; it seemed to say, *We have secret business together; you will see how well I shall be received; I am at home in his cabinet.* His heavy and awkward manner betrayed a very inferior being: this was Laubardemont.

Richelieu frowned at seeing him face to face, and cast a glance of

fire at Joseph; then turning towards those who surrounded him, he said, with a bitter laugh,—

"Is there some criminal near us?"

Then turning his back upon him, the cardinal left him redder than his robe, and preceded by a crowd of personages who wished to escort him to his carriage or horse, he descended the grand staircase of the archiepiscopal palace.

All the people at Narbonne and its authorities looked upon this royal departure with stupefaction.

The cardinal entered alone into a spacious litter, of square form, in which he journeyed to Perpignan, his infirmities not permitting him either to go in a carriage, or to perform the whole distance on horseback. This sort of moveable chamber enclosed a bed, a table, and a little chair for a page, who had either to write for or to read to him. This machine, covered with a purple-coloured damask, was carried by eighteen men, who relieved each other league for league; they were chosen from his guard, and performed this honourable service with bared heads, in spite of the heat or the rain. The duke of Angoulême, marshals Schomberg and Estrées, Fabert, and other dignitaries, were on horseback; the cardinal of Vallette and Mazarin were distinguished as most eager, as well as Chavigny and marshal Vitry, who sought to avoid the Bastile, with which it was said they were threatened.

Two carriages followed for the cardinal's secretaries, his doctors, and confessor; eight coaches-and-four for his gentlemen, and twenty-four mules for his baggage; two hundred musqueteers on foot closely surrounded him; his company of men-at-arms of the guard and his light-horse, all gentlemen, marched in front and in the rear of this train, mounted on magnificent steeds.

It was thus equipped that the prime minister repaired for a few days to Perpignan; the size of the litter several times rendered it necessary to enlarge the ways, and knock down the walls of some *towns and villages* where it could not enter; so that, say the authors of the manuscripts of the times, brimful of sincere admiration of this luxury, *so that he seemed a conqueror entering by the breach.* We have vainly though carefully sought some document of the proprietors or inhabitants of the houses which were opened at his passing, where the same admiration was testified, but these we must confess we have been unable to find.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE INTERVIEW.

The pompous train of the cardinal was stopped at the entrance of the camp; all the troops under arms were drawn up in order, and it was amid the firing of cannon and the clang of martial instruments, that the litter traversed a long lane of cavalry and infantry, formed

from the first tent to that of the prime minister, pitched at some distance from the quarters of royalty, and made visible at a distance by its purple covering. Each chief obtained a nod or a word from the cardinal, who, having at last come to his tent, bowed to his suite, and shut himself up, awaiting the time to present himself to the king. But, before him, each personage in his escort repaired there individually, and, without entering the royal dwelling, waited under the long covered galleries which led to the chamber of their prince. The courtiers met them there, and walked about in groups, bowing and shaking hands, or looking at one another with haughtiness and suspicion, according to their interests, or those of the lords whom they served. Others chatted together, and gave signs of astonishment, of pleasure, or of ill-humour, which showed that something extraordinary had come to pass. Among a thousand others, the following singular dialogue was carried on in a corner of the principal gallery.

"May I ask, M. Abbé, why you stare at me with so much assurance?"

"Zounds! M. de Launay, because I am curious to see what part you intend to play. Everybody abandons your cardinal-duke since your journey into Touraine. You don't believe it? go and talk with the people of Monsieur or the queen for a moment; you are ten minutes slow by the watch of the Cardinal La Vallette, who was reconciled to Rochepot and all the gentlemen of the late Count of Soissons, whom I shall regret all my life."

"It is well, M. de Gondi, I understand you; it is a challenge which you do me the honour of addressing to me."

"Yes, M. le Comte," replied the young abbé, saluting him with all the gravity of that period; "I shall seek an opportunity of calling on you in the name of M. d'Attichi, my friend, with whom you had something to do at Paris."

"Monsieur Abbé, I am at your command; I am going to seek my seconds, get you yours."

"It shall be on horseback, with sword and pistol, shall it not?" added Gondi, with the air of a man arranging a pleasure party, turning up the sleeve of his cassock.

"If such be your pleasure," replied the other; and they separated for a moment, saluting each other with great politeness and deep reverences.

A brilliant crowd of young men passed and repassed them in the gallery. They mixed in it to seek their friends. All the elegance of the costumes of the period was displayed by the court that morning; small cloaks of every colour of velvet or satin, braided with gold or silver; the crosses of St. Michael and of the Holy Ghost; the numerous feathers in their hats, the golden points, the swords hung by long chains, which glittered and sparkled scarcely less than the eyes of the young warriors—their lively questions, and light and spirited laughter. In the midst of this assembly passed grave and great lords, followed by their numerous gentlemen.

The little Abbé de Gondi, who seemed very downcast, walked among the crowd knitting his eyebrows, half shutting his eyes, so as to see better, and turning up his moustachios—for they were then worn by ecclesiastics. He glanced at each in order to recognise his friends, and at last stopped a young man of tall stature, clothed in black from head to foot, and whose sword was made of very darkly bronzed steel. He was talking with a captain of the guards when the Abbé de Gondi drew him apart.

"M. de Thou," said he to him, "I shall want you for a second in an hour, on horseback, with sword and pistol, if you will honour me so far. . . . ."

"Sir, you know that you may command me at all hours. Where shall we find you?"

"Before the Spanish bastion, if you please."

"Forgive me if I return to a conversation in which I am much interested; I shall not fail at the appointed time and place."

And De Thou quitted him to return to his captain. He had spoken with a mild voice, the most imperturbable coolness, and even with some abstraction.

The little abbé shook him by the hand with evident satisfaction, and continued his search.

It was not so easy to make a bargain with the young lords whom he addressed, for they knew him better than De Thou, and when they saw him coming they sought to avoid him, or, laughing at him, would not engage in his service.

"Ah, abbé! you must go further; I'll wager you want a second!" said the Duke of Beaufort.

"And I wager," added M. de la Rochefoucauld, "that it is against one of the cardinalists."

"You are both right, gentlemen; but how long is it since you began to laugh at affairs of honour?"

"God preserve me," replied M. de Beaufort; "men of the sword like us are always at tiers, quatre, and octave; but about the folds of a cassock I know nothing."

"Zounds, sir! but you know well that it does not embarrass the wrist, and I will prove it if you wish. I am only waiting to throw this gown to the dogs."

"Is it, then, to tear it that you fight so often?" said Rochefoucauld. "But remember, my dear abbé, that you are within it."

Gondi turned his back upon them to look at a clock, unwilling to lose more time in these unpleasant jests; but he had no more success with others, for having attacked two of the young queen's gentlemen, whom he supposed discontented with the cardinal, and consequently happy to measure themselves with his creatures, one of them said to him very gravely:—

"M. de Gondi, you know what has happened; the king said aloud: 'Whether our *imperious* cardinal will or not, the widow of Henry the Great shall be no longer exiled.' *Imperious*, M. l'Abbé, hear

you that? The king never before spoke so strongly. *Imperious!* Why, it is a complete disgrace. Really, I suppose no one will dare to speak of him; he will certainly quit the court to-day."

"I have heard so, sir; but I have an affair . . . . ."

"It is fortunate for you that he stops short in your career."

"An affair of honour. . . . . ."

"Instead, as Mazarin is for you . . . . ."

"But will you listen to me or not?"

"Oh! if it be for you; your adventures cannot be got out of one's head. Your fine duel with M. de Coutenan, about the pretty little pin-maker, it has even reached the king. Come, farewell, dear abbé, we are in great haste; good bye, good bye. . . . . ." And taking his friend's arm, the young quiz, without listening to a word more, walked quickly into the gallery, and was lost in the multitude of passers-by.

The poor abbé was left very mortified at being unable to find a second, and sadly regarded the advance of the hour and the crowd, when he perceived a young gentleman who was unknown to him, seated at a table, and resting his head upon his hand in a melancholy mood; he wore black clothes, which indicated no attachment to any great house in particular, or to a party; and appeared to await without impatience till he could enter the king's presence, he looked with a listless air upon those who surrounded him, and seemed neither to know nor to see any one.

Gondi observing him, accosted him without hesitation.

"Really, sir," said he, "I have not the honour of knowing you; but a fencing party can never displease a man of mettle; and if you will be my second, in a quarter of an hour we shall be upon the field. I am Paul de Gondi, and I have called out M. de Launay, who is a cardinalist, but otherwise a very proper man."

The unknown, without being astonished at this apostrophe, answered him, without changing his attitude,—"And who are his seconds?"

"Faith, I don't know; but what matters that? one stands none the worse with one's friends for having given them a prick or two."

The stranger smiled carelessly, stopped a minute to pass his fingers through his long chestnut hair, and said indolently, looking at a large round watch suspended from his girdle:

"Well, sir, as I have nothing better to do, and as I have no friends here, I am yours; I would as soon do this as anything else."

And taking from the table his large hat, ornamented with black feathers, he slowly followed the martial abbé, who went quickly before and wished to hasten him, as a child runs before his father, or a young dog, which goes and returns twenty times before arriving at the end of the walk.

Meanwhile two ushers, clothed in the royal livery, drew the great curtains which separated the gallery from the king's tent, and silence was immediately observed. The courtiers began to enter successively

and slowly into the temporary dwelling of the prince. He received them all gracefully, and was himself the first to meet the eye of each person introduced.

Before a very small table surrounded by gilded chairs, stood Louis XIII. in the midst of the great officers of the crown; his costume was very elegant: a sort of chamois-coloured vest, with sleeves open and ornamented with points and blue ribbons, clothed him to the waist. Large and flowing pantaloons descended to his knee, made of yellow stuff trimmed with red, and ornamented with blue ribbons. His boots, scarcely higher than the ankle, were closed with such a profusion of lace, and so large, that they seemed like a vase filled with flowers. A little cloak of blue velvet, on which was embroidered the cross of the Holy Ghost, covered the left arm of the king, which was supported by the hilt of his sword.

His head was uncovered, and his pale and noble features were clearly seen by the light of the sun, which was allowed to penetrate the top of the tent. The little pointed beard which was then worn, made his face appear thinner, and increased its melancholy expression; his high forehead, his classical profile, his aquiline nose, stamped him as a Bourbon; he had all the features of his ancestors, without their expression; his eyes seemed reddened by tears and veiled with perpetual sleep; his nearness of sight gave him a somewhat vacant expression.

At this time he called around him with some degree of affectation the greatest enemies of the cardinal, and listened to them with attention, balancing himself with his feet crossed, an hereditary habit of his family; he spoke with some animation, stopping to nod graciously or wave his hand to those who passed before him with profound salutation.

Two hours were passed in this way without the cardinal appearing; the whole court was gathered round the prince, and in the galleries which stretched out behind the tent; the courtiers now appeared at longer intervals.

"Shall we not see our cousin, the cardinal?" said the king, turning and looking at Montrésor, one of Monsieur's gentlemen, as if to encourage him to reply; "Sire, he is thought to be very sick at present," responded the latter.

"And I know of no other than your majesty who can cure him," said the Duke of Beaufort.

"We cure only the king's evil," said the king; "and the ills of the cardinal are always so mysterious, that they are unknown to us."

The prince thus attempted to brave his minister behind his back, strengthening himself with pleasantry the better to break this yoke, so insupportable but so difficult to throw off. He believed himself nearly successful, and, supported by the joyous air of all who surrounded him, he applauded himself internally for having known how to take the supreme empire, and enjoyed at that moment all the power of which he believed himself to be in possession. An

involuntary perturbation of mind told him that from that hour the whole burden of the state would fall upon him alone; but he tried to deafen himself to this importunate thought, and dissimulating the untimely presentiment which he had of his want of power to reign, he no longer allowed his imagination to float upon the result of his undertakings, constraining himself thus to forget the devious ways which led to them. Rapid phrases succeeded each other from his lips.

"We shall soon take Perpignan," said he to Fabert.

"Well, cardinal, Lorraine is ours," added he, to La Vallette. Then touching the arm of Mazarin:

"It is not so difficult as one would think, to govern a kingdom, is it?"

The Italian, who had not so much confidence as the rest of the courtiers in the disgrace of the cardinal, warily replied:

"Ah, sire! the recent successes of your majesty, both at home and abroad, prove your sagacity in choosing your instruments and in directing them, and . . . . ."

But the Duke of Beaufort, interrupting him with that confidence, that elevated tone and manner which has brought upon him the surname of *Important*, exclaimed aloud:

"Zounds," sire, "the will is necessary; a nation is managed like a horse, with spur and bridle; and as we are all good knights, it is but to choose among us." This sally had no time to take effect, for two ushers cried at once: "His eminence!"

The king coloured involuntarily, as if surprised in the act. But presently, gathering assurance, he donned an air of resolute haughtiness, which did not escape the minister.

The latter, clothed in all the pomp of the costume of his rank, leaning upon two young pages, and followed by his captain of the guards and more than five hundred gentlemen attached to his house, advanced towards the king slowly, pausing at every step, as if to check his sufferings, but in fact to observe the physiognomies of those who stood before him. A glance sufficed.

His retinue remained at the entrance of the royal tent, and of all those who filled it, not one had the assurance to salute or to look upon him; La Vallette even feigned to be busily occupied in a conversation with Montrésor; and the king, who wished to receive him coolly, bowed slightly, still continuing his conversation in a low voice with the Duke de Beaufort.

The cardinal was then obliged, after the first salute, to stop and pass towards the crowd of courtiers, as if he had wished to mix with them; but his design was to inspect them more closely: they all recoiled as at the sight of a leper; Fabert alone advanced towards him, with the frank and hearty air which was habitual to him, and employing the language of his profession, said:

"Egad, my lord, you make a breach in the midst of them like a cannon ball; I beg your pardon for them."

"And you stand as firm before me as you do before the enemy," said the cardinal; "you will not be a loser in the end, my dear Fabert."

Mazarin also approached, but with caution, and giving his features the expression of profound sadness, made him five or six very deep reverences, turning his back to the group which stood by the king, so that on that side they might be taken for those cold and hurried salutations made only out of deference, and by the duke for marks of respect, but of discreet and silent sorrow.

The minister, ever calm, smiled with disdain; and assuming that steady gaze and air of greatness which he always had amid imminent dangers, he leaned again upon his pages, and without awaiting a word or a look from his sovereign, suddenly resolved upon his line of action, and walked directly towards him, traversing the whole length of the tent. No person had lost sight, though they pretended not to notice him, and all were silent, those even who were speaking to the king; all the courtiers pressed eagerly forward to see and hear.

Louis XIII. turned round in astonishment, and his presence of mind wholly forsook him; he remained motionless, and awaited with a listless look, in which consisted all his strength, an inert *power* very great in a prince.

The cardinal on coming to the monarch did not bow; but without changing his attitude, his eyes lowered, and his hands resting upon the shoulders of the two children, he bent and said:

"I come to supplicate your majesty to grant me at last the retirement for which I have long sighed. My health fails; I feel my life fast waning; eternity draws nigh, and before rendering an account to the Eternal King, I come to do so to a temporary monarch. It is eighteen years, sire, since you placed in my hands a weak and divided kingdom; I restore it to you united and powerful. Your enemies are beaten down and humiliated. My work is accomplished. I ask your majesty's permission to retire to Citeaux, of which I am abbot-general, to end my days in prayer and meditation."

The king, wounded by some haughty expressions in this speech, gave no signs of weakness expected by the cardinal, and which he had always exhibited when he had threatened to quit the helm of state. On the contrary, sensible of the observation of his court, he looked like a king, and said, coldly:

"We thank you, then, for your services, lord cardinal, and we wish you the repose which you ask."

Richelieu was abashed, but rage prevented its appearance in his countenance. "With the same coldness," said he to himself, "thou didst leave Montmorency to die; but thou shalt not escape me thus." Bending slightly, he answered:

"The only reward which I ask for my services, is that your Majesty will deign to accept of me, as a gift, the cardinal's palace, raised at my expense, in Paris."

The king, astonished, made a sign of consent. A murmur of surprise for a moment agitated the attentive court.

"I also throw myself at the feet of your majesty, as I am anxious that you should grant me the revocation of an act of rigour which I provoked, (I avow it publicly,) and which I regarded perhaps as too useful for the tranquillity of the state. Yes, when I was of this world, I forgot too much my old sentiments of respect and attachment for the general good; now that I enjoy, by anticipation, the pleasures of solitude, I see that I have deviated from the right course, and I repent."

Attention was redoubled, and the king's uneasiness became visible.

"Yes, it is a person, sire, whom I have always loved, despite that person's wrongs towards you, and the estrangement which the affairs of the kingdom obliged me to show; a person to whom I have owed much, and who ought to be dear to you, despite her armed undertakings against you; a person, in short, whom I supplicate you to call out of exile: need I say the queen, Mary de Medicis, your mother?"

The king uttered an involuntary cry, so far was he from expecting to hear this name. An agitation, suddenly suppressed, appeared upon every countenance. The royal words were awaited in silence. Louis XIII. for some time looked at his old minister without speaking, and that look decided the destiny of France. It reminded him in a moment of all the indefatigable services of Richelieu, his unbounded devotion, his prodigious capacity, and he was astonished at himself for having wished to separate from him; he felt greatly softened at this demand, which tore up his anger from the depths of his heart, and made him drop from his hands the only weapon which he had against his old servant; filial love brought pardon upon his lips and tears into his eyes; happy to grant that which he most desired in the world, he held out his hand to the duke with all the nobleness and goodness of a Bourbon. The cardinal bent, and kissed it with respect; and his heart, which ought to have burst with repentance, was filled with the joy of a proud triumph.

The prince was touched; he abandoned his hand to him, and turning gracefully towards the court, said, in a tremulous voice:

"We often deceive ourselves, sirs, and especially in thinking that we understand so great a politician as this; he will, I hope, never quit us, since he has a heart as good as his head."

The cardinal of La Vallette immediately seized the hem of the king's cloak, kissing it with the ardour of a lover, and young Mazarin did nearly as much to the Duke de Richelieu himself, assuming a countenance radiant with joy and affection, with admirable Italian suppleness. Two waves of adulators flowed, one upon the king, the other upon the minister; the first group, no less skilful than the second, though less direct, addressed thanks to the king only that the minister might hear them, and burned at the feet of the one an incense which it intended for the other. As to Richelieu, nodding on the right, and smiling on the left, he advanced two steps, and

placed himself at the king's right hand as his natural place. Had a stranger entered, he would rather have thought that the king was on his left. Marshal d'Estrées, and all the ambassadors, the Duke of Angoulême, the Duke of Halluin (Schomberg), Marshal Châtillon, and all the great officers of the crown surrounded him, and each awaited impatiently till the compliments of the others were paid to utter his own, fearful of being anticipated in the tale of flattery, or in the formula of adulation which he was inventing. As to Fabert, he had retired into a corner of the tent, and seemed not to have paid much attention to this scene. He conversed with Montrésor and the gentlemen of Monsieur, all sworn enemies of the cardinal, because, out of the crowd which he had fled, he could find only them to speak to. This conduct would have been extremely unskilful in any less known person; but all were aware, that though living in the midst of the court, he was entirely ignorant of its intrigues; and it was said that he returned from a pitched battle like the king's horse from the hunt, leaving the dogs to caress their master and divide the carcass, without seeking to recal the part which he had taken in the triumph.

The storm seemed therefore entirely quelled, and to the violent agitation of the morning succeeded a soft calm; a respectful murmur, broken by agreeable laughter, and the noise of protestations of attachment, were all that was heard in the tent. The cardinal raised his voice, from time to time, to exclaim:—"Poor queen! we shall see her return! I had never hoped that happiness before death!" The king listened trustfully, and sought not to conceal his satisfaction:—"This is indeed an idea which has descended to him from on High," said he; "this good cardinal, against whom we have been so much displeased, thought only of the union of my family; since the birth of the dauphin I have not tasted so much satisfaction as at this moment. The protection of the Holy Virgin is visibly bestowed upon the kingdom."

At this moment a captain of the guards whispered in the ear of the prince.

"A courier from Cologne!" said the king; "let him attend me in my cabinet."

Then, unable to wait,—"I go, I go," said he; and he entered alone into a little square tent attached to the larger one. They saw there a young courier holding a black letter-bag, and the curtains dropped behind the king.

The cardinal, left sole master of the court, concentrated all its adoration: but they perceived that he no longer received them with the same presence of mind; he frequently asked what time it was, and testified an unfeigned uneasiness. His uneasy looks were turned towards the cabinet; it opened suddenly; the king alone appeared, and stopped at the entrance. He was paler than ordinary, and trembled in every limb: he held in his hand a large letter, fastened with five black seals.

"Gentlemen," said he, in a loud but broken voice, "the queen-mother has died at Cologne, and I have, perhaps, not been the first to learn it," added he, casting a severe look at the unflinching cardinal; "but God knows all things. In an hour, to horse and attack the lines. My lord marshals, follow me;" and he turned his back sharply, and re-entered his cabinet with them.

The court retired after the minister, who, without giving any sign of sadness or of vexation, went out as gravely as he had come in, but as a conqueror.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SIEGE.

THERE are some occasions when we long for strong excitement, in order to drive away the petty vexations of life; some periods when the mind, like the lion in the fable, fatigued by the continued attacks of the insect, desires a stronger enemy, and to be surrounded by greater dangers. Cinq-Mars found himself in this condition of mind, which always gives birth to an unhealthy sensibility, and a perpetual agitation of heart. Weary of incessantly recurring to combinations of events which he desired, and those which he doubted; weary of setting down as probable all that his head had power to calculate, of calling to his aid all that his education had taught him of the lives of illustrious men, to compare it with his present situation; overwhelmed with regret, with thought, with prediction, with chimeras, with fears, and with all that imaginary world in which he had lived during his solitary journey,—he breathed again at finding himself thrown into a real world nearly as brilliant, and the feeling of two real dangers quickened the circulation of his blood, and revived his drooping spirits.

Since the nocturnal scene at the inn, near Loudun, he had not been able sufficiently to regain command over his thoughts, or to occupy himself with anything save his dear though mournful reflections; and he seemed already marked as the victim of consumption, when happily he arrived at the camp of Perpignan, and still more happily had an opportunity of accepting the proposition of the Abbé Gondi; for the reader has no doubt recognised Cinq-Mars in the person of that young stranger in black, so unsociable and melancholy, whom the cassocked duellist had taken for a second.

He had set up his tent as a volunteer in that street of the camp assigned to the young lords who came to be presented to the king, and to serve as aides-de-camp of the generals; he went there quickly, and was soon armed, horsed, and cuirassed, for such was then the custom, and departed alone for the Spanish bastion, the place of rendezvous. He was the first on the ground, and found that a little smooth spot, hidden by the works of the besieged place, had been very well chosen by the little abbé for his homicidal projects; for, besides no one suspecting that the officers would go to fight under

the very town which they were attacking, the body of the bastion separated them from the French camp, and veiled them like an immense screen. It was well to take these precautions, for it cost a man his head to give himself the satisfaction of risking his body.

Awaiting his friends and his adversaries, Cinq-Mars had time to examine the south side of Perpignan before which he found himself. He had heard say that it was not these works which they were about to attack, and he vainly tried to account for these projects. Between this southern aspect of the town, the mountains of Albere, and the Col du Perthus, they might have fixed lines of attack, and redoubts against the accessible point; but not a soldier of the army was placed there; all the strength seemed directed towards the north of Perpignan, on the most difficult side, against a brick fort called Castillet, which commanded the gate of Notre-Dame. He saw that a marshy-looking, but very solid piece of land, led to the foot of the Spanish bastion; that this post was guarded with true Castilian negligence, and was of no strength without defenders, for its battlements and loopholes were ruined, and furnished with four pieces of cannon of an enormous calibre, bedded in the grass, and thus rendered immoveable and impossible to be directed against a body rapidly advancing up to the wall.

It was easy to see that these enormous pieces had diverted the besiegers from the idea of attacking this point, and the besieged from increasing the means of defence. Thus, on the one side, the advanced posts and ridettes were very distant; on the other, the sentinels were few and ill supported. A young Spaniard, holding a long carbine with its rest suspended by his side, and the lighted match in his right hand, walked carelessly on the rampart, and stopped to survey Cinq-Mars, who was riding about the ditch and marsh.

"*Senor Caballero,*" said he, "think you that alone, and on horseback, you could take the bastion, like Don Quixote de la Mancha?"

At the same time, he detached the iron rest which he had at his side, planted it in the ground, and supported thereon the end of his carbine to take aim, when a grave and aged Spaniard, wrapped in a dirty brown cloak, said to him in his own language:

"*Ambrosio de Demonio,* dost thou not well know that it is forbidden to throw away powder except in sallies or attacks, to have the pleasure of killing a child who is not worth thy match? It was here that Charles the Fifth threw the sleeping sentinel into the ditch, and left him to drown like a dog. Do thy duty, or I shall imitate him."

Ambrosio shouldered his gun, put up his rest, and resumed his walk upon the rampart.

Cinq-Mars had been very little disturbed by this threatening gesture, and was content to draw the reins of his horse, and apply the spur, knowing that the animal would at one bound place him

behind the wall of a low hut which was built in the field, and would shelter him from the Spaniard's carbine before the operation of the fork and the match was ended. He knew besides, that a tacit convention of the two armies forbade the skirmishers from firing upon sentinels, which would have been looked upon as an assassination by either side. Consequently, the soldier, who was disposed to attack him thus, must have been ignorant of orders to have threatened so to do. Young d'Effiat, therefore, made no apparent motion; and when the sentinel resumed his walk upon the rampart, he continued his upon the exterior of the fortress, and soon perceived five cavaliers coming towards him. The two first, who came up at a gallop, did not salute him; but stopping close by, leapt to the ground; he followed their example, and found himself in the arms of the Counsellor de Thou, who embraced him tenderly, whilst little Abbé de Gondi, laughing heartily, exclaimed:

"Behold another Orestes restored to his Pylades, and at the moment of immolating a knave, who is not one of the family of the king of kings, I assure you."

"Is it indeed you, my dear Cinq-Mars?" cried de Thou; "and without my knowing even of your arrival in the camp! Yes, it is really you; I recognise you, though you have grown paler. Have you been ill, dear friend? I have written to you very often; for the friendship of our infancy has struck deep into my heart."

"And I," replied Henry d'Effiat, "have been very blameable towards you; but I will relate to you the cause of all this heedlessness; I can speak what I was ashamed to write. But how good you are! your friendship has not been estranged!"

"I know you too well," replied De Thou; "I knew that there could be no false pride between us, and that my friendship was echoed by yours."

With these words they embraced each other with eyes moist with those sweet tears which flow so rarely in life, and yet of which the heart seems always full, so much relief follows their flowing.

This interview was short; and, during these few words, Gondi had been incessantly pulling them by the cloaks. The impatient little man could bear it no longer.

"To horse!—to horse, gentlemen!" he exclaimed; "by Jove, you shall have time to embrace if you are so affectionate! But do not hinder the business in hand; let us first finish with our worthy friends here. We are in a villanous position with those three fine fellows in front, the archers not far off, and the Spaniards above; we are exposed to three fires."

He was yet speaking, when De Launay, being about sixty paces off with his seconds, chosen from among his friends, rather than from the partizans of the cardinal, cantered up to them, and with all the precision of the riding schools of the period, advanced gracefully towards his young adversaries, and saluted them gravely.

"Sirs," said he, "I think we shall do well to choose our opponents, and take the field; for there is some talk of attacking the lines, and I must be at my post."

"We are ready, sir," said Cinq-Mars: "and as to choosing, I shall be happy to confront you; for I have not forgotten Marshal Bassompierre and the wood of Chaumont; you know my opinion of your insolent visit to my mother."

"You are young, sir! I fulfilled towards your mother the duties of a man of the world; towards the marshal those of a captain of the guards; here I fulfil those of a gentleman towards M. l'Abbé, who has called me out; afterwards, I am entirely at your service."

"If I spare you!" said the Abbé, who was already mounted.

They retreated sixty paces, all that the extent of the ground afforded; the Abbé de Gondi was placed between De Thou and his friend, who were nearest the ramparts, where two Spanish officers, and a score of soldiers, had placed themselves to see this six-handed duel, a sight to which they were tolerably accustomed. They gave the same signs of joy as at their bull-fights, and laughed with that savage and bitter laughter left by their Arab blood as a legacy to their features.

At a sign from Gondi, the six horses set off at full speed, and met without collision in the midst of the arena; instantly six pistol-shots were heard almost simultaneously, and the smoke covered the combatants.

When it was dispersed, of the six cavaliers and six horses, but three men and three animals were in a sound state. Cinq-Mars was on horseback, giving his hand to his adversary as calm as himself; at the other extremity, De Thou approached his opponent, whose horse he had killed, and helped him to rise; as to Gondi and De Launay, neither was visible. Cinq-Mars, seeking them with uneasiness, perceived before him the horse of the abbé leaping and curvetting about, dragging after him the future cardinal, whose foot had caught in the stirrup, and who was swearing as if he had never studied aught but the language of camps; his nose and hands were bleeding from the effects of his fall, and his efforts to clutch the grass, and he saw with alarm that his horse, pricked by the spur of the fettered foot, was making for the well-charged ditch, which surrounded the bastion, when happily Cinq-Mars, passing between him and the border of the marsh, laid hold of the bridle, and brought him to a stand.

"Well, my dear abbé, I see you are not much hurt, for you speak energetically."

"By the lord!" cried Gondi, wiping out the dust which he had in his eyes, "to pull a trigger at that giant it was necessary to lean forward and stand up in the stirrups; thus I lost my equilibrium; but I fancy he's down too."

"You are not deceived, sir," said De Thou, who came up; "yonder

is his horse, swimming in the ditch with his master, whose brains are blown out. It is necessary to think of escaping."

"Escaping? that is rather difficult, gentlemen," said the surviving adversary of Cinq-Mars; "there is the cannon shot, the signal of attack; I thought not that it would have begun so soon: if we return we shall meet the Swiss and Lansquenets, who are to fight upon this point."

"M. de Fontrailles is right," said De Thou; "but if we return not, the Spaniards will fly to arms, and the balls will whistle about our ears."

"Well, suppose we hold counsel," said Gondi; "call back M. de Montrésor, who is uselessly occupied in seeking the body of poor De Launay. Have you not wounded him, M. de Thou?"

"No, abbé; every one is not so fortunate as you," said Montrésor, bitterly, who halted a little from his fall; "we shall not have time to continue with the sword."

"I, for one, am not for continuing, gentlemen," said Fontrailles; "M. de Cinq-Mars has acted nobly towards me; my pistol hung fire, and—I yet feel its cold muzzle—his own was at my cheek; he was generous enough to withdraw it and fire in the air; I shall never forget it, and am his in life and death."

"That matters not, gentlemen," interrupted Cinq-Mars; "a ball has just whistled past my ear; the attack has begun on all sides, and we are shut in between friends and enemies."

In fact, the cannonade was general; the citadel, the town, and the army were covered with smoke; the bastion alone, in front of which they were, was not attacked; and its guards seemed less prepared to defend it than to examine the fate of the other fortifications.

"I think the enemy has made a sally," said Montrésor, "for the smoke has ceased on the plain, and I see masses of cavalry charging under the protection of the cannon of the place."

"Gentlemen," said Cinq-Mars, who had not ceased to observe the walls, "we can take a part in the mêlée: let us enter this badly-guarded bastion."

"That is well said, sir," said Fontrailles; "but we are but five against thirty at least, and we are very visible and easy to count."

"Faith, but the idea is not so bad," said Gondi: "it is better to be shot above than hanged below if they find us, for they must be already aware that De Launay is not with his company, and all the court knows our business."

"Zounds, sirs!" said Montrésor, "look at the succour that is coming."

A numerous, but disorderly troop of horsemen, came up at a gallop; their red dresses made them visible at a distance; their object seemed to be to draw up on the very spot occupied by our embarrassed duellists, for hardly had the first horseman reached it than cries of "*Halt!*" were repeated and prolonged by the voices of the chiefs mingling with those of their followers.

"Let us go before them, these are men-at-arms of the king's guard," said Fontrailles; "I know them by their black cockades. I observe, also, many light horse with them; let us take advantage of their disorder to mingle with them, for I think they are *ramenés.*"

This term is a respectable substitute for *routed*, in military language. All five advanced towards this lively and noisy troop, and saw that their conjecture was correct. But instead of the consternation usual in similar circumstances, they found only youthful and noisy gaiety, and heard only bursts of laughter from these two companies.

"By Jupiter, Cahuzac," said one, "thy horse ran better than mine; I think you have exercised him in the king's hunts."

"It was that we might be sooner rallied that you arrived here first," replied the other.

"I think the Marquis de Coislin is mad, to make four hundred of us charge eight Spanish regiments."

"Ah! ah! ah! Locmaria, your plume is in fine order; it looks like a weeping willow. If we follow that it will be to the grave."

"Indeed, gentlemen, I told you this before," replied that young officer, somewhat out of temper; "I was sure that this Capuchin, Joseph, who meddles in all things, was deceived by the cardinal, in telling us to charge. But would you have been satisfied if those who have the honour to command you had refused the charge?"

"No, no, no!" replied they all, with one voice, rapidly closing up into their ranks.

"I said," replied the old Marquis of Coislin, who, with his white hair, had still the fire of youth in his eyes, "that if ordered to mount to the assault on horseback, you would do it."

"Bravo! bravo!" cried the men-at-arms, clapping their hands.

"Well, marquis," said Cinq-Mars, approaching him, here is an opportunity of executing your promise; "I am but a simple volunteer; but these gentlemen and I have just examined the bastion, and I think we could take it."

"Sir, we must first ascertain the depth of the ditch. . . ."

At this moment, a shot fired from the rampart shivered the skull of the old captain's horse.

"Locmaria de Mouy, take the command; to the assault!—to the assault!" cried the two noble companies, believing their officer dead.

"One moment, gentlemen, if you please," said old De Coislin, rising, "I will conduct you; guide us, sir volunteer, for the Spaniards invite us to the ball, and we must answer politely."

Hardly had the old man mounted another horse, brought him by one of his people, and drawn his sword, than, without waiting for the word of command, all these impetuous young men, preceded by Cinq-Mars and his friends, whose horses were urged forward by those behind, leaped upon the marshy ground, where, to his great astonishment, and that of the Spaniards, who reckoned too much upon its depth, the horses sank only to the hocks, and, in spite of a discharge of grape from the two largest pieces, landed, pellmell, upon a little plot of

grass, at the foot of the half-ruined ramparts. In the excitement of the attempt, Cinq-Mars and Fontrailles, with young Locmaria, leaped their horses upon the very ramparts; but a brisk fire killed and overthrew these three animals, which rolled over their masters.

"Down, gentlemen, down," cried old Coislin; "forward! forward! loose your horses."

All obeyed rapidly, and threw themselves into the breach, sword in one hand, and pistol in the other.

Meanwhile, De Thou, whose coolness or friendship never quitted him, had not lost sight of young Henry, and had seized him by his arm when his horse was falling. He placed him on his legs, restored to him his sword, and calmly said, notwithstanding a shower of balls:

"My dear friend, do I not look very ridiculous in the midst of this hubbub, clothed in my costume of counsellor of parliament."

"On my word, sir," said Montrésor, advancing, "on comparison with our friend, the abbé, you are fully justified."

In fact, little Gondi, edging in between the light horse, cried, with all his might:—"Three duels and an assault! I hope I shall lose my cassock at last!"

So saying, he made a dash at a tall Spaniard.

The defence was not lasting. The Castilian soldiers did not long stand their ground against the French officers, and none of them had time or boldness to reload his piece.

"Gentlemen, we will tell this to our mistresses at Paris," cried Locmaria, throwing up his hat in the air; and Cinq-Mars, De Thou, Coislin, De Mouy, Londigny, officers of the red companies, and all these young gentlemen, with swords in the right hand, and pistols in the left, crushing and crowding together, and doing each other as much mischief by their eagerness as they did the enemy, came, at last, upon the platform of the bastion, as water poured from a vessel the neck of which is too narrow issues in broken streams.

Disdaining to notice the vanquished soldiers, who threw themselves on their knees, they allowed them to wander about the fort, without even disarming them, and began examining their conquest like schoolboys on a holiday, laughing with all their might, as if they were at a pleasure party.

A Spanish officer, wrapped in his brown cloak, looked at them with a gloomy air.

"What demons are these, Ambrosio?" said he to a soldier. "I have never seen them before in France. If Louis XIII. have a whole army of these fellows, he is very kind not to conquer Europe."

"Oh, I don't think they are very numerous; they must be a corps of poor adventurers, who have nothing to lose and all to gain by pillage."

"Thou art right," said the officer; "I will try to induce one of them to let me escape."

And approaching slowly, he accosted a light-haired youth, about eighteen years old, who was seated alone on the parapet; he had the

red-and-white complexion of a young girl, his delicate hand held an embroidered handkerchief, with which he wiped his forehead and golden hair; he was looking at a great round watch, chased and covered with rubies, suspended to his girdle by a knot of ribbons.

The Spaniard stopped in astonishment. If he had not seen him overcome his soldiers, he would have thought him incapable of aught save singing a romaunt, couched upon a soft bed. But reverting to Ambrosio's ideas, he thought that these objects might be the produce of the pillage of some woman's wardrobe, and advancing, rudely said:

"Hombre! I am an officer; wilt thou restore me liberty and leave to return to my country?"

The young Frenchman looked at him with the sympathy of youth, and, thinking of his own home, said to him:

"I will present you, sir, to the Marquis de Coislin, who will undoubtedly grant what you ask; is your family of Castile or Arragon?"

"Thy Coislin will ask another's permission, and will make me wait a year. I will give thee four thousand ducats to let me escape."

His mild countenance, his youthful features, were fired with the blush of indignation; his blue eyes were lit up with the same feeling: —"Money, and to me?" he said, "begone, idiot!" The young man struck the Spaniard a smart blow. The latter, without hesitation, drew a long dagger from his breast, and, seizing the Frenchman's arm, thought of plunging it easily into his heart; but, quick and vigorous, the youth took him by the right arm, and forcing it above his head, brought it back with some force upon the head of the enraged Spaniard.

"Ah! ah! ah! softly, Oliver, softly," cried his comrades, running from all sides: "there are enough Spaniards laid low already."

And they disarmed the discomfited officer.

"What shall we do with this madman?" said one.

"I wouldn't have him for a valet," responded another.

"He deserves to be hung," said a third; "but, in faith, gentlemen, we know not how to hang; look at that Swiss battalion scouring the plain." And that calm and sombre man, wrapping himself up in his cloak, set himself in motion, followed by Ambrosio, to go and join the battalion, pushed by the shoulders, and hurried on by five or six of these young madcaps."

Meanwhile, the first troop of besiegers, astonished at its success, had followed it up. Cinq-Mars, by the advice of old Coislin, had gone the round of the bastion, and they saw with chagrin that it was entirely separated from the town, and that they could not pursue their advantage. They therefore returned to the platform slowly, and in conversation, to rejoin De Thou and Abbé de Gondi, whom they found laughing with the young soldiers.

"Having with us Religion and Justice, gentlemen, how could we fail to triumph?"

"How, indeed, when they struck as hard as we!"

They were silent on the approach of Cinq-Mars, and stopped a

minute to chatter and ask his name; then they all turned to him, seizing his hand eagerly.

"Gentlemen, you are right," said their old captain; "he is as our fathers said, *the best doer of the day*. This is a volunteer who ought to be immediately presented to the king by the cardinal."

"By the cardinal! we will present him ourselves; ah! he may not be a *cardinalist*,* he is too brave for that," cried they, with vivacity.

"Sir, I will soon disgust you with him," said Oliver d'Entraigues, approaching, "for I have been his page, and know him perfectly. Rather serve in the Red Companies; come, you will have good comrades."

The old marquis saved Cinq-Mars the difficulty of returning an answer, by sounding the trumpets to rally his brilliant company. The cannon had ceased to be heard, and a guard had come to warn it that the king and the cardinal were traversing the line to see the results of the day; he put all the horses through the breach, which was not very narrow, and drew up his two companies in order of battle, in a place where it seemed impossible for any other troops than infantry ever to penetrate.

CHAPTER X.

THE REWARDS.

"To soften the first transports of royal sorrow, to open a source of emotions which shall turn this vacillating spirit from its grief, I will consent that this town shall be besieged," said Richelieu; "let Louis go, I will allow him to strike a few poor soldiers with the blows which he would, if he dared, inflict on me; let his anger slake itself in this obscure blood; I desire it; but this caprice for glory shall not derange my immutable designs, this town shall not yet fall, it shall only be French perpetually after two years has elapsed; it shall be dragged into my nets only on the day fixed on in my thoughts. Thunder on, bombs and cannons; plan your works, learned captains; rush on, young warriors; I will silence your noise, dissipate your projects, and render your efforts abortive; all shall end in useless smoke, and I will conduct, in order to mislead you."

This was very nearly what ran in the bald head of the old cardinal before the attack, of which we have seen a part. He was on horseback, at the north of the town, upon one of the Salcean mountains; from this point he could see the plain of Roussillon before him, coming down towards the Mediterranean.

Perpignan, with its brick ramparts, its bastions, its citadel, and its bell-tower, formed an oval and sombre mass, surrounded by broad and verdant meadows; it was surrounded by vast mountains, like an enormous arc, from north to south, whilst prolonging its white line to the east, the sea seemed to be the silvered cord. To his right

* France and the army were divided into royalists and cardinalists.

arose that immense mount which is called Canigou, from which two rivers flow into the plain. The French line extended to the foot of this western barrier. A crowd of generals and great lords were mounted behind the minister, but at twenty paces distant, and in profound silence. He had begun by following, step by step, the line of operations, and had afterwards come back to take up a permanent position upon this height, whence his eye and mind hovered over the destinies of the besiegers and the besieged. The army had its eyes upon him, and could see him from all points. Every man bearing arms regarded him as his immediate chief, and awaited his nod to act. France had long bent beneath his yoke, and admiration had excluded from all his actions the ridicule to which any other man would have been sometimes subjected. Here, for example, it never entered the mind of any man to laugh, or even to be astonished, that the cuirass clothed a priest, and the severity of his character and look repressed all ideas of ironical comparisons or injurious conjectures. On that day, the cardinal appeared clothed in an entirely warlike costume; this was a dark yellow cloak edged with gold, a bluish-coloured cuirass, a sword by his side, pistols at his saddle-bow, and a feathered hat, but this he rarely placed upon his head, which was generally covered with the red cap. Two pages were behind him; one carried his gauntlets, the other his helmet, and the captain of his guards was by his side.

As the king had newly named him generalissimo of his troops, it was to him that the generals sent to ask orders; but he, knowing too well the secret motives of his master's present anger, affected to send to that prince all those who wished to have a decision from his mouth. It happened as he had foreseen, for he regulated and calculated the movements of the court like those of a watch, and would have been able to tell exactly by what feelings it had been affected. Louis XIII. placed himself at his side, but he came like a youthful pupil, forced to acknowledge the superiority of his master. His air was haughty and discontented, his speech was abrupt and harsh. The cardinal remained unmoved. It was remarkable that the king, in consulting him, employed the words of command,—thus conciliating his weakness and his power, his irresolution and his boldness, his incapacity and his pretension, whilst his minister dictated to him laws with the tone of the profoundest obedience.

"I wish thee to attack soon, cardinal," said the prince, coming up; "that is to say," added he, carelessly, "when all your preparations shall be made, and at the time you shall have fixed on with our marshals."

"Sire," said the cardinal, looking at his watch, "if I might venture to tell my mind, I should wish that your majesty were agreeable to attack in a quarter of an hour, for that time will suffice to bring up the third column."

"Yes, yes; very good, lord cardinal; I think so too; I will give orders myself; I wish to do all myself. Schomberg! Schomberg! in a quarter of an hour let me hear the signal gun."

On departing to command the right wing of the army, Schomberg ordered, and the signal was given.

The batteries, long since arranged by marshal Meilleraie, began to make a breach, but slowly, because the gunners felt that they had been directed upon two impregnable points, and that with their experience, and especially that sense of right, and that quick eye of the French soldiery, each of them had been able to point out the place which he would have chosen.

The king was struck with the slowness of their fire.

"La Meilleraie," said he, with impatience, "your batteries are unwilling, your cannoneers asleep."

The marshal, and the commanders of the regiments of artillery, were present, but none uttered a syllable. They had cast their eyes upon the cardinal, who had remained motionless as an equestrian statue, and they imitated him. They must have answered that it was not the fault of the soldiers, but of him who had ordered this false disposition of the batteries, and this was Richelieu himself, who, pretending to think them more useful where they were, had silenced the observations of the chiefs.

The king was astonished at this silence, and fearing that he had committed some gross error in the military art by this question, reddened slightly, and approaching the group of princes who had accompanied him, said to them, in order to give time for his confidence to return—

"Angoulême, Beaufort, this is is very tiresome, is it not? We stand here like mummies."

"It seems to me, sire," said Charles of Valois, approaching, "that they have not employed here the machines of Pompée-Targon, the engineer."

"Zounds, sir!" said the Duke of Beaufort, looking steadily at Richelieu, "that is because we had rather take Rochelle than Perpignan, in the time of that Italian. There's not a machine prepared, not a mine, or a petard under those walls, and Marshal Meilleraie told me this morning that he had proposed to try some to open the trenches. It was neither Castilet, nor those six great bastions by which it is covered, nor the half-moon, which we should have attacked. If we go on at this rate, the great stone arm of the citadel will show us its fist for some time yet."

The cardinal, still motionless, said not a word; he only signed Fabert to come to him; the latter left the group which followed him, and drew up behind Richelieu, near the captain of his guards.

The Duke of Rochefoucauld, approaching the king, continued:

"I think, sire, that our want of activity has opened the breach made by the insolence of these people, for, see, there's a numerous sally, which is directed just towards your majesty; the regiments of Biron and Ponts fall back after firing."

"Well," said the king, drawing his sword, "let us charge them,

and make the knaves retire; support me with the cavalry, d'Angoulême. Where is it, cardinal?"

"Behind that hillock, sire, is a column of six regiments of dragoons, and the carabineers of La Roque; you see below my men at arms and my light horse, whom I beg your majesty to take, for those of your guard are scattered about by the Marquis of Coislin, who is always too zealous. Joseph, go and tell him to return."

He whispered to the capuchin, who had accompanied him muffled in military attire, which he wore awkwardly, who immediately advanced on to the plain.

Meanwhile, the close columns of the old Spanish infantry left the gate of Notre Dame like a moving black forest, whilst by another gate a body of heavy cavalry also issued and drew up on the plain. The French army, posted at the foot of the hillock where the king stood, behind redoubts and fascines of turf, were terror stricken at the sight of these men-at-arms and light horse, ten times their superiors in numbers.

"Sound the charge!" cried Louis XIII., "or poor old Coislin is lost."

And he descended the hill with a suite as eager as himself; but ere he had reached the bottom, and was at the head of his musqueteers, the two companies had taken their part; swift as lightning, and crying *God save the king!* they threw themselves upon the enemy's long column of cavalry, like vultures upon a serpent, and making a large and bloody gap, passed through it and rallied behind the Spanish bastion, as we have seen, and left the cavaliers so astonished, that they thought only of their own ranks, not of pursuit.

The whole army set up a shout; the king was motionless with astonishment; he looked around him, and saw that every eye sparkled with the desire to attack; all the valour of his race burned within him; for an instant he remained as if undetermined, listening with intoxication to the roar of the cannon, breathing and snuffing the smell of the powder; he seemed to take another life, and to become a Bourbon; all who then saw him felt as if commanded by another man, when, raising his sword and his eyes towards the shining sun, he cried:

"Follow me, brave friends! here I am King of France!"

His cavalry, deploying, set off with an eagerness, destroying space and throwing up clouds of dust from the ground, which shook beneath them; they were in an instant mixed with the Spanish cavalry, and both were swallowed up in an immense and unsteady cloud.

"Now! now!" cried the cardinal, from his height, with a voice of thunder, "tear down those batteries from their useless position. Fabert, give your orders; let them all be directed upon that infantry which is slowly surrounding the king. Run! fly!—save the king!"

Suddenly his suite, which appeared immoveable, was agitated in every way; the generals gave their orders, their aides-de-camp dis-

appeared and threw themselves on the plain, where clearing the ditches, barriers, and palisades, they arrived at their destination nearly as promptly as the thought which directed and the look which followed them. All at once the slow and interrupted flashes which issued from the discouraged batteries became one broad sheet of flame, leaving no room for the smoke, which rose to the heavens, forming an infinite number of light and floating wreaths; the cannon shots, which before seemed but far and feeble echoes, were changed into formidable thunder, the peals of which were as frequent as the rolls of the drum beating to the charge; whilst on three opposite points large red rays of fire descended upon the sombre columns which left the besieged town.

Yet Richelieu, without changing his place, but with eager eye and imperative gesture, ceased not to multiply orders by casting upon those who received them a look which foreshadowed condemnation to death, if they obeyed them not with sufficient alacrity.

"The king has overthrown this cavalry, but the infantry still resists; our batteries have only killed, they have not conquered. Three regiments of infantry, forward! Gassion, Meilleraie, and Lesdiguières, turn the columns on the flank. Order the rest of the army not to attack, and to remain stationary along the whole line. Some paper! that I may write myself to Schomberg."

A page dismounted and advanced, holding a pencil and paper. The minister, assisted by four of his men, descended painfully from his horse, uttering some involuntary cries, torn from him by the intensity of his sufferings; but he subdued them, and seated himself upon the carriage of a gun; the page bending, gave his back as a desk, and the cardinal hurriedly wrote this order, which the contemporary manuscripts have transmitted us, and which might be imitated by the diplomatists of our day, who seem more anxious to hold a perfect balance between two ideas, than to seek those combinations which wield the whole world's destinies.

"Marshal, hazard nothing, and think well before attacking. When you are thus told that it is the king's desire that you should hazard nothing, you are not to understand that he absolutely forbids you to fight, but his intention is, that you shall not enter into a general engagement unless with a strong hope of gain from the advantage which a favourable position would give you: the responsibility of the battle naturally falling upon you."

All these orders given, the old minister, still seated upon the gun-carriage, resting his arms upon the touch-hole and his chin upon his hands, in the attitude of a man taking aim, continued, in silence and tranquillity, to regard the king's fight, like an old wolf, which, satiated with victims and benumbed with age, contemplates the ravages of a lion upon a herd of bullocks which he dares not attack; from time to time his eye brightens, the smell of blood is pleasing to him, and so as not to loose the taste he licks his toothless jaws with his burning tongue.

On this day it was remarked by his servitors (that is by very nearly all who approached him,) that from the time he arose until night he had taken no food, and so applied his whole soul upon the matter he had in hand that he triumphed over bodily pains, and seemed to conquer them by forgetting them. It was this power of attention and this continual presence of mind that raised him nearly to a genius. He would have attained it if he had not wanted native elevation of soul, and generous sensibility of heart.

All was accomplished upon the field of battle as he had desired; the same fortune following him there as in the cabinet. Louis XIII. claimed with avidity the victory which his minister had gained him; personal valour was however the only portion he had contributed towards it.

The cannon had ceased to play, when the columns of infantry were thrown back broken into Perpignan; the rest had met the same fate, and only the brilliant squadrons of the king were visible on the plain.

He returned on foot, and contemplated with satisfaction the field of battle entirely cleared of the enemy; he passed boldly under the very fire of the Spaniards, who, whether from unskilfulness, from a secret convention with the prime minister, or shame of killing a king of France, fired only a few bullets, which passing high over his head, were exhausted before they reached the lines of the camp, and merely added to his just reputation for bravery.

However, at each step he took towards the place were the cardinal was seated, his features changed, and he was visibly disturbed; he lost the glow of fighting, and the noble glance of triumph fled from his eye. As he approached, his accustomed paleness overspread his countenance, as if it alone had a right to be seated upon a royal head. His look lost its transient fire, and at last, when he had joined him, his face was entirely shrouded in profound melancholy. He found the cardinal as he had left him; remounted upon his horse, the latter, ever coldly respectful, bent, and after a few complimentary words, placed himself near Louis, to traverse the lines, and see the results of the day, whilst the princes and great lords, marching before and behind at some distance, seemed like a great cloud around them.

The skilful minister took care to say or do nothing which could give any suspicion that he had the least part in the events of the day; and it was remarkable that of all those who came to render an account, there was not one who did not seem to divine his thoughts, and know how to avoid compromising his occult power by demonstrative obedience. All was reported to the king. The cardinal traversed, therefore, by the side of the prince, the right of the camp, which he could not observe from the height where he was placed, and saw with satisfaction that Schomberg, who knew him well, had acted precisely as the master had written, pushing forward only some light troops, and fighting enough to discourage reproaches of inactivity, and not enough to obtain a decided result. This conduct

charmed the minister, and did not displease the king, whose self-love was flattered with the idea of being the sole conqueror of the day. He wished even to persuade himself, and make others believe, that all the efforts of Schomberg had been fruitless; and he said that he did not wonder at his want of success: he himself had experienced that the enemies before him were far less contemptible than he had at first supposed.

"To prove to you that you have gained in our eyes," added he, "we name you knight of our order, and we give you undeniable access to our person."

The cardinal shook him affectionately by the hand as he passed, and the marshal, astonished at this deluge of favours, followed the prince with downcast eyes, like a guilty thing, being obliged to console himself by calling all the brilliant deeds which he had done during his career, and which had remained in oblivion, calming his conscience by mentally attributing to them these unmerited rewards.

The king was ready to retrace his steps, when the Duke of Beaufort, with upturned eyes and astonished air, exclaimed:

"But, sire, have I still the fire in my eyes, or has a sunstroke made me mad? It seems to me that I see upon that bastion some cavaliers in red clothes, who strongly resemble your light horse which we thought dead.

The cardinal frowned.

"It is impossible, sir," said he; "the imprudence of M. de Coislin has lost his majesty's men-at-arms and cavaliers; that is why I have always told the king that if these useless bodies were suppressed, there would result great advantages in a military point of view."

"Egad, your eminence will pardon me," replied the Duke of Beaufort; "but I am not deceived, and there are seven or eight of them on foot driving before them some prisoners."

"Well, let us go and visit that point," said the king, carelessly; "if I find old Coislin, I shall be very glad."

It was with great caution that the horses of the king and his suite passed the marsh and the ruined outworks, but it was with great astonishment that they perceived above them the two red companies drawn up as if on parade.

"Good God!" cried Louis, "I think there is not one missing. Well, marquis, you have kept your word, you have taken the walls on horseback."

"I think it has not been badly chosen," said Richelieu, disdainfully; "it in no way advances the taking of Perpignan, and must have cost many lives."

"In faith, you are right," said the king (for the first time addressing the cardinal less drily since the interview which followed the news of the queen's death); "I regret the blood which must have been shed here."

"There have been, sire, but two of our young people wounded in this attack," said old Coislin; "and we have gained new companions in arms in the volunteers who were our guides."

"Who are they?" said the prince.

"Three of them have modestly retired, sire; but the youngest whom you see, was the first at the assault and gave me the idea. The two companies claim the honour of presenting him to your majesty."

Cinq-Mars, on horseback behind the old captain, raised his hat and discovered his young and pale features; his large dark eyes and long brown hair.

"Those features remind me of some one," said the king. "What say you, cardinal?"

The latter had already thrown a penetrating glance upon the new comer, and said:

"I am deceived, or this young man is . . . ."

"Henry d'Effiat," said the volunteer, in a loud voice, bowing.

"Ah, then, sire, it is the same that I had announced to your majesty, and who was to be presented by myself—the second son of the marshal."

"Ah," said Louis, quickly, "I like to see him presented at this bastion. It is well, my child, it should be so with those who bear the name of our old friend. You will follow us to the camp, where we have much to tell you. But who do I see? You here, M. de Thou? Who have you come to judge?"

"I think, sire," replied Coislin, "that he has rather condemned some Spaniards to death, for he entered the place second."

"I struck no one, sir," interrupted De Thou, reddening; "it is not my trade. Here I have no merit. I accompanied my friend, M. de Cinq-Mars."

"We like your modesty as well as this bravery, and we shall not forget that characteristic. Cardinal, is there not some presidency vacant?"

Richelieu liked not De Thou; and as his hatred always had a mysterious source, 'twas vain to seek the cause. It displayed itself in a cruel word which escaped him. The reason of this enmity was a passage in the history of the President de Thou, father of him who now stood before the king, wherein he blasted in the eyes of posterity, a great uncle of the cardinal, at first a monk, then an apostate, and soiled with all the human vices.

Richelieu, bending down to Joseph's ear, said to him,—

"Thou seest that man! His father put my name in his history—good! I will put his in mine." In fact, he afterwards wrote it with blood. At this moment, to avoid answering the king, he pretended not to have heard his question, but to be engaged upon the merit of Cinq-Mars, and the desire which he had of seeing him placed at court.

"I have promised you beforehand to make him a captain in my guards," said the prince; "name him so to-morrow. Besides, I wish to know him, and I reserve better things for him afterwards, if he please me. Let us withdraw; the sun is sinking, and we are far from our army. Tell my two good companies to follow us."

The minister, after having given this order, from which he had taken care to suppress the praise, placed himself at the right of the king, and the whole escort quitted the bastion, confided to the Swiss guards, to return to the camp.

The two red companies defiled slowly through the breach which they had made so promptly. They were grave and silent.

Cinq-Mars approached his friend.

"These heroes are very badly rewarded," said he. "Not a favour; not a flattering inquiry!"

"In return," replied the simple de Thou, "I, who was forced to come, receive compliments. Such are the ways of life. But the true judge is on high; he is not blind."

"That will not hinder us from getting killed to-morrow, if necessary," said young Oliver, laughing.

CHAPTER XI.

MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

In order to appear before the king, Cinq-Mars had been obliged to use the horse of one of the light horsemen wounded in the affray, having lost his own at the foot of the rampart. While watching the filing off of the two companies, which occupied some time, he felt a hand roughly laid upon his shoulder, and on turning round, saw old Grandchamp holding by the bridle a fine grey horse.

"Would not my lord prefer a horse of his own?" said he. "I have put on him the saddle and housings embroidered with gold which were left in the ditch. Alas! alas! only to think that a Spaniard or even a Frenchman might have seized them; for in these times there are so many people that think all they find belongs to them; and then, as the proverb says, what falls upon the field is the soldier's. They would not have been nice about appropriating these four hundred golden crowns, which my lord, with submission be it said, had forgotten in the holsters of his pistols. And these pistols—what pistols! Why, I bought them in Germany, and here they are, at this very moment, as good as new. It was bad enough to lose the poor little black horse, as surely born in England as I was at Tours in Touraine; but it was worse than madness to expose such precious objects to the eyes of the enemy."

While grumbling in this strain, the brave old man finished saddling the grey horse; the column was long defiling, and being in no hurry, he paid scrupulous attention to the length of the stirrups, and to each buckle of the saddle, giving himself time to continue his discourse.

"Pardon me, if I am rather long, my lord; I hurt myself a little in raising M. de Thou, who saved my lord in the heat of the scuffle.

"What! were you there, you old fool?" said Cinq-Mars: "that is not your calling; I told you to remain in the camp."

"Oh, to remain in the camp would be impossible; I could not do it; if a musket-shot were heard, I should be ill if I could not see the flash. As for my calling, certainly it is to take care of your horses, and you are upon them, my lord. Do you think that, had I been able, I would not have saved the life of that poor little black beast which lies yonder in the ditch? Ah! how I loved it; a horse which in its life gained three cups! When I think of it, its life has been too short for all who know how to love as I do. He would receive his oats from none but his Grandchamp, and whilst eating them he would caress me with his head; in proof of this, look at my left ear, the tip of which this poor friend one day bit off; he did not wish to hurt me—on the contrary. He would neigh angrily if any one else came near him; that was why, one day, this good animal broke John's leg; I did so love him! When he fell, I supported him on one side, M. de Locmaria on the other; I thought at first that he and this gentleman were going to rise; unhappily but one came to life, and it was he of whom I knew the least. You appear to laugh at what I say of your horse, my lord; but you forget that in time of war the horse is the soul of the cavalier—yes, my lord, his soul; for what is it that frightens the infantry?—it is the horse! Certainly it is not its rider, who, once thrown off, is of hardly more use than a truss of hay; who is it that performs so many admirable actions?—again, it is the horse! Sometimes his master would gladly be far away; in spite of himself he is victorious, and rewarded, whilst the poor animal gains nothing but blows. Who is it that gains the prize at races?—it is the horse, who has scarcely more than his usual supper, whilst his master puts the gold into his pocket, is envied by his friends, and regarded by all with as much consideration as if he had run the race himself. Who is it that hunts the deer, and then is not allowed to eat even one little bit?—it is the horse! Sometimes, too, he is himself eaten, poor animal; in a campaign with the marshal, it happened that . . . . But what is the matter with you, my lord?—you turn pale." . . . .

"Tie up my leg with something—a handkerchief, a leathern strap, or with anything you can find, for I feel a burning pain in it; I don't know what it is."

"Your boot is cut, my lord; perhaps a bullet has entered; but 'lead is man's friend.'"

"At all events, it hurts me very much!"

"Ah, 'he who loveth much, chastiseth much,' my lord. Ah, lead! we must not speak against it; who is it that . . . ."

Whilst binding up Cinq-Mars' leg above the knee, the good-natured man was beginning a lecture upon lead, as foolish as the one he had already delivered upon the horse, when both he and his master were obliged to give an attentive ear to a sharp and hot dispute between several Swiss soldiers, who had remained very near them after the departure of the troops; they talked to one another, making use of a great deal of gesticulation, and appeared to be conversing about two

men who were seen at a little distance, surrounded by about thirty soldiers.

D'Effiat, leaning against his horse's saddle, with his foot still stretched towards his servant, listened attentively to find out, if possible, what they were quarrelling about, but it was quite useless, for he did not understand a word of German. Grandchamp, with the boot still in his hand, listened also very seriously; all at once, he burst out laughing with all his might, holding his sides, a thing he had never been known to do before.

"Ah—ah—ah! my lord, there are two serjeants quarrelling about which of those two Spaniards they ought to take; for your red comrades did not take the trouble to tell them; one of these Swiss pretends that it is the officer, the other that it is the soldier, but a third is coming to settle the dispute."

"And what has he said?"

"He has told them to take both."

"Gently—gently," cried Cinq-Mars, trying to walk, but he was unable to use his leg.

"Lift me upon my horse, Grandchamp."

"My lord, don't think of it; your wound . . . ."

"Do what I tell you, and then mount yourself."

The old domestic grumblingly obeyed, and hastened, after another peremptory order, to stop the Swiss, who were already in the plain, prepared to hang their prisoners to a tree, or rather to let them hang themselves; for the officer, with the careless courage of his energetic nation, had even now put the knotted cord round his neck, and without being told, mounted a small ladder in order to tie the other end of the rope to the tree; the soldier, with the same calm indifference, looked on and assisted his officer by holding the ladder.

Cinq-Mars arrived in time to save them; he gave his name to the inferior Swiss officer, and taking Grandchamp for his interpreter, said that the two prisoners belonged to him, and that they were to be conducted to his tent, that he was captain of the guards, and would be responsible for them.

The Germans, always in strict discipline, dared not reply; the prisoner alone resisted. The officer, still at the top of the ladder, turned round, and, speaking as from a pulpit, said, with a sardonic smile—

"I should be glad to know what has brought you here? Who told you that I wished to live?"

"I took not the trouble to ask," said Cinq-Mars, "and I care little what becomes of you afterwards; my present purpose is to hinder an act which appears to me unjust and cruel. Kill yourself afterwards, if you like."

"Thou sayest well," replied the ferocious Spaniard; "thou pleasest me. I thought at first that thou playedst the generous in order to oblige me to be grateful, which I detest. Well, I will come down; but I hate thee as much as before, because thou art French. I warn

thee not to expect any thanks, for thou hast but paid the debt thou owedst me: it was I who hindered thee from being killed this morning by that young soldier, when he took aim at thee, and he never missed a chamois on the mountains of Leon."

"Be it so," said Cinq-Mars. "Come down."

It was his nature to act to others as they acted towards him, and this rudeness steeled his heart against the Spaniard.

"That's a bold fellow, my lord," said Grandchamp; "had my lord the marshal been in your place, he would certainly have left him on his ladder. Come, Louis, Stephen, Germain, come and look after my lord's prisoners, and lead them off; here's a pretty acquisition; if this bodes good luck, I shall be much astonished."

Cinq-Mars, suffering a little from the motion of his horse, walked slow enough to allow the men on foot to keep pace with him; he kept at some distance from the column which had followed the king, and thought of what that prince could wish to say to him. A ray of hope showed him the countenance of Mary of Mantua in the distance, and his thoughts were for a moment calm. But his future life lay in the words, *please the king;* he began to reflect on the bitterness of this course.

At this moment his friend De Thou came up, who, uneasy at his remaining so long behind, sought him on the field, and ran to succour him if he had fallen.

"It is late, my friend; night approaches; you have stopped a long time; I was alarmed for your safety. Who do you bring with you? Why did you stop? The king wants to see you soon."

Such were the rapid questions of the young counsellor, whom uneasiness had robbed of his accustomed calmness,—a task which the battle had not been able to accomplish.

"I was slightly wounded; I bring a prisoner; and I was thinking of the king. What wants he with me, my friend? what is to be done if he wishes me to be near the throne? He must be pleased. At this idea, shall I avow it to you, I am tempted to fly; and I hope that I shall not have the fatal honour of living with him. Please! how humiliating is that word! obey, is not so much so. A soldier is exposed to death—that is all. But what stooping, what sacrifices of character, what compositions with conscience, what degradation of mind, is the destiny of a courtier? Oh, de Thou! my dear de Thou! I feel that I am not made for the court, though I have seen it but for an instant; the depths of my heart are wild; education has but polished the surface. From a distance, I thought I could live in this all-powerful world; I even longed for it, guided by a dearly cherished project of my heart; but I recoil at the first step; the sight of the cardinal has made me tremble; the remembrance of the last of his crimes, at which I assisted, hinders me from speaking to him; he horrifies me; I shall never conquer my dislike of him. The favour of the king, too, has something repulsive in it, as if it were to be fatal."

"I am glad to see you so frightened: it will be salutary, perhaps," replied de Thou, as they went forward. "You are coming into contact and in commerce with power; you have not felt it, you are about to touch it; you will see what it is, and from whose hand the lightning is cast. Alas! pray heaven it may not burn you! You will assist, perhaps, at councils which rule the destinies of nations; you will see, you will give birth to, those caprices whence spring bloody wars, conquests, and treaties; you will hold in your hand the drop of water which generates torrents. It is from a high place, my friend, that human affairs are best seen; it is necessary to pass over the more elevated positions to know the littleness of those we now deem great."

"Ah, if I were there, I should have gained at least that lesson of which you speak, my friend; but this cardinal—this man to whom I must lay under obligation—this man whom I know too well by his works, what will he be to me?"

"A friend, a protector, doubtless," replied De Thou.

"Rather death, a thousand times, than his friendship! his whole being, his very name, I hate; he sheds the blood of men with the cross of the Redeemer."

"What horrors you relate, my dear friend. You will destroy yourself if you show the king such feelings towards the cardinal."

"No matter; in the midst of these tortuous paths I wish to trace a new one, the straight road. My whole thoughts—the thoughts of a just man—shall be unfolded to the eyes of the king himself, if he interrogates me, should it cost me my head. I have at last seen this king, who has been painted so weak. I have seen him, and his look has touched my heart in spite of me; true, he is very unhappy, but he cannot be cruel: he will hear the truth. . . . ."

"Yes; but he dares not make it triumphant," replied the wise De Thou. "Beware of this warm-heartedness, which will often draw you into rash and dangerous movements. Attack not such a Colossus as Richelieu without having measured him."

"You talk like my old tutor, Abbé Quillet, my dear and prudent friend; neither of you know me; you know not how weary I am of myself, and how high I have cast mine eyes. I must ascend or die."

"What! already ambitious!" cried De Thou, with extreme surprise.

His friend hid his face in his hands, dropping the reins of his horse, and answered not.

"What! has that egotistical passion of a riper age seized you at twenty, Henry? Ambition is the saddest of hopes!"

"And still it fills me entirely, for I live but for it; my heart is wrapt up in ambition."

"Ah, Cinq-Mars! I know you no longer; but you were different once! I will not conceal from you that you seem to me much fallen: in the rambles of our childhood, when the life, and especially the death of Socrates suffused our eyes with tears of admiration and of envy;

when raising ourselves to the ideal of the highest virtue, we desired that in the future we might meet those illustrious sorrows, those sublime misfortunes, which make great men; when we would compose ourselves to meet imaginary sacrifices and devotion: if the voice of a man had suddenly pronounced the single word *ambition!* we should have recoiled as from the sting of a serpent. . . . ."

De Thou spoke with the warmth and enthusiasm of reproach. Cinq-Mars continued his way without answering, his hands still to his face: after a moment's silence, he removed them, and showed his eyes full of generous tears; he shook his friend heartily by the hand, and said to him in thrilling tones— . . . . .

"Monsieur de Thou, you have reminded me of the most beautiful thoughts of my early youth; believe me, I am not fallen, but I am devoured by a secret hope which I cannot confide even to you: as much as you I despise the ambition which seems to possess me; the whole earth will believe it, but what to me matters the whole earth! As to you, noble friend, promise that you will not cease to esteem me, whatever you may see me do. I swear by heaven that my thoughts are pure as the skies above."

"Well!" said De Thou, "I swear by it that I will believe you blindly. You restore me to life!"

They still held clasped hands affectionately, when they perceived that they had come nearly in front of the king's tent.

Evening had set in, but it seemed as if a milder day had risen, for the moon rose from the sea in all her splendour; the transparent sky of the south was cloudless, and looked like a blue veil spangled with silver stars; the air, still warm, was agitated by the occasional passage of a Mediterranean breeze, and all sounds had ceased upon the earth. The weary army reposed under tents, the fires of which showed their extent, and the besieged town seemed wrapt in the same sleep; nought was seen on the ramparts but the arms of the sentinels which glanced in the light of the moon, or the moving fires of the night watch; nought disturbed the ear save the sombre and prolonged cries of the guards who warned one another not to sleep.

It was only around the king that all were awake, but not with him. This prince had dismissed his retinue; he walked alone before his tent, and, stopping sometimes to gaze upon the beautiful sky, appeared plunged in melancholy meditation. None dare interrupt him, and the few lords who remained in the royal quarter had gathered around the cardinal, who, at twenty paces from the king, was seated upon a little knoll raised by the soldiers; there he wiped his pale forehead, fatigued with the anxieties of the day and the unaccustomed weight of his armour; he bade good night in a few hurried words, but still attentive and polite, to those who came to salute him before retiring; none were now with him but Joseph, who chatted with Laubardemont. The cardinal looked towards the king, to see if, before entering his tent, the prince would speak to him, when the

noise of Cinq-Mars' horses was heard; the cardinal's guards questioned him and allowed him to advance without his followers, and only with De Thou.

"You have arrived too late to speak to the king," said the cardinal-duke, in a harsh voice; "his Majesty must not be made to wait."

The two friends were about to retire when the king's own voice was heard. Louis XIII. was at that moment in one of those false positions which made his whole life unhappy. Deeply vexed with his minister, but not dissimulating from himself that it was to him he owed the success of the day, having besides need of announcing to him his intention of quitting the army and of suspending the siege of Perpignan, he was fighting between the desire of speaking to him and the fear of weakening his discontent; on his side the minister dared not speak the first word, uncertain of the thoughts which rolled in the head of his master, and fearful of choosing the wrong moment, but unable to decide on retiring; both were in precisely the same situation as two lovers who have quarrelled, who long for an explanation, when the king joyfully seized the first opportunity to break silence. The chance was fatal to the minister. Behold on what hangs those destinies which the world calls great.

"Is it not M. de Cinq-Mars?" said the king, in a loud voice. "Let him come in; I expected him."

Young Effiat approached on horseback, and at some paces from the king wished to dismount; but hardly had his foot touched the ground than he fell to his knees.

"Forgive me, sire," said he, "I think I am wounded;" and the blood flowed freely from his boot.

De Thou had seen him fall, and had run to sustain him. Richelieu seized this opportunity of advancing with affected eagerness.

"Remove this sight from the king's eyes," said he; "you see that this young man is dying."

"Not at all," said Louis, assisting in supporting him; "a king of France can look on death, and fear not the blood which flows for him. I am interested in this young man; let him be carried to a tent near mine, and let my surgeons see him; if his wound be not serious, he shall come with me to Paris, for the siege is suspended, my lord cardinal; I have seen enough; other business calls me to the middle of the kingdom; I will leave you here to command in my absence; that is what I wanted to tell you."

At these words the king entered his tent abruptly, preceded by his pages and officers with torches.

The royal pavilion was shut, Cinq-Mars carried off by De Thou and his people, but Duke Richelieu, motionless and stupified, still gazed upon the place whereon this scene had passed; he seemed struck by lightning, and incapable of seeing or hearing those who observed him.

Laubardemont, still frightened by his bad reception of the previous day, dared not say a word, and Joseph hardly recognised his old

master; he felt a momentary regret at being connected with him, and believed that his star was waning; but knowing that all men hated him, and that Richelieu was his only resource, he seized him by the arms, and shaking him roughly, said to him in a whisper, but with harshness—

"Come, come, my lord, you are chicken-hearted; come with us." And, as if supporting, but in fact dragging him, aided by Laubardemont, he took him into his tent as a schoolmaster sends a scholar to bed to be out of the evening dew. This premature old man slowly followed the will of his two acolytes, and the purple of the pavilion dropped behind him.

CHAPTER XII.

THE NIGHT WATCH.

No sooner had the cardinal entered his tent, than he fell, armed and cuirassed as he was, into a great arm-chair, and there, with his handkerchief to his mouth and with fixed eyes, he left his two black confidants to guess whether meditation or annihilation retained him in such an attitude. He was deadly pale, and a cold sweat trickled down his forehead. In wiping it abruptly, he had thrown off his red cap, the only ecclesiastical sign which remained upon him, and again dropped his chin upon his hands. The capuchin on the one side, the sombre magistrate on the other, regarded him in silence, and seemed, with their black and brown frocks, the priest and the notary of a dying man.

The monk, speaking from the depths of his chest, in a voice which seemed fitter to read the burial service than to give consolation, was the first to speak.

"If my lord would remember my advice, given at Narbonne, he would acknowledge that I had a just presentiment of the mortification this young man would one day cause him."

The counsellor continued:—

"I have been told by the old deaf abbé, who was at dinner with the Marchioness of Effiat, and heard all, that this young Cinq-Mars showed more energy than he was thought to possess, and that he attempted to deliver Marshal Bassompierre. I have still by me the report of the deaf man, who played his part very well; his eminence the cardinal ought to be sufficiently satisfied."

"I have told my lord," began Joseph,—for these two ferocious Seyds spoke in turns, like the shepherds of Virgil,—"I have told him that it would be well to get rid of this fellow Effiat, and that I would undertake to do so, if such were his pleasure; it would be easy to destroy him in the king's mind."

"It would be safer to let him die of his wound," continued Laubardemont, "if his eminence were so good as to give me the order. I am intimately acquainted with the deputy-surgeon, who cured me of a blow on the forehead, and who has the care of him. He is a

prudent man, entirely devoted to my lord, the cardinal duke, and his affairs are a little deranged by gambling."

"I believe," replied Joseph, with an air of modesty mingled with a little bitterness, "that if his excellency employed any one in this useful project, it would be his usual negotiator, who has had some previous success."

"I think I am able to enumerate some sufficiently striking instances," replied Laubardemont, "and very recent, in which the difficulty was great."

"Ah! doubtless," said the father, with a bend, and a show of consideration and politeness; "your boldest and most skilful mission was the judgment of Urban Grandier, the magician. But with God's help, we can do as good and as brave things. It was not without some merit, for example," added he, lowering his eyes like a young girl, "to be the vigorous extirpator of a branch of the royal Bourbons."

"It was not very difficult," replied the counsellor, bitterly, "to choose a soldier of the guards to kill the Count of Soissons; but to preside, to judge . . . ."

"And execute oneself," interrupted the heated capuchin, "is certainly less difficult than to raise a man, from infancy, for the purpose of accomplishing great things with discretion, and of supporting, if necessary, every torment, for the love of Heaven, rather than reveal the name of those who had armed him as the instrument of their justice, or to die courageously on the body of the stricken criminal, as did he whom I sent; he uttered not a cry as he fell by the sword of Ricquemont, the prince's squire; his end was like a saint's: that was my pupil."

"It is one thing to order dangerous enterprises, and another to execute them."

"And did I not face danger at the siege of Rochelle?"

"The danger of being smothered in a sewer, no doubt?" said Laubardemont.

"And as to you," said Joseph, "have your dangers been the placing of other people's fingers in instruments of torture? and all that because the abbess of the Ursulines is your niece."

"Your brothers of St. Francis were no better, for they held the hammers; but I was struck on the forehead by this same Cinq-Mars, who led a frenzied populace."

"Art sure of that?" cried Joseph, overjoyed; "dared he thus brave the orders of the king?" The delight this discovery gave him made him forget his anger.

"Idiots!" cried the cardinal, suddenly breaking silence, and removing from his lips his bloodstained handkerchief; "I would punish your sanguinary dispute, if it had not taught me your secret infamy. My orders have been overstepped; I would have no torture, Laubardemont; this is your second fault; you make me hated for nothing; that were useless. But you, Joseph, neglect not the details of this

insurrection in which Cinq-Mars was engaged; that may serve us in the end."

"I have all the names and descriptions," said the secret judge, eagerly, stooping his tall form until his thin and olive-coloured visage, wrinkled with a servile smile, reached the chair.

"It is well—it is well," said the minister, repulsing him; "but it matters not yet. You, Joseph. should be at Paris before this presumptuous youth, who, I am certain, is about to be the favourite. Become his friend, make him of my party or destroy him; let him serve me, or he falls. But above all, send me safe people, and daily, to give a verbal account; never write in future. I am very dissatisfied with you, Joseph; what a miserable courier you chose to come from Cologne! he was not able to understand; he saw the king too soon, and we have still disgrace to fight against. A little more, and I should have been wholly lost. You are going to see what is doing in Paris; a conspiracy will soon be hatched against me; but it shall be the last. I will stay here to let them act more freely. Quit me both of you, and send my valet in two hours hence: I wish to be alone."

The steps of the two men were still heard, and Richelieu, his eyes fixed upon the entrance of the tent, seemed to pursue them with angry glances.

"Wretches!" cried he, when he was alone, "go forth and accomplish a few more secret deeds, and afterwards I will destroy yourselves, the impure spring whence my power flows. The king will soon succumb under the slow disease which consumes him; I shall be Regent then, I shall be King of France myself; I shall no longer have to depend on the caprices of his weakness; I will destroy for ever the proud races of this land; I will sweep them from the face of France, and strike them with the rod of Tarquin; I will be above all; Europe shall tremble—I . . . ."

Here a mouthful of blood caused him to raise his handkerchief to his lips.

"Ah! what did I say? wretch that I am! Behold, I am stricken with death; my body sinks, my blood flows, and my mind worketh yet! For what—for whom? Is it for glory? 'tis an empty word; is it for men? I despise them. For whom, then, since I am about to die ere three, perhaps ere two years have passed? Is it for God?—that name! I have not walked with him, and he has seen all . . . ."

Here he let his head fall upon his chest, and his eyes encountered the great gold cross which he wore around his neck; he could not help throwing it behind him; but it followed him; he took it, and regarding it with fixed and devouring eyes:—"Terrible sign," said he, in a low tone, "thou pursuest me! Shall I find thee elsewhere . . . . divinity and punishment! what am I? what have I done? . . . ."

For the first time he was overcome by a singular and unknown terror; he trembled, frozen and burnt up by an invincible emotion; he dared not raise his eyes for fear of encountering some frightful vision; he dared not call, for fear of hearing his own voice; he

remained deeply buried in the meditation of eternity, so terrible for him, and he murmured this sort of prayer:—

"Great God, if thou hearest, judge me, but judge me not by myself. Look upon me as surrounded by the men of my age; observe the immense work that I have undertaken; was not an enormous lever necessary to remove these masses? and if this lever crushes in its fall some useless wretches, am I much to blame? I shall seem wicked to men; but thou, O supreme judge, wilt thou tell me so likewise? No; thou knowest that it is boundless power which renders creature guilty towards creature; it is not Armand Richelieu who puts to death, it is the prime minister. It is not for his personal injuries, 'tis to follow out a system. But a system,—what is this word? Was I permitted to play thus with men, and to regard them as figures for accomplishing a thought, perhaps false? I overthrow the bulwarks of the throne. If, without knowing it, I sap its foundations, and hasten its fall! Yes, my borrowed power has seduced me. O labyrinth! O weakness of human thought! simple faith! why have I quitted thy ways? why am I not still the simple priest? O that I dare break with man, and give myself to God! the ladder of Jacob would still descend in my dreams."

At this moment his ear was struck by a great noise coming from without; the laughter of the soldiers, and ferocious cries and oaths, were mingled with words spoken for some time by a clear, but feeble voice; it seemed like the song of an angel interspersed with the laughter of devils. He got up and opened a sort of canvass window, worked in one of the sides of his square tent. A singular spectacle met his eyes; he stopped some moments to contemplate it, attentive to the discourse which was held.

"Listen, listen, La Valeur," said a soldier to another; "she is beginning to speak and sing; put her in the middle of the ring, between us and the fire."

"Dost thou not know her—dost thou not know her?" said another; "here's Grand-Ferré, who says he knows her!"

"Yes, I tell thee I know her, and by St. Peter of Loudun, I will swear that I saw her in our village when I was on furlough, and it was a business to warm one, but not to be spoken of, especially to a cardinalist, like thee."

"Ah! and why not speak of it, great green-horn?" said an old soldier, raising his moustache.

"It is not spoken of, because it might burn the tongue, do ye understand?"

"No, I understand not."

"Well, nor I neither; but it was the burgesses that told me."

Here a general burst of laughter interrupted him.

"Ah! ah! he is cracked," said one; "he listens to what the citizens say."

"Well! if thou listest to their nonsense, thou hast plenty of time to spare," continued another.

"Thou dost not know what my mother used to say, youngster," continued the old man, gravely, lowering his eyes in a ferocious and solemn manner to attract attention.

"How am I to know, La Pipe? thy mother must have died of old age before my grandfather came into the world."

"Well, youngster, I will tell thee. Firstly, you must know that my mother was a respectable Bohemian, as much attached to the regiment of the carbineers of La Roque, as my dog *Canon* here; she carried brandy round her neck in a barrel, and drank better than the best among us; she had had four husbands, all soldiers, and died upon the field of battle."

"That was indeed a woman!" interrupted the soldiers, full of respect.

"And never in her life did she speak to a citizen, unless to tell him on coming to her lodging, 'Light my candle, and warm my soup.'"

"Well, but what is it that thy mother used to say to thee?" said Grand-Ferré.

"If thou art so eager, thou shalt not know, youngster; she always used to say, '*A soldier lives scarce better than a dog, but a dog lives better than a burgess.*'"

"Bravo! bravo! that's well said," cried the soldiers, full of enthusiasm at these fine words.

"And that does not prevent the burgesses who told me that which burns the tongue from being right," said Grand-Ferré; "besides, it was not all done by the burgesses, for they had swords, and they were vexed because they burned a minister, and so was I."

"And what harm has it done thee if they did burn thy priest, simpleton?" continued a sergeant, leaning on the fork of his arquebuss; "after him will come another; thou wilt be able to put in his place one of our generals, who are all priests now; I am a royalist, and I say so frankly."

"Silence!" cried La Pipe; "let the girl speak. These dogs of royalists always interfere when we are going to amuse ourselves."

"What dost thou say?" replied Grand-Ferré; "knowest thou what is a royalist?"

"Yes," said La Pipe, "I know you all well; you are for the ancient so-called princes of the peace, with the *croquants* against the cardinal and the gabel—there, am I right or not?"

"No, old red stockings; a royalist is one who is for a king; that's what it is. And as my father was one of the king's falconers, I am for the king—there. And I don't like your red stockings, that's flat."

"Ah! callest thou me red stockings?" replied the old soldier; "thou shalt do me right to-morrow morning. If thou hadst made war in Valteline, thou wouldst not speak like that; and if thou hadst seen his eminence walk upon the ditch at Rochelle, with the old Marquis of Spinola, with the cannon-balls flying around him, thou wouldst say nothing about red stockings."

"Come, let's amuse ourselves, instead of quarrelling," said the other soldiers.

The fellows who discoursed thus surrounded a great fire, which lit them more than the moon, beautiful as she was; and in the midst of them was placed the subject of their gathering and cries. The cardinal distinguished a young woman clothed in black, and covered with a long white veil; her feet were naked; a thick cord was around her elegant figure, and a long rosary fell from her neck to her feet; her delicate hands, white as ivory, counted the beads which she slipped rapidly through her fingers. The soldiers, with barbarous glee, amused themselves with throwing little bits of burnt wood in her way to burn her naked feet; the oldest took the smoking match of his arquebus, and putting it to the bottom of her gown, said in a gruff voice—

"Come, fool, tell us thy history, or I will fill thee with powder, and blow thee up like a mine; have a care, for I have already played that game with others in the old wars with the Huguenots. Come, sing."

The young woman, looking at him gravely, answered not, but dropped her veil.

"Thou takest her badly," said Grand-Ferré, with a drunken laugh; "thou wilt make her weep; thou knowest not the fine language of a court; let me speak to her;" and, chucking her under the chin—

"Sweetheart," said he, "if thou wilt, my darling, begin again the pretty little history thou hast just recounted to these gentlemen, I will take thee a voyage with me on the river of Tenderness, as the great ladies say in Paris, and take a glass of brandy with thy faithful cavalier, who has met thee before at Loudun, when thou playedst a comedy to burn a poor devil. . . . ."

The young woman crossed her arms, and, looking around her with a glance of scorn, cried—

"Back, in the name of the God of armies: withdraw, foul men; there is nothing in common between us. I understand not your tongue, and you will not understand mine. Go, sell your blood to the princes of the earth at so many pence a-day, and leave me to accomplish my mission. Lead me to the cardinal . . . ."

A loud laugh interrupted her.

"Thinkest thou," said a carbineer of Maurevert, "that his eminence the generalissimo will receive thee with thy naked feet? Go and wash them!"

"The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away," replied she, her arms still folded. "Conduct me to the cardinal."

Richelieu cried with a loud voice—

"Bring me this woman, and leave her alone."

All were silent; they led her to the minister. "Why," said she, on seeing him, "bring me before an armed man?" They left her alone before him, without reply.

The cardinal regarded her suspiciously.

"Madam," said he, "what do you in the camp at this hour; and if your mind be not scared, why these naked feet?"

"'Tis a vow—'tis a vow," cried the young nun, impatiently, seating herself by him abruptly; "I have also sworn not to eat till I meet the man I seek."

"Sister," said the cardinal, astonished and softened, approaching to observe her; "God exacts not such rigours from a feeble body, and especially at your age, for you seem very young."

"Young? oh, yes! I was very young a few days gone; but since I have passed two existences, so much have I thought and suffered: look at my face."

And she uncovered a countenance of perfect beauty; fine black eyes gave it animation; but without them the features would have seemed those of a phantom, they were so pale; her lips were livid and tremulous, a shuddering fit made her teeth chatter.

"You are ill, sister," said the minister, moved, taking her hand, which was burning hot. A sort of habit of questioning himself concerning his own health, and that of others, made him feel the pulse of her weak arm; he felt the veins throb with the beatings of a high fever.

"But," continued he, with more interest, "you are killing yourself with rigours above human strength; I have always blamed them, and especially at a tender age. What, then, has brought you here? Is it to confide in me that you are come? Speak calmly, and make sure of assistance."

"To confide in men!" replied the young girl; "oh, no! never! They have all deceived me; I will trust no one, not even M. de Cinq-Mars, who, however, must soon die."

"What!" said Richelieu, frowning, but with a bitter laugh—"what! do you know that young man? Is he the cause of your misfortunes?"

"Oh, no! he is very good, and he detests the wicked; that is what will destroy him. Besides," said she, suddenly assuming a harsh and savage manner, "men are weak, there are some things which women must accomplish. When no more brave men were to be found in Israel, Deborah arose."

"Ah! how knew you all these fine things?" continued the cardinal, still holding her hand.

"Oh! that I cannot explain to you," replied the young nun, with touching simplicity and sweet voice; "you would not understand me; it is the devil who has taught me all, and who has destroyed me."

"Ah! my child, he is always plotting our destruction; but he teaches us evil," said Richelieu, with a kind of fatherly protection and increasing pity. "What have been thy faults? tell them me; I am powerful."

"Ah!" said she, doubtfully, "you may be powerful among warriors, among brave and generous men; under your breastplate should

beat a noble heart; you are an old general who knows nothing of the stratagems of crime."

Richelieu smiled; this mistake flattered him.

"I heard you ask for the cardinal; what would you with him? what are you come to seek?"

The nun recollected herself, and put her finger to her brow.

"I had forgotten," said she; "you have said too much .... I have lost that idea, which was so far a great idea ..... It was for that I condemned myself to the hunger which kills me; I must accomplish it, or I shall die first. Ah!" said she, putting her hand under her gown, into her breast, whence she seemed to take something, "here is this idea ....."

She blushed suddenly, and her eyes dilated in an extraordinary degree; she continued, leaning towards the ear of the cardinal—

"I will tell you; listen. Urban Grandier, my lover Urban, told me to-night that it was Richelieu who caused his death; I have taken a knife from an inn, and I have come here to kill him: tell me where he is."

The cardinal, alarmed and surprised, recoiled with horror. He dared not call his guards, fearing the cries of this woman and her accusations; and yet her frenzy might be fatal to him.

"This frightful history will pursue me everywhere!" cried he, looking at her fixedly, endeavouring to settle the part he should take.

They remained in silence face to face, in the same attitude, like two wrestlers measuring each other before the onset, or like the pointer and his victim petrified by a look.

Meanwhile Laubardemont and Joseph were gone forth together, and before separating, they conversed for a moment before the cardinal's tent, each thinking it necessary to deceive the other; their hatred had gathered strength during their quarrel, and each had resolved to destroy his rival with their master. The judge began the dialogue for which both of them were prepared, taking one another's arm by a simultaneous movement.

"Ah! reverend father! how you have afflicted me by seeming to take in bad part some light jokes I just now uttered!"

"Now, I take God to witness, my dear sir, that I am far from doing so. Would it be charitable? No! I am sometimes urged by holy zeal, in conversation, for the good of the state and of my lord, to whom I am entirely devoted."

"Ah! who knows that better than I, reverend father? but you must do me justice, you know well how dear to me is his eminence the cardinal-duke to whom I owe all. Alas! I have been over zealous in his service, and for that he reproaches me."

"Reassure yourself," said Joseph, "it will not count against you; I know him well, he thinks one should do something for one's family; he himself is a very good relation."

"Yes, that is very right," replied Laubardemont, "and my case is this; my niece would have been utterly destroyed in her convent if Urban had triumphed; you must feel that, for she did not quite understand us, and played the child when she had to appear."

"Is it possible? in open court! What you tell me makes me commiserate you. How painful must this have been!"

"More than you imagine. She forgot all she had been taught about the possession; made a thousand mistakes in her Latin, which we corrected as well as we were able; and she was even the cause of a disagreeable scene on the day of the trial; very disagreeable for me and the judges: the women fainted, and the men uttered cries. I declare I would have lectured her well, if I had not been obliged to quit Loudun in a hurry. But, look you, it is natural that I should care for her, as she is my nearest relation; for my son has turned out bad, no one knows what has become of him these four years. Poor dear Jeanne de Belfiel! I made her a nun, and then an abbess, to keep all for that rascal. If I had foreseen his conduct, I would have reserved her for the world."

"They say she is very handsome," replied Joseph; "it is a precious gift for a family; she might have been presented at court, and the king. . . . . Ah! ah! . . . . .Mademoiselle de La Fayette. . . . . He! he! Mademoiselle d'Hautefort . . . . you understand. . . . . It would be possible even still to think of it."

"Ah! I understand you well . . . . . my lord, for you know you are nominated to the cardinalate; but you are too good to forget the most devoted of your friends!"

Laubardemont was still speaking to Joseph when they found themselves at the end of the road in the camp which led to the quarters of the volunteers.

"May God and the Holy Mary protect you during my absence," said Joseph, stopping; "to-morrow I set out for Paris; and as I shall more than once have business with this fellow Cinq-Mars, I am going to see him beforehand, and to learn news of his wound."

"If I had been listened to," said Laubardemont, "you would not now have had this trouble."

"Alas! you are right!" replied Joseph, with a profound sigh, and raising his eyes to heaven; "but the cardinal is no longer the same man; he listens not to good ideas; he will destroy us if he continue thus."

And making a low bow to the judge, the capuchin took the road to the tent of Cinq-Mars.

Laubardemont followed him for some time with his eyes, and when he was sure which way he had gone, he returned, or rather ran back, to the tent of the minister. "The cardinal removes him," said he; "therefore he is disgusted with him; I know some secrets which would destroy him. I will add, that he is gone to pay his court to the future favourite; I will take the place of this monk in the favour

of the minister. The moment is propitious; it is midnight; he will be alone for an hour-and-a-half. Let me run."

He came to the tent of the guards, placed before the pavilion.

"My lord is engaged," said the captain, hesitating; "none can enter."

"No matter, you saw me leave an hour since; things have occurred of which I must give an account."

"Come in, Laubardemont," cried the minister; "come in quickly, and alone." He entered. The cardinal, still seated, held the two hands of a nun in one of his, and with the other made a sign for silence to his stupified agent, who remained motionless, not yet seeing the face of this woman; she spoke quickly, and the strange things she said contrasted horribly with the sweetness of her voice. Richelieu seemed moved.

"Yes, I will strike him with a knife; this is the knife which the demon Beherith gave me at the inn; but it is the nail of Sisera. It has a haft of ivory, look you, and I have wept over it much. Is it not singular, my good general? . . . . I will thrust it into the neck of him who killed my love, as he told me to do; and afterwards I will burn the body; that is the law of retaliation, the law which God gave to Adam. . . . . You seem astonished, my brave general . . . . . but you will be more so if I tell you his song . . . . . the song which he sang me yester-night, when he came to see me at the hour of his death, you comprehend? the hour when he wept, the hour when my hands began to burn as now; he said to me, These magistrates, these red magistrates, are deceived. . . . . I have eleven devils at my command, and I will return to see thee when the clock strikes . . . . under a canopy of purple velvet, with torches, with flaming pine torches to light us; ah! it is beautiful! see, see! he sings." And to the air of the *De profundis*, she chanted:

"I am created prince of hell,
My sceptre is an iron hammer,
My throne is a burning pine,
And I am clothed in sulphur;
But I will marry thee to-morrow:
Come, Jeanne, give me thy hand."

"Is it not singular, my good general? And I answer him every night; attend to this—O, listen well. . . . ."

"The judge has spoken in the night
And hath led me to the tomb.
Still I was thy bride!
Come, the rain is cold.
But thou shalt not sleep alone,
I will bring thee my shroud."

"Afterwards he speaks, and speaks like the ghosts, and like the prophets. He says, 'Cursed! cursed be he who sheddeth blood! Are the judges of the land gods? no, they are but old and suffering men, and yet they dare to say in a loud voice, Put that man to death!—the

punishment of death!—the punishment of death! Who has given man the right of inflicting it on man? is it because there are two? . . . . one alone would be an assassin, seest thou! But count well, one, two, three. . . . . Behold they are wise and just, these grave and salaried villains! O crime! the horror of heaven! If thou sawest from on high, as I, Jeanne, thou wouldst be paler still! Flesh destroyeth flesh! he who lives by blood sheds blood, coolly, and without anger! as God, who is the creator!"

The cries uttered by the unhappy girl as she rapidly spoke these words, made Richelieu and Laubardemont motionless with terror. But delirium and fever carried her on.

"'Did the judges tremble?' asks Urban Grandier; 'did they tremble at deceiving themselves? They put the just to death—the torture. They bind his limbs with cords to make him speak; his skin is cut, torn, and shrivelled like parchment; his nerves are naked, red, and shiny; his bones crack; the marrow bursts from them. . . . But the judges sleep. They dream of flowers and spring. 'How hot the great hall is,' says one awaking, 'this man will not speak! Is the torture finished?' And merciful at last, he condemns him to death. Death! sole fear of the living! Death! the world unknown! he has cast before him a furious soul which will await him. Oh! has he never seen the picture of the avenging angel? has he never seen before his sleep the flayed prevaricator?'"

Already weakened by fever, fatigue, and grief, the cardinal, seized with horror and pity, cried,—

"O, for the love of God! end this frightful scene; remove this woman; she is mad!"

The mad girl turned, and suddenly uttering loud cries—

"Ah! the judge, the judge, the judge! . . . . " said she, recognising Laubardemont.

The latter, clasping his hands, and kneeling before the minister, said with affright—

"Alas! my lord, forgive me; it is my niece, who has lost her reason; I knew nothing of this misfortune; if I had, she should have been shut up long since. Jeanne, Jeanne . . . . Come, madam, on your knees! ask pardon of my lord the cardinal! . . . ."

"'Tis Richelieu!" cried she; and astonishment seemed to paralyze this young and unhappy beauty; the red which had flown to her cheek gave place to mortal paleness, her cries to a dead silence, her rambling gaze to a frightful fixing of her large eyes, which constantly followed the saddened minister.

"Take this unhappy child away quickly," said the latter, beside himself; "she is dying, and I also; so many horrors pursue me since this condemnation, that hell itself seems loosed against me."

He arose as he spoke. Jeanne de Belfiel, still silent and stupified, with haggard eyes, open mouth, and head thrust forward, remained under this double surprise, which seemed to have extinguished the remnant of her reason and strength. At the movement

of the cardinal, she trembled at seeing herself between him and Laubardemont, looked alternately at both, let fall from her hand the knife which she held, and retired slowly towards the opening of the tent, covering herself with her veil, and turning with terror her scared looks behind her upon her uncle, who followed, as a frightened sheep, which already feels upon its back the burning breath of a ferocious wolf.

They both went out thus together, and hardly were they in the open air, when the furious judge seized his victim by the hands, bound them with a handkerchief, and dragged her along; for she uttered not a cry, not a sob, but followed him, her head still dropped upon her bosom, and as if plunged in deep sleep.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SPANIARD.

MEANWHILE a scene of another nature passed in the tent of Cinq-Mars; the king's words, the chief balm to his wounds, had been followed by the eager cares of the court surgeons: a spent ball, easily extracted, had been the cause of his accident. He was allowed to travel; all was ready for the journey. The sick man had received till midnight friendly and interested visitors; among the first were little Gondi and Fontrailles, who were also making ready to quit Perpignan for Paris; Richelieu's late page, Oliver d'Entraigues, had joined them to compliment the happy volunteer whom the king seemed to have distinguished; the habitual coldness of the prince towards all who surrounded him made those who had heard them to look upon the few words which he had said as sure signs of high favour, and all were come to wish him joy.

At last he was alone, stretched upon his camp-bed; De Thou, by his side, held his hand; Grandchamp at his feet, still grumbled at the visits which had fatigued his wounded master, about to depart on a long journey. As for Cinq-Mars, he at last tasted one of those moments of calm and hope, which come at the same time as the blood, as it were, to refresh the mind; the hand not given to his friend secretly pressed the golden cross which hung upon his heart, anticipating the pleasure of again pressing, as he was soon to do, the hand by which it had been bestowed. He listened with attention and smiles to the counsels of the young magistrate, and dreamed of the object of his journey, which was also the object of his life. The grave De Thou said to him in a calm soft voice—

"I will soon follow you to Paris. I am happier than you are that the king takes you with him. It is the germ of a friendship which you must foster, for it is important. I have reflected deeply on the secret causes of your ambition, and I believe I have read your heart. Yes, this sentiment of love for France, which made it beat in your earliest youth, ought to increase in strength; you will draw near the king

to serve your country, to set in action those golden thoughts of our boyhood. Indeed, the thought is vast and worthy of you! I admire you! I bow before you! Approach the monarch with the chivalric devotion of our fathers, with a heart full of candour, and ready for every sacrifice; receive the outpourings of his confidence; soften the grief of the king, by telling him the thoughts of his subjects; stifle the complaints of the people, by discovering them to its master, and through the intermission of your favour, re-establish by these means that intercourse of love of a father with his children, which was interrupted for eighteen years by a man with a heart of marble; expose yourself in this noble enterprise to all the horrors of his vengeance, and still more, brave the treacherous calumny which will pursue the favourite even to the very steps of the throne: this thought was worthy of you. Continue thus, my friend; never be discouraged; speak loudly to the king of the merit and misfortunes of his most illustrious friends who are being crushed; tell him fearlessly that his old nobility has never conspired against him; and that, from young Montmorency, to the amiable count of Soissons, all have fought the minister, never the monarch; tell him that the old races of France are born with his race, that in striking them, he shakes the whole nation, and that if he extinguish them, his own will suffer; that he will remain alone exposed to the storms of time and events, like an old oak stripped of its branches, and exposed to the tempest, when the forest which surrounded and supported it is overthrown. "Yes," cried De Thou more animatedly, "this object is noble and beautiful; go your way with a firm step, drive off even this secret shame, this modesty which a noble mind experiences before it can resolve upon flattering—to do that which the world calls its *court*. Alas! kings are accustomed to these every-day words of false admiration; consider them as a new language to be learned, a tongue hitherto foreign to your lips, but which, believe me, may be spoken nobly, and which will express fine and generous thoughts."

During this warm discourse, Cinq-Mars could not suppress a sudden blush, and he turned his face from his friend, so that it might not be seen. De Thou stopped.

"How is this, Henry? you answer not. Can I be deceived?"

Cinq-Mars sighed deeply, and was still silent.

"Is not your heart moved by these ideas with which I believed it transported?"

The wounded man regarded his friend with less uneasiness, and said:—

"I thought, dear De Thou, that you would question me no more, and that you would place confidence in me blindly. What evil genius thus urges you to probe my soul? I am not a stranger to your ideas. Who told you that I had not conceived them? Who told you that I had not formed the firm resolution of putting into action that which you dare not put even in words? Love of France, virtuous hatred of the ambitious man who oppresses and breaks her

ancient manners with the axe of the executioner, the firm belief that virtue may be as skilful as crime; these are my gods as well as yours. But when you see a man on his knees in church, do you ask him what angel or what saint protects and receives his prayer? What matters it, provided he pray at the foot of the altar which you adore, provided that, if necessary, he become a martyr? Ah! when our forefathers walked with naked feet to the holy sepulchre, staff in hand, told they the secret vow which led them to the holy land? They struck, they died; and men, nay, perhaps e'en God himself, asked no more. The pious captain who guided them did not strip their bodies to see if the red cross and cilice hid not some other mysterious sign; and in heaven, doubtless, they were not judged with more rigour for having helped the strength of their resolutions upon earth by some hope permitted to the Christian, some second and secret thought more human, and nearer the heart of mortals."

De Thou lowered his eyes, smiled, and blushed slightly.

"My friend," replied he, gravely, "this agitation may make you ill; let us change the subject: let us not mix God and heaven in our discourse, for that is not well; put the clothes over your shoulders, for it is a cold night. I promise you," added he, covering his sick friend with maternal care, "I promise you not again to put you out of temper with my advice."

"Ah!" cried Cinq-Mars, in spite of the injunction not to speak, "but I swear, by this golden cross, and by the holy Mary, to die rather than renounce the plan you have just traced; you will, perhaps, see the day on which to beg me to stop; but it will be too late."

"Very well, very well; go to sleep," repeated the counsellor; "if you do not stop, I will continue with you, wherever this may lead me."

And taking a breviary from his pocket, he began to read attentively; a moment after he looked at Cinq-Mars, who was not yet asleep. He signed to Grandchamp to move the lamp out of the sick man's sight, but this new care succeeded no better; the latter, with his eyes still open, tossed upon his narrow couch.

"Come, you are not calm," said De Thou, smiling. "I will read you some pious words which will put your mind at rest. Ah! my friend, it is here that real rest is to be found! it is in this consoling book; for open it where you will, and you will always see, on the one side, man in the only state that suits his weakness, prayer and uncertainty of his destiny; and, on the other, God speaking to him himself, of his infirmities. What a magnificent and celestial spectacle! What a sublime bond 'twixt heaven and earth! Life, death, and eternity are there: open it by chance."

"O, yes!" said Cinq-Mars, rising with childlike vivacity, "let me open it. You know the old superstition of our country? When they open a mass-book with a sword, the first page on the left hand contains the destiny of him who reads it; and the first who enters

when he has finished, will powerfully influence the future of the reader."

"What childishness! But no matter. Here is your sword; take the point. Come!"

"Let me read myself," said Cinq-Mars, taking the book on his bed. Old Grandchamp, with his sunburnt face and grey head, sat solemnly on the foot of the bed to listen. His master read, stopped at the first sentence, but with rather a forced smile continued to the end.

"'I. Now it was in the city of Mediolanum that they appeared.

"'II. The high priest said to them, Bow down and adore the gods.

"'III. And the people were silent, regarding their faces, which appeared as the faces of angels.

"'IV. But Gervais, taking the hand of Protais, cried, raising his eyes to heaven, and filled with the Holy Ghost,

"'V. O, my brother! I see the Son of Man, who smileth on us; let me die first.

"'VI. For if I see thy blood, I fear shedding tears unworthy of the Lord our God.

"'VII. Now Protais answered him in these words:

"'VIII. My brother, it is just that I should perish after thee, for I am older, and have more strength to see thee suffer.

"'IX. But the senators and the people ground their teeth against them.

"'X. And the soldiers having struck them, their heads fell together on the same stone.

"'XI. Now it was in this very place that the blessed St. Ambrose found the ashes of the two martyrs which restore sight to the blind."

"Well," said Cinq-Mars, looking at his friend, when he had finished, "what say you to that?"

"God's will be done; but we ought not to sound it."

"Nor to go back from our purpose for child's play," said Effiat, impatiently, and wrapping himself in a cloak thrown over him. "Do you remember the sentence we used to recite together—*Justum et tenacem propositi virum;* these iron words are printed on my brain. Yes; let the universe crumble around me, its wrecks shall carry me away firm."

"Compare not the thoughts of men with those of Heaven, but let us submit," said De Thou, gravely.

"*Amen*," said old Grandchamp, whose eyes were filled with tears, which he brushed quickly away.

"Why meddlest thou, old soldier? thou weepest," said his master.

"*Amen*," said a snuffling voice from the door of the tent.

"Zounds, sir, rather ask his grey eminence who comes hither," replied the faithful servant, pointing to Joseph, who advanced with folded arms, bowing fawningly.

"Ah! this will be he!" murmured Cinq-Mars.

"Perhaps my visit is ill-timed," said Joseph, softly.

"Very timely, perhaps," said Henry Effiat, smiling, with a look at De Thou. "What can bring you here, father, at this early hour? it must be some good work."

Joseph saw he was unwelcome; and, as he never walked out without having in his mind five or six reproaches to throw in the face of those he met, and as many mental resources for getting out of difficulty, he thought that they had discovered the purpose of his visit, and felt that it was not the moment of ill humour that he must take to prepare friendship. Therefore, coolly seating himself near the bed—

"I come," said he, "sir, to speak to you on the part of the cardinal generalissimo of the two Spaniards whom you have captured; he desires to have them examined as promptly as possible; I must see and interrogate them. But I did not reckon on finding you still watching; I would have received them of your people."

After an exchange of forced politeness, the two prisoners were brought in, whom Cinq-Mars had nearly forgotten. They appeared—the one young, and showing a physiognomy lively and rather wild: this was the soldier; the other, concealing his figure beneath a brown mantle, and his sombre but sinister features under a broad-brimmed hat, which he would not remove: this was the officer; he spoke first and alone—

"Why do you drag me from my straw and my sleep? is it to deliver or to hang me?"

"Neither," said Joseph.

"What have I to do with thee, long-bearded man? I saw thee not at the breach."

It took some time after this amiable exordium to make the stranger comprehend what right a capuchin had to interrogate him.

"Well!" said he, at last; "what wouldst thou?"

"I would know your name and country."

"I tell not my name; and as to my country, I look like a Spaniard; but perhaps I am not, for a Spaniard never owns his country."

Father Joseph turning towards the two friends, said—

"I am much deceived or I have heard the sound of his voice elsewhere: this man speaks French without the least accent; but it seems that he would give us riddles, as in the East."

"The East! that is it," said the prisoner; "a Spaniard is a man of the East, he is a Catholic Turk; his blood languishes or boils—he is idle or indefatigable; indolence makes him slavish; passion, cruel; stolid in his ignorance, ingenious in his superstition, he wants but a religious book, a tyrannical master; he obeys the law of the faggot, he commands by that of the dagger, passes the night in his bloody misery, nurses fanaticism, and awakes to crime. Which is this, gentlemen? is this the Spaniard or the Turk? Guess. Ah! ah! you

seem to think I am witty, because I have hit upon a likeness. Really, gentlemen, you do me much honour, and yet the idea may be pushed too far, if one were so minded; if I pass to the physical order, for instance, may I not tell you—That man has grave and elongated features, black, almond-shaped eyes, harsh brows, sad and inconstant mouth, brown, thin, and hollow cheeks; his head is shaved, and he covers it with a handkerchief wrapped like a turban; he passes the day in bed or under the burning sun, motionless, speechless, smoking tobacco, which enervates him. Is this a Turk or a Spaniard? Are you content, gentlemen? Really, you seem so—you laugh, and at what? I, who have presented to you this idea, laugh not; see, my countenance is sad. Ah! it is perhaps because the dull prisoner has suddenly become a bully, and speaks fast? Oh, that is nothing; I could tell you other things, and render you some service, my brave friends. If I took to anecdote, for instance, if I told you that I knew a priest who had ordered the death of some heretics before saying mass, and who, furious at being interrupted at the altar during the holy sacrifice, cried to those who asked his orders, '*Kill all—kill all!*'—would you all laugh then, gentlemen? No, not all. That gentleman, for example, bites his lips and his beard. Oh! it is true, he might answer that he had done wisely, and that they did wrong to interrupt so holy a prayer. But if I added that he was hid for an hour behind the canvass of your tent, M. de Cinq-Mars, to listen to your speech, and that he is come to do you some act of perfidy, and not for me, what will he say? Now, gentlemen, are you content? May I withdraw after this display?"

The prisoner had uttered all this with the rapidity of a mountebank, and in so loud a voice that Joseph was deafened. He rose, indignantly, at the end, and addressing Cinq-Mars—

"Why suffer you a prisoner, who ought to have been hung, to speak to you thus? The Spaniard, without deigning to notice this, leaned towards Effiat, and said in his ear—

"I am worth nothing to you, give me my liberty; I could have taken it already, but I would not without your consent; give it me, or put me to death."

"Be gone, if you can," replied Cinq-Mars; "I shall be very glad." And he told his people to take away the soldier, whom he would keep in his service.

This was the work of a moment; there remained in the tent only the two friends, the disconcerted Joseph and the Spaniard, when the latter, removing his hat, showed a French and ferocious face: he laughed, and seemed to draw more air into his broad chest.

"Yes, I am a Frenchman," said he to Joseph; "but I hate France, because she is the birth-place of my father, who is a monster, and to me who have become one, and who struck him once; I hate its inhabitants because they have robbed me of my whole fortune at play, and because I have robbed them and killed them afterwards; I have

been two years a Spaniard, to kill more Frenchmen; but now I hate Spain still more; none shall ever know why. Farewell, I shall henceforth live without a nation; all men are my enemies. Yes, Joseph, thou hast seen me before," continued he, pushing him violently on the chest, and overthrowing him.—"I am Jacques de Laubardemont, son of thy worthy friend."

At these words, leaping briskly out of the tent, he disappeared like an apparition. De Thou and the servants ran to the entrance, saw him take two bounds past a surprised and disarmed soldier, and run towards the mountains as swiftly as a stag, in spite of the pursuit of many useless shots. Joseph profited by the disorder to get away, mumbling some words of politeness, and left the two friends laughing at his adventure and his disappointment, as two schoolboys would laugh at the misfortunes of their master, and at last ready to court the sleep of which both stood in need, and which they soon found, the wounded man in his bed, and the young counsellor in his arm-chair.

As to the capuchin, he walked towards his tent, meditating how he should turn all this to account, to take the best vengeance possible, when he met Laubardemont, dragging the poor mad girl by her bound hands. Each related his horrible adventures.

Joseph felt no little pleasure in driving the poignard deeper into his heart by telling him of the fate of his son:

"You are not exactly happy in your family," added he; "I advise you to shut up your niece and hang your heir, if happily you find him."

Laubardemont grinned horribly:—"As to this wretched idiot, I shall give her to an old secret judge, now a smuggler in the Pyrenees at Oleron; he will make her what he pleases, a servant in his *posada*, for example; I care little, provided my lord can never hear her speak."

Jeanne de Belfiel, with downcast head, gave no sign of intelligence; the light of reason was extinct; one word alone remained upon her lips, which she pronounced continually—"The judge! the judge! the judge!" said she, lowly; and she was silent.

Her uncle and Joseph loaded her nearly like a sack of corn, upon one of two horses brought by two servants; Laubardemont mounted one and set out from the camp, wishing to get into the mountains before day.

"Pleasant journey!" said he to Joseph; "do your business well in Paris; I commend you to Orestes and Pylades."

"Pleasant journey!" replied the latter. "I commend you to Cassandra and Œdipus."

"Oh! he has neither killed his father nor married his mother . . ."

"But he is in the right road for such pranks."

"Farewell, reverend father!"

"Farewell, venerable friend!"

Said they aloud, but to themselves:

"Farewell, assassin of the grey gown; I will gain the ear of the cardinal in thy absence."

"Farewell, villain of the red robe: go, and be thy accursed family's executioner; finish shedding thy blood which runs in others; of what remains in thee I will take care. . . . . I go now. This night has been well spent."

END OF THE FIRST PART.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RIOT.

THE immortal Shakspere, in the chorus of one of his tragedies, exclaims—

> "Thus with imagin'd wing our swift scene flies,
> In motion of no less celerity
> Than that of thought;
> Suppose that you have seen
> The well-appointed king
> Embark his royalty, and his brave fleet
> With silken streamers the young Phœbus fanning.
> . . . . . Behold,
> And follow."

With this poetic licence he traverses time and space, and, at his own pleasure, transports the attentive assembly to scenes which he stamps with sublime reality.

Without having the same genius, we are about to exercise the same right. We do not wish, any more than he did, to seat ourselves upon the tripod of the unities, but merely glancing at Paris, and the old black palace of the Louvre, we shall suddenly pass over a space of two hundred leagues, and two years of time.

Two years! what changes they work upon men in their families, and, above all, in the great and troubled family of nations, in which alliances are broken in a day, in which a birth appeases wars, in which a death destroys peace! Our eyes have seen kings return to their homes on a spring day; on that very day a ship departed on a two years' voyage; the navigator returned; the kings were on their throne; nought seemed to have passed in his absence; and yet God had shortened their reign by one hundred days.

But nothing was changed in France in 1642, the epoch to which we pass, if it were not its fears and its hopes. The future alone had changed its aspect. Before recalling our actors to the stage, it is important for us to treat with some detail of the state of the kingdom. The united power of the monarchy was made to appear still more imposing by the misfortunes of the neighbouring states; the revolts of England, and those of Spain and Portugal, made the calm enjoyed by France the subject of so much the more admiration; Strafford overthrown, and Olivarez defeated, aggrandized the immovable Richelieu.

Six formidable armies, resting on their triumphant arms, served as the rampart of the kingdom; those of the north, leagued with the

Swedes, had put to flight the imperialists, still followed by the shadow of Gustavus Adolphus; those which looked towards Italy received the keys of the Piedmontese towns which had been defended by Prince Thomas; and those which wound around the chain of the Pyrenees sustained revolted Catalonia, and shook the battlements of Perpignan, which they were not permitted to take. At home, France was not happy, but tranquil. An invisible genius seemed to have maintained this calm; for the king, mortally ill, languished at St. Germain with a young favourite; and the cardinal, they said, was dying at Narbonne. Some deaths, however, betrayed his life, and far and near men fell as if struck by a poisonous wind, recalling to mind his invisible power.

St. Preuil, one of Richelieu's enemies, placed his *iron head** upon the scaffold, *without shame or fear*, as he said, on ascending it.

Yet France seemed governed by itself, for the prince and the minister were long since separated; and of these two sick men, who hated each other, the one had never held the reins of his state, the other no longer allowed his interference to be visible; his name was no longer heard in the public acts, he no longer appeared in the government; it was effaced; everywhere he slept like a spider in the centre of his web.

If some events and some revolutions had passed during these two years, it was in the heart; it must have been some of those occult changes whence in baseless monarchies spring frightful overthrows, and long and bloody dissensions.

We shall be enlightened by scanning the old black building of the unfinished Louvre, and listening to the conversation of those who inhabited it, and those by whom it was surrounded.

It was in the month of December; a severe winter had saddened Paris, where the misery and uneasiness of the people were extreme; yet their curiosity was still alive and excited by the spectacles given by the court. Their poverty bore less heavily upon them when they contemplated the agitation of the rich; their tears became less bitter at the sight of the struggles of power; and the blood of the great, which reddened the streets and seemed alone worthy of being shed, made them bless their obscurity. Already some tumultuous scenes, some startling assassinations, had shown the feebleness of the monarch, the absence and near end of the minister, and, as a sort of prologue to the bloody comedy of La Fronde, gave point to the malice, and heightened the passions of the Parisians. This disorder did not displease them; indifferent to the causes of these quarrels, too abstract for them, they were not so to the individuals engaged in them, and began already to regard the party chiefs with affection or hatred, not because they supposed them interested in the well-being of their class, but simply because, like actors, they pleased or displeased.

One night, especially, shots had been heard frequently in the city;

* This name was given him for his valour and too firm character, which was a crime.

numerous patrols of Swiss and the body guards were attacked, and met by a few barricades in the winding streets in the isle of Nôtre-Dame; carts chained to the posts, and covered with casks, had hindered the horse from penetrating there, and some musket shots had wounded the horses and men. Yet the town still slept, except the quarter which surrounded the Louvre, inhabited at this moment by the queen and Monsieur, the Duke of Orleans. There all announced a nocturnal expedition of a very grave nature.

It was two o'clock in the morning; it was freezing, and the darkness was very great, when a numerous assembly stopped upon the quay, then scarcely paved, and slowly and gradually occupied the sandy earth which ran down towards the Seine. This gathering seemed to be composed of nearly two hundred men; they were wrapped up in great cloaks, and armed with long Spanish swords. Walking without order, they seemed to expect events rather than to seek them. Many of them sat, with their arms folded, upon the stones brought for the purposes of the building; they observed the profoundest silence. After some minutes, however, a man, who appeared to come out of a vaulted door of the Louvre, approached slowly with a dark lanthorn, the rays of which he threw into the face of each individual, and then blew it out, after having distinguished him whom he sought. He seized him by the hand, and whispered as follows:—"Well, Oliver, what said the Master?* Does all go well?"

"Yes, yes, I saw him yesterday at St. Germain; the old dog is very ill at Narbonne—he *is going to his fathers;* but we must manage our affairs skilfully, for it is not the first time that he has appeared asleep. Have you a sufficient number of people for this evening, my dear Fontrailles?"

"Rest assured. Montrésor is coming with one hundred of Monsieur's gentlemen; you will recognise him by his being disguised as a master-mason, rule in hand. Be sure not to forget the pass-words; do you and your friends know them well?"

"Yes, all except Abbé Gondi, who is not yet arrived; but God forgive me, I think here he comes. Who the devil would have known him?"

In fact, a little uncassocked man, dressed as a soldier of the French guard, and wearing very black and false moustachios, glided between them. He skipped joyfully about, rubbing his hands in an ecstasy of delight.

"Thank God! all goes well, my friend; Fiesco did not do better;" and tiptoeing to strike Oliver upon the shoulder:—"Know you that, for a man cast among pages, you don't conduct yourself badly, Sir Oliver d'Entraigues? You will be among our illustrious men if we find a Plutarch. All is well organised; you come to the point, neither too soon nor too late, like a real party chief. Fontrailles, this young man will go far, I predict. But let us make haste; in

* The Master of the Horse, Cinq-Mars, was thus named for the sake of brevity. This name will often recur in our narrative.

two hours we must appear before my uncle, the archbishop of Paris I have well schooled them, and they will cry, *God save Monsieur! God save the regent! and down with the cardinal!* like furies! They are entirely devoted to our cause, thanks to me, who have led them on. The king is very ill. All goes well, very well. I have just come from St. Germain, where I saw our friend, Cinq-Mars; he is all right—still as firm as a rock. Ah! he is what I call a man! how he has played them with his melancholy and careless air! Now he is the master of the court. The king has decided, it is said, on making him a duke or peer; it is very likely, but he still hesitates; that must be decided by our movement this evening: *the will of the people!* he must indeed bow to *the will of the people:* we are going to make it heard. This will be the death of Richelieu, will it not? Hatred of him ought to predominate in our shouts, it is essential. This will at last decide Gaston, who still wavers, does he not?"

"Ah! when does he otherwise?" said Fontrailles; "if he resolved in our favour to-day, it would be a very unfavourable omen."

"Why?"

"Because we might be very sure that to-morrow he would be against us."

"No matter," replied the abbé; "the queen is firm."

"And of good heart also," said Oliver; "that makes me hope for Cinq-Mars, who seems sometimes to have dared to bend his brows when looking at her."

"Child that you are! how badly do you yet know the court! Nothing can sustain him but the hand of the king, who loves him as a son; and as for the queen, if her heart beat, it is from memory, and not anticipation. But these are trifles; tell me, my friend, if you are sure of your young advocate, whom I see wandering about there? Is he safe?"

"Perfectly; he is an excellent royalist: he would throw the cardinal into the river any day; besides, there is Fournier, of Loudun, who is everything."

"Well, well, they are fit men. But take care, gentlemen, some one comes from the Rue St. Honoré."—"Who goes there?" cried the most advanced of the troop to some men who were approaching, —"royalists or cardinalists?"

"Gaston and *the Master*," replied the new comers, in a whisper.

"It is Montrésor and MONSIEUR's people," said Fontrailles; "we shall soon be able to begin."

"Yes, thank Heaven!" said the new comer; "for the cardinalists will pass at three; they told us so just now."

"Where are they going?" said Fontrailles.

"They are more than two hundred strong, to conduct M. de Chavigny, who is going to see the old cat at Narbonne, they say; they believed it safest to come along by the Louvre."

"Ah! well, we are going to give them a velvet paw," said the abbé.

As he finished, a noise of horses and carriages was heard, several

men in cloaks rolled an enormous stone into the middle of the street. The first horseman passed rapidly through the crowd, pistol in hand, doubting their intentions; but the postilion who was driving the first carriage stumbled over the stone and fell.

"Whose is this carriage which crushes those who can only go on foot?" cried the men in cloaks. "It is very tyrannical! he can only be a friend of the Cardinal *of Rochelle.*" *

"It is one, who fears not the friends of the little *Master,*" cried a voice from the open door, whence a man sprang upon a horse.

"Throw these cardinalists into the river!" said a sour, piercing voice.

This was the signal for firing on each side, which lit up this tumultuous and sombre scene; the clashing of swords and the trampling of the horses did not hinder them from distinguishing the cries of the one side—"Down with the minister!"—"God save the King!"—"Long live Monsieur and the Master!"—"Down with the *Red Stockings!*"—on the other, "Long live his eminence!"—"Long live the great cardinal!"—"Death to the factions!"—"God save the king!" for the name of the king was fixed in the hatred as well as in the affections of all in this strange epoch.

Meanwhile the men on foot had succeeded in placing the two carriages across the quay, so as to form a rampart against Chavigny's horses, and from thence, between the wheels, through the doors, and under the springs, brought them down with pistol-shots, and dismounted several, when the gates of the Louvre were opened suddenly, and two squadrons of the body-guards issued at a trot; the greater part had torches in their hands to light themselves and those they were going to attack. The scene changed. As the guards came up to one of the men on foot, that man was seen to stop, to remove his hat, to give his name and quality, and the guards retired, sometimes saluting, at other times shaking him by the hand. This help to Chavigny's carriages was therefore almost useless, and served only to augment the confusion. The body-guards, as if to acquit their consciences, rushed through the crowd of duelists, saying, softly—

"Come, gentlemen, be moderate."

But when two gentlemen had really crossed swords and were warmly engaged, the guard who saw them stopped to judge of their skill, and sometimes even favoured him whom he thought to be of his own opinion; for this body, like all France, had its royalists and its cardinalists.

The windows of the Louvre were lighted up by degrees, and many women's heads were visible behind the little lozenge-shaped panes, attentively contemplating the combat.

Numerous patrols of Swiss came out with torches; these soldiers were distinguished by their strange uniform. The right arm was

* During the long siege of that town, this name was given to Richelieu to turn into ridicule his obstinacy in commanding as general-in-chief, and attributing to himself the merit of the taking of Rochelle.

striped with blue and red, and the silk stocking of their right leg was red; the left side striped with blue, red, and white, and the stocking white and red. It was undoubtedly hoped in the royal palace that this foreign troop would have dispersed the mob; but they were deceived. These immoveable soldiers followed, coldly, exactly, and without extension, the orders which had been given them—passed between the armed groups, which they divided in a moment, returned before the gate with perfect precision, and resumed their ranks, as if on parade, without caring whether the enemies between whom they had passed were rejoined or not.

But the noise, appeased for a moment, became general by reason of personal abuse. Everywhere summonses, curses, and imprecations were heard; it seemed that nothing could put a stop to this combat but the destruction of either party, when cries, or rather frightful howls, came to add to the tumult. The Abbé de Gondi, then occupied in pulling down a horseman by his cloak, exclaimed—

"Here are my people. Fontrailles, you will see something fine. See, see! it is really charming!"

He loosed his hold, and mounted upon a stone to contemplate the manœuvres of his troops, crossing his arms with the importance of a general. The day began to break, and they saw that from the Isle of St. Louis there ran a crowd of men, women, and children, the very dregs of the people, casting to heaven and towards the Louvre strange vociferations. Girls carried long swords, children dragged after them immense halberds and pikes of the time of the League; old ragged women dragged after them with cords carts full of old arms, rusted and broken; workmen of all trades, most of them drunk, followed with clubs, pitchforks, lances, shovels, torches, stakes, levers, sabres, and spits; they sang and howled by turns, counterfeiting, with atrocious laughter, the mewing of cats, and carrying, like a flag, one of those animals hung from a pole, and wrapped in red cloth, thus typifying the cardinal, whose taste for cats was generally known. Public criers ran about, all red and breathless, to paste upon the walls and pavements, upon the parapets, the posts, the walls of the houses, and even upon the palace, long satirical verses made upon the public men of the time; butcher-boys and scullions, carrying large cutlasses, beat the charge upon saucepans, and dragged into the mud a fresh-killed pig, adorned with the red cap of a chorister. Young and vigorous scoundrels, clothed as women, and thickly bedaubed with vermilion, cried, at the top of their voices—"We are the mothers of families ruined by Richelieu. Death to the cardinal!" They carried in their arms straw-stuffed figures of children, which they pretended to throw into the river, and did so afterwards.

When this disgusting mob had inundated the quays with its thousands of imps, it produced a strange effect upon the combatants, and altogether different from that which their patron had expected. The enemies of each faction lowered their arms and separated. Those of Monsieur and Cinq-Mars revolted at the sight of such auxiliaries,

and themselves helped the cardinalists to mount, and assisted in conveying the wounded to the carriages, afterwards challenging their adversaries to fight them, front to front, on a ground more secret and in a more worthy manner. Blushing at the superiority of numbers and the baseness of the troops which they seemed to command, foreseeing, for the first time, the fatal consequences of the political game which they were playing, and seeing the filth which they had stirred up, they divided, pulling their large hats over their eyes, throwing their cloaks over their shoulders, and dreading the daylight.

"You have deranged everything, my dear abbé, with this rabble," said Fontrailles, stamping his foot, to Gondi, who was thunderstruck; "your worthy uncle has pretty parishioners."

"It is not my fault," replied Gondi, sullenly; "it is because these idiots have arrived an hour too late; they should have come at midnight, when they would not have been seen; their being visible was against them, and we should then only have heard the voice of the people: *Vox populi, vox Dei.* Besides, it is not so bad; their numbers have given us the means of escaping without being recognised, and, to come to the point, our task is finished; we should not wish the death of a sinner. Chavigny and his followers are brave men, whom I like much; if he is only slightly wounded, so much the better. Farewell, I am going to see Bouillon, who is come from Italy."

Oliver," said Fontrailles, "set out for St. Germain, with Fournier and Ambrosio; I am going to give an account to Monsieur, with Montrésor."

All separated, and disgust had done to these well-bred men what strength had been unable to accomplish.

Thus ended this affray, which seemed likely to be the forerunner of great misfortunes; no one was killed; the horsemen, some of whom were slightly scratched, and, to their great surprise, minus their purses, resumed their way by the carriages, through the winding streets; the others slipped away, one by one, through the mob which they had raised. The wretches who composed it, robbed of their chiefs, remained for two hours, uttering the same cries, until their wine was evaporated, and the cold extinguished the heat of their blood and their enthusiasm. At the windows of the houses fronting the quay of the city, and along the walls, the wise and real people of Paris looked sorrowfully upon these preludes of disorder, and were mournfully silent; whilst the merchants, clothed in black, preceded by their echevins and provosts, walked slowly and courageously through the populace, towards the Palace of Justice, where parliament was assembled, to lay before it their complaint of these frightful nocturnal scenes.

Meanwhile the apartments of Gaston of Orleans were in a great uproar. This prince then occupied the wing of the Louvre parallel with the Tuileries, and his windows looked out on one side upon the court, and on the other upon a mass of little houses and narrow streets, which nearly covered the whole square. He had jumped hastily from

his bed at the first noise of fire-arms, and having slipped his feet into a pair of large square high-heeled slippers, and thrown about him a loose silken dressing-gown, figured and braided all over, he walked up and down his room, calling every moment to know what passed, and crying out to his servants to run for the abbé La Rivière, his usual adviser; but, unfortunately, he had then left Paris. At each shot this timid prince ran to the windows, but he could see nothing but some torches, which were carried quickly past. It was useless to tell him that the cries he heard were in his favour; he continued walking up and down in the greatest agitation. His long black hair stood on end, and his blue eyes seemed starting from their sockets with terror and affright; he was half naked when Montrésor and Fontrailles at last arrived, and found him beating his breast, and repeating, dolefully—"*Mea culpa, mea culpa!*"

"Well, you are come, then!" cried he, running to them; "you are come at last. What is passing—what are they doing? Who are those assassins? What are those cries?"

"They cry—'Long live Monsieur!'"

Gaston, without seeming to hear them, and holding the door in his hand, so that his voice might reach the galleries where his household was assembled, continued crying, with all his might, and with much gesticulation:—

"I know nothing of all this, and I have authorised nothing; I will hear nothing, I will know nothing; I will never enter into any project; these are villains that make all this noise; speak not to me of them if you value my favour; I have no enemy; I detest such scenes. . . ."

Fontrailles, who knew the man he had to deal with, said nothing, but entered with his friend, and quietly awaited until Monsieur's burst of passion should be spent; when all was said, and the door carefully closed, he spoke:—

"My lord," said he, "we are come to ask a thousand pardons of you for the impertinence of this people, who will not leave off crying that they desire the death of your enemy, and even that they wish to see you Regent, if we are so unfortunate as to lose his Majesty; the people were so open in their talk; and the mob were too numerous for us to check; their cry came from their hearts; it was an explosion of love which cold reason could not suppress, and which exceeded all rules."

"But what is going on?" asked Gaston, a little calmed; "what have they done in the last four hours?"

"That love," continued Montrésor, coldly, "as M. de Fontrailles had the honour of telling you, so much exceeded all rules, o'erleaped all bounds, that we ourselves were led away, and we felt seized with that enthusiasm which always makes our blood thrill at the name alone of Monsieur, and which carried us on to things which we had not premeditated."

"But what have you done?" asked the prince.

"Those things," replied Fontrailles, "of which M. de Montrésor had the honour to speak to Monsieur, are precisely those which I foresaw last evening, when I had the honour of conversing with you."

"That has nothing to do with it," interrupted Gaston; "you cannot say that I either ordered or authorized it. I neither mix myself up with nor understand aught about government. . . ."

"I agree," continued Fontrailles, "that your highness ordered nothing; but I was permitted to say that I foresaw that this night would be disturbed about two o'clock, and I hoped that your highness's astonishment would be less."

The prince, regaining his confidence by degrees, and seeing that he did not frighten the two champions; being besides conscious of his consent, and reading in their eyes the remembrance of his having given it the overnight, seated himself on the side of his bed, crossed his arms, and looking at them with all the gravity of a judge, said in an imposing tone, "But, what then, have you really done?"

"Ah! next to nothing, my lord," said Fontrailles; "by chance we met in the crowd some of our friends who had quarrelled with the coachman of M. de Chavigny, who was running over them; thereupon an altercation ensued, blows followed, a few scratches were given, and the carriage was obliged to turn back, and that's all."

"Absolutely all," repeated Montrésor.

"What, all!" cried Gaston, much moved, and stamping about the room; "and is it nothing to stop the carriage of a friend of the cardinal duke? I like not these scenes, I have already told you; I do not hate the cardinal; he is a great politician, certainly, a great politician; you have compromised me horribly; they know Montrésor is my friend; if they have recognised him, they will say I sent him. . . ."

"I found this dress," replied Montrésor, "accidentally, and as it is some workman's attire, I preferred it for that reason."

Gaston breathed. "You are sure that you were not recognised?" said he; "for you must feel, my dear friend, how painful it would be . . . . consider yourself. . . ."

"So sure am I," cried the prince's follower, "that I would chance my head and my share in Paradise, if any one saw my features, or called me by name!"

"Well, well!" continued Gaston, seating himself again more calmly upon the bed, and even allowing his countenance to be slightly irradiated with satisfaction, "tell me a little of what passed."

Fontrailles undertook the recital, wherein, as may be imagined, the people played a great part, and Monsieur's men none; and in his peroration, he added, condescending to enter a little into detail,—"You might have seen, my lord, from these very windows, respectable mothers of families, driven to despair, throw their children into the Seine, heaping curses on the head of Richelieu."

"Oh! 'tis horrible!" cried the prince, indignant, or feigning to be so, at the mention of these excesses. "Is it, then, indeed true that he is so generally detested? But it is what he deserves! What!

his ambition and his avarice have reduced to such a state the good inhabitants of Paris, whom I love so much!"

"Yes, my lord," replied the orator; "and it is not Paris only, it is all France that supplicates you to deliver it from this tyrant; all is ready, it wants but a nod of your august head to annihilate this pigmy, who has attempted to abase the royal house itself."

"Alas! God is my witness that I pardon him that injury," replied Gaston, turning his eyes upwards; "but I can hear no more the cries of the people; yes, I will fly to its help! . . . ."

Montrésor threw himself upon his knees before him.

"That is to say," continued the prince, (already afraid that he had gone too far,) "provided my dignity shall not be compromised, and that my name shall not be seen."

"Ah! that is just as we should wish," cried Fontrailles, a little more at his ease. . . . "Here are already some names, my lord, to put after yours, and they will not fear to sign; I will tell you them now if you wish. . . ."

"But—but—but . . . ." said the Duke of Orleans, with a slight return of fright, "know you that it is a conspiracy that you propose to me so simply?"

"Fie! fie! my lord; men of honour like us!—a conspiracy! not at all! a league, nothing more; a little understanding to direct the unanimous voice of the nation and of the court: that's all."

"But—but, that is not clear; for, in short, this affair will neither be general nor public: then it will be a conspiracy; you will not avow that you are in it."

"I, my lord! pardon me; to the whole earth, since all the kingdom is in it already, and I am of the kingdom. Ah! who would not sign his name after De Bouillon and Cinq-Mars? . . . ."

"After, perhaps, but that differs from before," said Gaston, looking fixedly at Fontrailles, and more shrewdly than he had expected. . . .

The latter seemed to hesitate a moment. . . .

"Well! what will Monsieur do if I tell him some names after which he can put his own?"

"Ah, ah! that's good," replied the prince, laughing; "know you that above mine there are not many? I see but one."

"And if that one be there, does Monsieur promise to sign that of Gaston under it?"

"Egad! with all my heart; I risk nothing, for above me there can be but the king, who is surely not of the party."

"Well! from this moment," said Montrésor, "permit us to take you at your word; consent at present to only two things—see M. de Bouillon with the queen, and the Master of the Horse with the king."

"Done!" said Monsieur, gaily striking Montrésor on the shoulder; "I will see my sister-in-law to-day, and I will pray my brother to run a stag with me at Chambord."

The two friends asked no more, and were themselves surprised at progress they had made; never had they seen their chief so

resolved. Then, for fear of diverting him from the road he had taken, they hastened to turn the conversation upon other subjects, and retired in ecstasies at leaving on his ear, as their final words, that they reckoned upon his last promises.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ALCOVE.

WHILST a prince was thus with difficulty reassured by those who surrounded him, and showed a terror which might have proved contagious, a princess, more exposed to accidents, more isolated by the indifference of her husband, weaker by her nature and the timidity which arises from the absence of happiness, presented an example of the calmest courage, the most pious resignation, to the terrified suite that was gathered around her; this was the queen. Scarcely had she slept an hour, when she heard piercing shrieks from behind the doors and thick tapestry of her room. She ordered her women to enter, and the Duchess of Chevreuse, wrapped in a great cloak, fell almost fainting at the foot of her bed, followed by four ladies of the bed-chamber, and three female attendants. Her delicate feet were naked and bleeding, for she had hurt them in running; she cried like a child, and exclaimed that a shot had penetrated the shutters of her room, and wounded her; she besought the queen to send her back into exile, where she found more quietness than in a country where they would assassinate her, because she was her majesty's friend. Her hair was in great disorder, and fell to her feet; this was her principal beauty, and the young queen thought that there was less chance in this toilet than she wished them to believe.

"Ah! my dear friend, what has happened?" said she, with considerable coolness; "you look like the Magdalen, but in her youth, before repenting. It is probable that if they want any one here, it is I; be calmer."

"No, madam; save me, protect me; it is that Richelieu who pursues me, I am certain."

The firing, which was then heard more distinctly, convinced the queen that the terror of Madame Chevreuse was not vain.

"Come, dress me, Madame de Motteville!" cried she. But the latter was entirely bewildered, and opening one of those immense ebony coffers which then served for wardrobes, took out a casket of the princess's diamonds to save it, and did not hear her. The other women had seen the glare of the torches upon the windows, and imagining that the palace was on fire, threw jewels, laces, gold vases, and even porcelain into sheets, which they afterwards wanted to throw out of the window. In the meantime came Madame Guémené, with a few more clothes on than the Duchess of Chevreuse, but appearing still more tragic; her terror slightly alarmed the queen, because of that lady's ceremonious and peaceable character. She entered without a salutation, pale as a spectre, and said quickly—

"Madame, it is time to confess; they are attacking the Louvre, and they tell me that the people are pouring out of the city."

Every one in the room was silent and motionless from terror.

"We are about to die!" cried the Duchess of Chevreuse, still on her knees. "Oh! my God! why stayed I not in England? Yes, let us confess. I will confess aloud: I have loved . . . . , I have been loved by . . . . "

"Very well—very well," said the queen, "I will not undertake to hear it to the end; that would, perhaps, not be the least of my dangers to which you pay no attention."

The calm collectedness of Anne of Austria, and this second severe answer, perhaps, restored a little presence of mind to this handsome woman, who arose confusedly, and perceiving the disorder of her dress, went to complete her toilet in a neighbouring apartment.

"Donna Stephania," said the queen to one of her women, the only Spaniard whom she had retained near her, "go, seek the captain of the guards: it is time that I should see some men, and hear something reasonable."

She said this in Spanish; and the mystery of this order, in a language which these ladies did not comprehend, brought them to their senses.

The waiting-woman thus addressed was telling her beads; but she rose from the corner of the alcove whither she had fled, and ran to obey her mistress.

Meanwhile the signs of revolt and symptoms of terror became more distinct, below and inside. In the great court of the Louvre were heard the prancing of the horses of the guard, the commands of the chiefs, the rolling of the queen's carriages, which were being drawn out for her flight, if such a step should be necessary; the noise of the iron chains which were stretched across the road to form barricades in case of attack; the hurried tread, the clash of arms, the troops of men that ran to and fro in the corridors; the loud and confused cries of the people, which rose and fell, were hushed, and again broke forth, like the uncertain moaning of the winds and waves.

The door then opened, and this time a charming creature stepped across the threshold.

"I have expected you, my dear Marie," said the queen, holding out her hands to the Duchess of Mantua: "you have more bravery than any of us, you come prepared to be seen by all the court."

"Fortunately I was not in bed," replied the young princess of Gonzaga, casting down her eyes; "I have seen all from my windows. Oh! madam, madam! fly! I pray you save yourself by the secret stairs, and let us remain here; they may take one of us for the queen, and," added she, shedding a tear, "I have heard cries of death. Save yourself, madam! I have no throne to lose; you are the daughter, wife, and mother of kings; save yourself, and leave us here."

"You have more to lose than I have, my friend, in beauty, in

youth, and, I hope, in happiness," said the queen, with a gracious smile, presenting her beautiful hand to kiss. "Remain in my cabinet, if you wish it, but we will both be there. The only service that I will accept of you, fair child, is to bring me that little golden casket which poor Motteville has left on the ground, and which contains the most precious thing I have."

Then, on receiving it, she added in Marie's ear:

"If any misfortune should happen to me, swear that thou wilt throw it into the Seine."

"I will obey you, madam, as my benefactress and as my second mother," said she, weeping.

Meantime the noise of the fight increased upon the quays, and the glass windows often reflected the flashes of which they heard the explosion. The captain of the guards and Swiss asked for orders through Donna Stephania.

"I will allow them to enter," said the princess; "come on this side, ladies; at such a moment I am as I ought to be, a man." Then raising the curtains of her bed, she continued, addressing the two officers:—

"Gentlemen, first of all remember that you will answer with your heads for the lives of my children the princes; do you understand, M. de Guitaut?"

"I will sleep across the door, madam; but this moment threatens neither them nor your majesty."

"It is well; think of me only after them," interrupted the queen, "and protect all those who are threatened. You also hear me, M. de Bassompierre; you are a gentleman; forget that your uncle is still in the Bastille, and do your duty towards the grandson of the late king, his friend."

The person addressed was a young man of frank and open countenance.

"Your majesty," said he, with a slight German accent, "can see that I have forgotten my family only, and not yours." And he showed his left hand, from which two fingers were missing.

"I have still another hand," said he, bowing, and retiring with Guitaut.

The queen, touched at this plea for his own fidelity, arose immediately, and in spite of the prayers of the Princess Guémené, the tears of Marie of Gonzaga, and the cries of Madam Chevreuse, would stand at the half-opened window, leaning on the shoulder of the Duchess of Mantua.

"What do I hear?" said she; "'tis true, they indeed cry, 'Long live the king! . . . . Long live the queen!'"

The people, thinking it was her, doubled their cries at this moment, and they heard, "Down with the cardinal! Long live the Master!"

Marie trembled.

"What ails you?" said the queen, observing her; but as she answered not, and trembled violently, the good and tender-hearted

princess appeared not to notice it, and paying the greatest attention to the cries of the people and its movements, she exaggerated even an uneasiness which had left her at the sound of the first name. An hour afterwards, when she was told that the crowd waited but a wave of her hand to retire, she gave it graciously, and with an appearance of satisfaction; but this joy was far from being complete, for her mind was troubled by many things, and especially by the presentiment of the regency. The further she leaned out of the window to show herself, the more visible became the revolting scenes which the day brought to light; terror entered her heart in proportion as it became more necessary to appear calm and confident; and her soul sickened at the joyful words which her mouth uttered, and the gaiety which lit up her countenance. Exposed to all eyes, she felt herself a woman, and trembled at the sight of the people whom perhaps she might soon be called upon to govern, and who had already taken upon themselves to demand the death of one person, and summon their queen to appear before them.

She bowed gracefully to them.

One hundred and fifty years afterwards, that bow was repeated by another princess, like her born of the blood of Austria, and Queen of France. The monarchy, baseless, as Richelieu had made it, was born and died between these two appearances.

At last the princess shut her windows, and hastened to dismiss her timid suite.

The thick curtains fell over the curiously-painted windows, and the chamber was no longer illumined by the light of an odious day; great wax flambeaux burned in candelabras fashioned as golden hands, springing from framed and flowery tapestry which covered the walls. She wished to remain alone with Marie of Mantua, and entered with her into the enclosure formed by the balustrade; she fell upon her bed, tired with her courage and her smiles, and gave vent to floods of tears. Marie, kneeling on the velvet footstool, held one of her hands in her own, and without daring to speak first, tremblingly supported her head; for, till then, never had there been seen a tear in the eyes of the queen.

She remained thus for some minutes; after which the princess, rising painfully, said:—

"Afflict thyself not, my child; leave me to weep; 'tis well for a queen if she can weep! If thou prayest to God for me, ask Him to give me strength not to hate the enemy that pursues me everywhere, and that destroys the royal family of France and the monarchy, by his unmeasured ambition. I recognise his hand in what is passing. I see it in these tumultuous revolts."

"How! madam, is he not at Narbonne? for undoubtedly 'tis the cardinal of whom you speak; and have you not heard that these cries were for you and against him?"

"Yes, my friend, he is three hundred leagues from us, but his fatal

genius watches at this door. If these cries have been uttered, it is because he permits them; if these men are assembled, it is because the hour has not come at which he has fixed to destroy them. Believe me, I know him, and I have paid dear for the knowledge of that froward soul; it has cost all the power of my rank, the pleasures of my age, the affections of my family, and even the heart of my husband; he has isolated me from the whole world; he now shuts me up within a barrier of honour and respect; and but just now he has dared, to the scandal of all France, to accuse me myself; they have inspected my papers, they have interrogated me; they made me sign my guilt, and ask pardon of the king for a fault of which I was ignorant; in fine, I owe to the devotion of a faithful servant,* now suffering an imprisonment perhaps eternal, the preservation of that casket which thou hast saved. I see by thy looks that thou thinkest me too frightened; but be not deceived in this, my dear child, as all the court seems to be; be sure that this man is everywhere, and that he knows even our thoughts."

"What! madam, does he know all that these people have cried under your windows, and the names of those who sent them?"

"Yes, undoubtedly, he knew it beforehand or foresaw it; he permits it, he authorized it, to compromise me in the king's eyes, to separate him from me for ever; he wishes to put the last stroke to my humiliation."

"But yet, the king has not loved him for two years, it is another that he loves."

The queen smiled; for some time she contemplated the pure and simple features of the beautiful girl, and her open countenance which was languishingly raised towards her; she pushed back the black curls which veiled her beautiful brow, and her eyes and mind seemed absorbed in the contemplation of such bewitching innocence expressed upon so fine a face; she kissed her cheek, and replied:

"Thou suspectest not, poor angel, a sad truth; 'tis that the king loves no one, and that those who appear most in favour are the nearest to being abandoned by him, and thrown to him that gloats over and devours all."

"Oh, my God! what horrors do you relate!"

"Knowest thou how many he has destroyed?" continued the queen, in a lower voice, and looking into her eyes as if to read all her thoughts and to transfer her own; "knowest thou the end of his favourites? hast thou not been told of the exile of Baradas, that of St. Simon, the convent of Mademoiselle Lafayette, the shame of Madam de Hautefort, the death of Chalais? all have fallen before an order from Richelieu to his master, and without that favour, which thou takest for friendship, their life had been peaceful; but this favour is deadly, 'tis a poison. Look you at that tapestry, which

* He was named Laporte. Neither the fear of torture, nor the hope of the cardinal's gold, could tear from him one word of the queen's secrets.

represents Semela; the favourites of Louis XIII. resemble that woman; his attachment devours like that fire by which she is dazzled and burned."

But the young duchess was not in a state to hear the queen; she continued to fix upon her her large black eyes, dimmed by a veil of tears; her hands shook in those of Ann of Austria, and a convulsive agitation made her lips tremble.

"I am very cruel, am I not, Marie?" continued the queen, in a voice of extreme sweetness, and caressing her like a child, from which it is wished to draw an avowal; "O, yes, undoubtedly I am very wicked; your heart is full; you can bear it no longer, my child. Come, speak to me; what are your relations with M. de Cinq-Mars?"

At this name, grief found a passage, and still on her knees at the feet of the queen, Marie poured in her turn on the bosom of that good princess a deluge of tears, with child-like sobs, and so violent was her emotion that it seemed as if her heart would break. The queen awaited the end of this first burst of grief, rocking her in her arms as if to appease her sorrow, and often repeating: "Come! my child, come! do not thus afflict thyself."

"Ah! madam," she cried, "I am very guilty towards you; but I had not counted upon such tenderness! I have done very wrong, I shall be perhaps sadly punished! But, alas! how shall I dare to tell it you, madam? It was not to lay bare my heart that was difficult to me; it was to learn what was passing there myself."

The queen reflected for a moment, putting her finger upon her lips.

"You are right," replied she, afterwards, "you are right, Marie, it is always the first word which it is difficult to tell, and that often destroys us; but it is necessary, and without this etiquette we should almost want dignity. Ah! it is difficult to reign! To-day, I wish to probe your heart, and I arrive too late to do you good."

Marie lowered her head without reply.

"Is it necessary to encourage you to speak?" replied the queen; "must I remind you that I have nearly adopted you as my eldest daughter; that after having endeavoured to marry you to the king's brother, I shall prepare for you the throne of Poland? must I, Marie? or is more necessary; I will do it for thee: if afterwards thou dost not know thy whole heart, I have judged thee badly. Open with thine own hand this golden casket: here is the key; open it boldly —tremble not, like me."

The Duchess of Mantua hesitatingly obeyed, and saw in this little chased coffer a knife of clumsy make, and rusted iron blade; it laid upon some letters carefully folded, upon which was the name of Buckingham. She wished to raise them, Ann of Austria stopped her.

"Seek no more," said she; "this is all the treasure of the queen. .... It is a real treasure, for 'tis the blood of a man, now no more, but who lived for me: he was the handsomest, the bravest, the most illustrious of the nobles of Europe; he covered himself with the diamonds of the crown of England to please me; he stirred up a bloody

war, and armed fleets, which he himself commanded, for the happiness of fighting my husband; he crossed the seas to cull a flower on which I had walked, and ran the risk of death to kiss and bathe with tears the feet of this bed, in the presence of two women of my court. Shall I say more? yes, I will tell thee, I have loved, I still love him in the past more than I can love him in the present. Well! he never knew it, never guessed it: this face, these eyes were in his presence rigid as marble, whilst my heart burned and broke with sorrow; but I was Queen of France. . . ."

Here Ann of Austria clutched the hand of Marie.

"Darest thou complain now," continued she, "if thou hast not been able to speak to me of love; and darest thou be silent when I speak to thee of these things?"

"Oh! yes, madam, I will dare to confide in you my grief, since you are to me. . . ."

"A friend, a woman," interrupted the queen; "I have been a woman in my alarm, which has given thee a secret unknown to the whole world; I have been a woman, thou seest it, by a love which survives the man I loved. Speak!—speak to me!—it is time! . . . . ."

"On the contrary, the time has passed," replied Marie, with a forced smile; "M. de Cinq-Mars and I are united for ever."

"For ever!" cried the queen; bethink yourself! your rank, your name, your future, all lost! Do you retain this blighting news for your brother, the Duke of Bethel, and all the Gonzagas?"

"For more than four years I have thought and I am resolved; and for ten days we have been affianced. . . . . ."

"Affianced!" cried the queen, clasping her hands; "they have deceived you, Marie. Who dared do it without the order of the king? This is an intrigue of which I desire to know the particulars; I am sure you are entrapped and deceived."

Mary collected her scattered thoughts, and said:

"Nothing was more simple, madam, than our attachment. I dwelt, as you know, in the old castle of Chaumont, with Marshal d'Effiat's widow, mother of M. de Cinq-Mars. I had retired thither to weep for my father, and it soon happened that he had to weep for his. In this numerous and afflicted family, I saw only his grief, which was as deep as mine; all that he said, I had already thought; and when we came to speak of our sorrows, we found them both alike. As I was the first unfortunate, I had got the better of my sadness, and attempted to console him by telling him what I had suffered, so that, in pitying me, he forgot himself. This was the beginning of our love, which, you see, was born almost between two tombs."

"May it be God's will that it should end happily!" said the queen.

"I hope so, madam, since you pray for me," continued Marie; "besides, all smiles on me at present; but then, I was very unfortunate. The news arrived one day at the castle, that the cardinal

summoned M. de Cinq-Mars to join the army; it seemed to me as if they were carrying off another relation, and yet we were strangers. But M. de Bassompierre ceased not to speak of war and death; every evening I withdrew in tribulation, and I wept all night. At first I believed that my tears still ran for the past; but I perceived that it was for the future, and I felt that they could not be the same tears, for I desired to conceal them.

"Some time passed in expectation of this departure; I saw him daily, and I pitied him for his being obliged to go, because he told me every moment that he should have wished to live for ever, as he had done before, in his country, and with us. He was thus unambitious until the day that he set off, because he knew not that he was . . . . I dare not tell your majesty."

Marie blushed, and lowered her moistened eyes. . . . . .

"Come!" said the queen, "that he was loved! is it not?"

"And in the evening he departed ambitious!"

"That is now very perceptible. But at last he departed," said Ann of Austria, relieved of some of her uneasiness; "but he has returned these two years, and you have seen him? . . . ."

"Rarely, madam," said the young duchess, somewhat boldly, "and always in a church, and in the presence of a priest, before whom I have promised to be the bride of only M. de Cinq-Mars."

"Is it then, indeed, a marriage? have they dared to do it? I shall ascertain. But, good God, what faults, what faults, my child, are in those words. Let me think of them."

And thinking aloud, the queen continued, with her head lowered, and her eyes cast upon the ground in the attitude of reflection—

"Reproaches are useless and cruel if the evil be committed; the past is no longer ours, we must think of the future. Cinq-Mars is personally good, brave, high-minded, and of profound ideas; I have noticed him; in two years he has travelled far on the road to fame, and I see it was for Marie. . . . . He conducts himself well; he is worthy of her,—yes, in my eyes, he is worthy of her; but he is not so in the sight of Europe. It is necessary that he should be more elevated still; the Princess of Mantua cannot have less than a prince for a husband. He must be one. I can do nought; I am not queen: I am the neglected wife of the king. There is only the cardinal, the everlasting cardinal . . . . and he is his enemy; and perhaps, this riot! . . . ."

"Alas! it is the commencement of the war between them; I saw it immediately."

"He is then lost!" cried the queen, throwing her arms about Marie. "Forgive me, my child, if I rend thy heart, but we ought to see and say all now; yes, he is lost, if he overthrow not this wicked man, for the king will not renounce him; strength alone . . . ."

"He will overthrow him, madam—he will do it, if you aid him. You are like the goddess of France. Oh! I conjure you! protect the angel against the demon! it is your cause! that of your royal family! that of your nation! . . . ."

The queen smiled.

"It is, above all, thy cause, my daughter, is it not? and it is as such that I embrace it with all my might; 'tis not much I have told thee; but such as it is, take it all: provided, however, that this *angel* descend not to mortal sins," added she, with a sly look; "for I have heard his name pronounced to-night by voices very unworthy of him."

"Oh, madam! I will swear that of this he knew nothing!"

"Ah, my child! speak not of state affairs, thou art not learned in them yet; let me sleep a little if I can, before I rise to my toilet; my eyes burn, and thine also, perhaps."

As she said these words, the amiable queen sank her head upon the pillow which covered the casket, and Marie soon saw that fatigue had overpowered her. She then rose, and seating herself in a great square tapestried arm-chair, joined her hands upon her knees, and fell into a reverie upon her mournful position. Consoled by the sympathy of her dear protectress, she often opened her eyes to watch her sleep, and secretly uttered all the blessings of which love is so prodigal towards those who protect it. Sometimes kissing her forehead, as if, by her kisses, she could convey to her soul all the thoughts favourable to her ever present dream.

The queen slept long, and Marie thought and wept. However, she recollected that at ten o'clock she would have to appear before all the royal court; she wished to break off her reflections, to stop her tears, and took a large folio volume, placed upon a table, inlaid with enamel and medallions: this was the *Astrea* of M. d'Urfé, a work on *gallantry*, adored by the fair prudes of the court. Marie's simple, but upright mind, could not enter into these pastoral amours; she was too simple to comprehend the shepherds of Lignon, too spiritual to be pleased at their discourse, and too impassioned to feel their tenderness. However, the great fashionableness of this romance so attracted her, that she endeavoured to take an interest in it, and accusing herself whenever she experienced the wearying influence of the pages of her book, she turned over leaf after leaf with impatience to find something which might please or delight her: an engraving arrested her attention; it represented the shepherdess, Astrea, with high-heeled shoes, a bodice, and an immense *farthingale*, raising herself upon her toes to look at the tender Celadon, who was drowning himself in despair at having been rather coldly received in the morning. Without attending to the motives of its taste, or the accumulated faults of this picture, she found in turning over the pages a word which fixed her attention: it was *Druid*. "Ah! here is a great character," said she; "I shall see one of those mysterious sacrificers who raised the immense stones, which, I am told, are still preserved in Britain; but I shall see him sacrificing men: that will be a horrid sight; however, let us read."

So saying, Marie read the following with repugnance, knitting her brows, and almost trembling:—

"*The Druid Adamas, delicately called the shepherds Pimander, Ligdamont, and Clidamant, arrived quite recently from Calais. 'This adventure cannot end,' said he, 'but in an extremity of love. The mind, when it loves, is transformed into the object beloved; it is to figure this to you that my agreeable enchantments will show you in this fountain the nymph Sylvia, whom you all three love. The high priest, Amasis, is coming from Montbrison, and will explain to you the delicacy of this idea. Go, then, gentle shepherds, if your desires be well regulated, they will cause you no torments; if they be not, you will be punished by swoons, like those of Celadon, and the shepherdess, Galatea, whom the fickle Hercules abandoned in the mountains of Auvergne, and who gave her name to the tender country of Gaul; or you will be stoned by the shepherdesses of Lignon, as was the ferocious Amidor. The great nymph of this cave has wrought enchantment . . . . ."

The effect of the enchantment of the *great nymph* was complete upon the princess, who had scarce strength to find that the Druid Adamis was an *ingenious allegory*, representing the lieutenant-general of *Montbrison, of the family of Papon;* her wearied eyelids closed, and the great book slipped upon the velvet cushion, which supported her feet, and there rested the lovely Astrea and gallant Celadon, as motionless as Marie of Mantua, conquered by them and by profound sleep.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CONFUSION.

During the same evening, the effects of which we have seen acted so differently on Gaston of Orleans and the queen, the calmness and silence of study reigned in the modest cabinet of a great house in the neighbourhood of the Palace of Justice. A copper lamp of gothic form struggled with the growing day, and threw a red light upon a mass of papers and books which covered a large table; it showed the bust of L'Hospital, that of Montaigne, of President de Thou the historian, and of King Louis XIII.; the chimney was high, and wide enough to afford accommodation to those whom the coldness of the weather might induce to sit there, and a wood fire burned cheerfully on the hearth. Upon one of the fire-dogs rested the foot of the studious de Thou, who, early as it was, was attentively examining the new works of Descartes and Grotius; he was writing on his knees his notes upon those books of philosophy and politics which then formed the subject of universal conversation; but at that moment the *Metaphysical Meditations* absorbed all his attention; the philosopher of Touraine enchanted the young counsellor. He often struck the book, and uttered enthusiastic sounds of admiration; sometimes he took a globe placed near him, and kept turning it round and round, plunged into the profoundest reveries of science; then, led by their depth to a more elevated train of thought, he suddenly

* Read *Astrea* (if it be possible).

threw himself on his knees before a crucifix placed over the mantelpiece, because on the verge of the human mind he had met his God. At other moments, he buried himself in his great arm-chair, so as to be nearly seated upon his back, and clasping his hands over his eyes, followed in his head the reasoning of René Descartes, from this idea of the first meditation:

"Suppose that we are asleep, and that all these particularities—viz., that we open our eyes, move our heads, stretch out our arms, are but false illusions. . . ."

To this sublime conclusion of the third:

"There is but one thing more to be said: it is, that like the idea of self, that of God is born and produced with me from the time I was created. And truly, it ought not to be thought strange that God, in creating me, should have put this idea into me to be as the stamp of the workman imprinted upon his work."

These thoughts entirely occupied the mind of the young counsellor, when he was suddenly aroused by a great noise under his windows; he thought some fire excited these prolonged cries, and hastened to look towards the wing of the building occupied by his mother and sisters; but all seemed asleep, and no smoke escaped from the chimneys to attest the wakefulness of the inhabitants: he blessed Heaven, and running to another window, saw the people, whose exploits we have recounted, pressing towards the narrow streets which led to the quay. After having examined this assemblage of women and children, the ridiculous ensign at their head, and the rude disguises of the men: "'Tis some popular festival, or carnival comedy," said he; and re-seating himself in the chimney corner, he took a great almanac from the table, and carefully sought what saint they were honouring on that day. He looked at the column for December, and finding at the fourth day of that month the name of *St. Barbara*, he remembered that he had seen some little cannons and casks carried past, and, perfectly satisfied with this explanation, he hastened to drive away the idea which had disturbed him, and fell back into that sweet study, rising occasionally only to take a book from the shelves of his library; and after having read a sentence, a line, or only a word, he threw it upon his table, or on the floor, encumbering himself thus with papers which he dare not put in their places, for fear of interrupting his reveries.

Suddenly the door opened, and a name was announced which was distinguished among those at the bar; it was that of a man whose position as a magistrate made him well known to de Thou.

"Ah! by what chance do I see M. Fournier at five in the morning?" cried he; "is there some unfortunate to defend, some family to feed by the fruits of his talent? has he some error to destroy among us, some virtue to awaken in our hearts? for such are his accustomed works. Perhaps you come to tell me some humiliating news of our parliament; alas! the secret chambers of the Arsenal are more powerful than a magistracy old as the time of Clovis; the parliament is upon its knees, all is lost, at least if it be not suddenly refilled with men like yourself."

"Sir, I do not merit your eulogiums," said the advocate, entering, accompanied by a grave and aged man, wrapped like himself in a great cloak; "I deserve, on the contrary, all your blame, and I am almost repentant as well as Count Lude here. We come to ask of you an asylum for the day."

"Asylum! and against whom?" said de Thou, handing them chairs.

"Against the lowest people of Paris, who wish us to be their chiefs, and from whom we fly; it is odious; the eye, the nose, the ear, and feeling, are too much hurt by it," said M. de Lude, with comic gravity: "'tis too strong!"

"Ah! ah! say you it's too bad?" said de Thou, much astonished, but wishing not to seem so.

"Yes," replied the advocate; "really, between ourselves, the Master goes too far."

"Yes, he urges these things forward too fast; he will render our projects abortive," added his companion.

"Ah! I see, you say he goes too far," replied de Thou, stroking his beard, and still more surprised.

It was three months since he had seen his friend Cinq-Mars; but this absence had not made him uneasy, knowing him to be at St. Germain, high in favour, and constantly with the king. Devoted to his studies, he never knew aught of public events but when they forced themselves on his notice by their clamour; he knew nothing of current life till the last extremity, and often afforded amusement to his friends by his artless astonishment; the more so that from a little worldly self-love, he wished to appear to understand public affairs, and attempted to hide the surprise he experienced at each piece of news. Now he was in this dilemma, and to self-love was joined friendship; he did not wish it to be thought that Cinq-Mars had failed in respect towards him, and, even for the honour of his friend, he wished to appear acquainted with his projects.

"You know well where we are," continued the advocate. . . .

"Perfectly; proceed."

"Connected as you are with him, you are not ignorant of all that has been going on for the last year. . . ."

"Certainly . . . . all that has been going on . . . . but pray continue."

"You will agree with us, sir, that the Master is not right. . . ."

"Ah! ah! that is according to circumstances; but explain yourself, I shall see. . . ."

"Well! you know what was agreed at the last conference of which he gave you an account?"

"Ah! that is to say . . . . forgive me, I very nearly remember; but set me a little on the way. . . ."

"It is useless; doubtless you have not forgotten that he himself recommended us to Marion de Lorme?"

"Not to add another person to our list," said M. du Lude.

"Ah! yes, yes! I understand," said de Thou; "that seems reasonable, very reasonable, truly!"

"Well!" continued Fournier, "he himself has infringed that convention; for this morning, among the ridiculous rascals whom that ferret of an abbé, Gondi, brought us, I saw some vagabond *Hector*, who throughout the night struck right and left at both parties, crying out with all his might:—'Soho! Aubijoux! thou hast gained of me three thousand ducats, there are three thrusts for thee. Soho! La Chapelle! I will have ten drops of thy blood in exchange for my ten pistoles;' and I saw him with my own eyes attack those gentlemen, and several others of both parties, loyally enough, it is true, for he struck them in front, and when they were aware, but with much luck and revolting impartiality."

"Yes, sir, and I was going to give him my advice," continued du Lude, "when I saw him slip away into the crowd like a squirrel, and laugh loudly with some unknown swarthy-looking knaves. I have no doubt that M. de Cinq-Mars did not send him, for he gave orders to that Ambrosio, whom you must know, that Spanish prisoner, that scapegrace he has taken for a servant. By Jove, I am disgusted with this, and I do not care to be confounded with this rabble."

"This, sir," resumed Fournier, "is very different from the affair of Loudun. The people did but rise, without really revolting: in that country it was the sane and estimable part of the population, indignant at an assassination, and not animated by wine or money. It was a cry uttered against an executioner, a cry of which one could be the organ honourably, and not these howls of factious hypocrisy, and a mass of obscure people, sprung from the dregs of Paris, and vomited from its sewers. I avow that I am much grieved at what I have seen, and I also am come to pray you to speak of it to the Master."

De Thou was much embarrassed during this discourse, and sought in vain to comprehend what Cinq-Mars could have to do with the people, who had seemed to him to be rejoicing: on the other side he persisted in his desire of not avowing his ignorance; it was total, however, for the last time he had seen his friend he spoke only of the king's horses and stables, of falconry, and of the importance of the grand huntsman in the affairs of the state, which seemed not to announce vast projects into which the people could enter. At last he timidly risked saying:

"Gentlemen, I promise to undertake your commission; meanwhile I offer you bed and board for whatever time you require. But to tell you my opinion in this matter is very difficult. By the by, can you tell me whether it was not the festival of St. Barbara this morning?"

"St. Barbara!" said Fournier.

"St. Barbara!" said du Lude.

"Yes, yes, they burned powder; that is what M. de Thou would say," replied the first, laughing. "Ah! this is very droll! very droll! Yes, I really believe it is St. Barbara's day."

This time de Thou was confounded by their astonishment, and

reduced to silence; as to them, seeing that they were not understood by him nor he by them, they were silent.

They were still dumb, when the door opened for Cinq-Mars's old tutor, Abbé Quillet, who entered, halting a little. He seemed very sad, and preserved none of his old gaiety, either of look or speech; only his eye was restless and his voice harsh.

"I must beg pardon, my dear de Thou, for thus early disturbing your occupations; my visit is somewhat astonishing, is it not, for one troubled with gout? Ah! how time runs on; it is two years since I began to limp; I was on the contrary very nimble on my journey to Italy: 'tis true, fear strengthens our legs."

So saying, he stepped into the recess of a window, and signing to de Thou to come to him, he continued, lowly:

"What I am about to tell you, my friend, you know already, for you are in their secrets: I affianced them fifteen days ago, as they have told you."

"Oh, yes! indeed!" said poor de Thou, falling from the Charybdis into the Scylla of astonishment.

"Come, come, don't mince the matter! you know it well," continued the abbé. "But, in faith, I fear I was too easy, though the love of the two children was really interesting; I fear for him more than her; I believe he has done something foolish by the riot this morning. We ought to be consulted in such matters."

"But," said de Thou, gravely, "I know not, on my honour, what you mean. Who has committed this folly?"

"Come, my dear friend, why do you play the mysterious with me? it is wrong," said the good man, beginning to be vexed.

"No, really! But whom have you affianced?"

"Still? fie, fie, sir!"

"But what was this riot about this morning?"

"You enjoy yourself vastly at my expense!—I shall go," said the abbé, rising.

"I swear that I understand none of this that has been told me to-day. Is it about M. de Cinq-Mars?"

"That's right, sir! that's right. You treat me as a cardinalist; well! let us go," said the enraged Abbé Quillet. And he took up his crutch-headed cane, and ran out without listening to de Thou, who followed him to his coach, seeking to appease him, but unsuccessfully, for he dared not name his friend upon the stairs before his servants, and he could not explain himself. He had the mortification, therefore, of seeing his old friend depart in a rage, and could only cry:—"To-morrow," when the coachman drove off, and he received no answer.

He had not, however, uselessly descended to his door, for he saw groups of hideous people who were coming back from the Louvre, and was thus better able to judge of the importance of their movement in the morning; he heard gruff voices cry triumphantly:

"The little queen appeared as usual!"—"Long live the good Duke

of Bouillon, who is coming to us! he has a hundred thousand men with him, who are coming up the Seine on rafts."—"The old Cardinal of Rochelle is dead."—"God save the King! long live the Master!"

The cries were doubled on the arrival of a coach and four, the servants of which wore the king's livery; it stopped at the counsellor's door. He recognised the equipage of Cinq-Mars, for whom Ambrosio got down to draw aside the great curtains, which formed the doors of the carriages of that period. The people rushed between the foot-path and the door-steps, so that our hero had great difficulty in getting through the crowd of market-women who wished to embrace him, crying:

"Here thou art, then, my heart, my little friend!"—"Thou art come at last, my pet!"—"See how handsome he is, the love, with his great lace collar!"—"Aint he better than the other with his white moustache?"—"Come, my boy, bring us out some good wine!"

Henry D'Effiat blushed deeply as he seized the hand of his friend, who hastened to shut his doors. "This popular favour is a cup from which one must drink," said he, entering. . . . .

"It seems," replied de Thou, gravely, "that you drink it to the very dregs."

"I will explain this noise," responded Cinq-Mars, rather embarrassed. "Now, as you love me, dress yourself, to accompany me to the queen's toilet."

"I have promised blindness," said the counsellor; "however, it cannot last much longer, indeed. . . ."

"Once more, I will speak to you at length, as we go to the queen. But make haste; it is ten o'clock already."

"I will go there with you," said de Thou, taking him into his library, where he found Count Lude and Fournier; and he himself passed into another apartment.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TOILET.

THE carriage of the Master of the Horse rolled rapidly towards the Louvre, when, drawing the curtains, he took the hand of his friend, and said to him, with emotion:

"Dear de Thou, I have kept great secrets in my heart, and believe me, they have been very heavy; but two fears have made me silent; that of your danger, and, shall I confess it? that of your advice."

"But you well know that I despise the first," said de Thou, "and I think that you do not despise the second."

"No; but I fear it, I fear it still; I do not wish to be stopped. Speak not, my friend, not a word, I conjure you, before you have heard and seen what is about to pass. I will bring you back when we leave the Louvre; there I will hear you, and depart to continue

my work; for nothing will divert me, I warn you; I have already told those gentlemen so at your house."

Cinq-Mars had in his manner none of the rudeness which these words implied: his voice was tender and confiding, his look mild, friendly, and affectionate, his manner quiet, although thoroughly determined; nothing announced the least constraint over himself. De Thou remarked it, and was grieved.

"Alas!" said he, quitting the coach with him; and sighing deeply, he followed him up the grand staircase of the Louvre.

When they entered the queen's apartments, announced by ushers clothed in black, and carrying ebony wands, she was seated at her toilet. A table was before her made of black wood, veneered with tortoiseshell, mother-of-pearl, and inlaid with brass, and forming an infinity of designs in rather bad taste, but which gave to all the furniture a grand appearance which we still admire; a convex mirror, which our present ladies of fashion would have found small and mean, was placed by itself in the middle of the table; it was covered with scattered jewels and collars. Ann of Austria, seated before it in a great arm-chair of crimson velvet, with long golden fringe, remained as grave and motionless as if she were seated on a throne, whilst Donna Stephana and Madame Motteville on each side, carelessly combed her hair, as if to finish the queen's coiffure, which, however, was already in good order, and ornamented with pearls. Her auburn hair was singularly beautiful, and seemed as fine and soft as silk. The light fell unintercepted on her forehead; whence it was reflected with almost equal brilliancy by its surprising whiteness, which she was pleased thus to display; her blue eyes were large and regular, and the lower lip of her rosy mouth, like that of all the princesses of Austria, was pouting and slightly cloven in the form of a cherry, a characteristic which may be remarked in the portraits of the time. It seems as if the painters had taken the queen's mouth as a model, to please, perhaps, the ladies of her retinue, whose desire it was to resemble her. The black dress then worn by the court, the form of which was even fixed by an edict, showed the uncovered ivory of her arms from the shoulder, and ornamented with a profusion of lace, which hung from her large sleeves. Great pearls dropped from her ears and from her waist. At this moment such was the queen's appearance. At her feet, upon two velvet cushions, a child of four years old was playing with a little cannon: this was the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XIV. The Duchess Marie of Mantua was seated on her right, upon a foot-stool, the Princess Guémené, the Duchess of Chevreuse, and Mademoiselle de Montbazon, Mesdemoiselles de Guise, de Rohan, and Vendome, all lovely and glowing with youth, were placed behind and about her. In the embrasure of a window, Monsieur, with his hat under his arm, conversed in a low voice with a man of tall stature, stout, red-faced, and with a firm and bold eye: this was the Duke of Bouillon. An officer, about twenty-five years old, slightly formed, and of agreeable countenance, had just brought

some papers to the prince, to whom the Duke of Bouillon appeared to explain them.

De Thou, after having saluted the queen, who said a few words to him, addressed the Princess Guémené, and spoke to her in a low voice, with intimate affection, but during this aside, attentive to watch the interest of his friend, and secretly trembling that his destiny was confided to a being less worthy than he had desired, he examined the Princess Marie with that scrupulous attention, that scrutinizing eye of a mother over the young person whom she is about to choose as the companion of her son; for he thought that he was not a stranger to the undertakings of Cinq-Mars. He saw with discontent that her extremely brilliant apparel seemed to make her more vain than she should have been, especially at such a moment. She was incessantly moving the rubies which ornamented her curls, and which did not equal the brilliancy or animated colour of her complexion; she often looked towards Cinq-Mars, but it was rather the look of coquetry than that of love, and her eyes were often drawn towards the glass, wherein she saw her symmetry and beauty. These observations of the counsellor began to persuade him that he was deceived in letting his suspicions fall upon her, especially when he saw that she seemed to experience some pleasure in being seated next the queen, whilst duchesses were behind her, and she often looked proudly at them. "In that heart of nineteen years' existence," thought he, "love should reign alone, and especially to-day: that is not her."

The queen nodded her head, almost imperceptibly, to Madame de Guémené, after the two friends had spoken in a low voice, for a moment, and at this sign all the ladies save Marie of Gonzaga, left the apartment without a word, making deep curtseys, as if it had been agreed upon beforehand. Then the queen, turning round in her chair, said to Monsieur:

"Brother, I pray you seat yourself by me. We are going to consult of what I have just told you. The Princess Marie will not be in the way; I have asked her to remain. We shall have no interruption to fear from others."

The queen seemed more free in her manners and language; and no longer wearing her severe and ceremonious motionlessness, she made the other assistants a gesture which invited them to approach.

Gaston of Orleans, a little uneasy at this solemn opening, carelessly seated himself on her right, and said, negligently, with a sneer, playing with his frill and the chain of the Holy Ghost, hanging at his neck:

"I think, madam, that we shall but tire the ears of so young a person by a long conference; she will like better to hear us speak of dancing and marriage, of an elector, or of the King of Poland, for instance."

Marie looked at him disdainfully; Cinq-Mars knitted his brow.

"Forgive me," replied the queen, turning to him, "I assure you that at this moment politics interest her much. Seek not to escape,

brother," added she, smiling, "I have you to-day! The least we can do is to listen to M. de Bouillon.

The latter approached, leading by the hand the young officer of whom we spoke.

"I ought first," said he, "to present to your majesty Baron Beauvau, who comes from Spain."

"From Spain!" said the queen, with emotion; "he must have courage to have done that. Have you seen my family?"

"He will tell you of them, as well as of Count Olivarez. As to courage, it is not the first time that he has shown it; you know, he commanded the Count of Soisson's cuirassiers."

"What! so young, sir, and like political wars!"

"On the contrary, I beg your majesty's pardon," replied he, "for I serve with the *princes of peace*."

Ann of Austria remembered the name taken by the conquerors of Marfée, and smiled. The Duke of Bouillon, seizing the moment to bring forward the great question he had in view, quitted Cinq-Mars, whose hand he had taken with much cordiality; and going with him towards the queen:

"It is wonderful, madam," said he, "that this epoch still shoots from its bosom some great characters, like these;" and he pointed to the Master of the Horse, young Beauvau, and de Thou: "in them is our only future hope: they are now very rare, for the great leveller has passed over France with his long scythe."

"Do you speak of Time," said the queen, "or of a real person?"

"Too real, too vital, too long-lived, madam," replied the duke, with more animation; "this unbounded ambition, this colossal egotism, can no longer be supported. All those who wear a loyal heart are indignant at his yoke, and at this moment, more than ever, are foreshadowed the misfortunes of the future. I must tell it, madam; yes, this is no time for subterfuge: the king's illness is very serious; the moment of thought and resolution is arrived, for the time of acting is not distant."

M. de Bouillon's severe and abrupt tone did not surprise Ann of Austria; but she had always seen him calmer, and was a little moved at the uneasiness he manifested; thus, quitting the jocular manner which she had at first assumed:

"Well! who do you fear? and what will you do?"

"I fear nought for myself, madam, for the army of Italy or Sedan will always afford me shelter; but I fear all for yourself, and perhaps for your princely children."

"For my children, my lord duke, for the sons of France? Hear you that, brother?—heard you not that? and yet you appear not astonished?"

The queen's voice was tremulous with agitation.

"No, madam," said Gaston of Orleans, very quietly; "you know that I am accustomed to all persecution; I expect everything from that man; he is master, we must be resigned. . . ."

"He is master?" replied the queen; "and from whom does he hold his power, if not from the king? and, after the king, what hand will sustain him, so please you? what will hinder him from falling into nothing—will you or I?"

"It will be himself," interrupted M. de Bouillon, "for he wants to be named regent, and I know that the moment he is so he meditates carrying off your children, and will ask the king to confide to him their guardianship."

"Carry them off from me!" cried the mother, involuntarily seizing the Dauphin, and taking him in her arms.

The child, standing between the queen's knees, looked at the men who surrounded him, with a gravity singular for his age, and seeing his mother in tears, put his hand upon his little sword.

"Ah, my lord," said the Duke of Bouillon, stooping to address to him what he wished the princess to hear, "it is not against us that you must draw your sword, but against him who undermines your throne; he is doubtless preparing great power for you; you will have an absolute sceptre; but he has broken up the pile of arms which sustained it. That pile was your old nobility, which he has decimated. When you shall be king something tells me you will be a great king; but you will have only subjects, not friends, for friendship exists only in independence, and a sort of equality which springs from strength. Your ancestors had their *peers*, but you will not have yours. May God then uphold you, my lord, for men cannot do it without institutions. Be great; but above all, after you, great man, may your successors be as great; for in the present state of things if one of them stumbles the whole monarchy will crumble into dust."

The Duke of Bouillon used a warmth and firmness of tone which always captivated those who heard it: his valour, his glance in the fight, the profundity of his political views, his knowledge of the affairs of Europe, his reflection and decision, at once made him one of the most able and imposing characters of his time, the only one really feared by the cardinal duke. The queen always listened to him trustingly, and allowed him to gain a sort of empire over her. This time she was more strongly moved than ever.

"Oh! would to God," cried she, "that my boy had a mind mature enough to receive your words, and an arm strong enough to profit by them! Until then, however, I will hear, I will act for him; it is I who ought to be, and it is I who will be regent, with my life only will I abandon that right: if war must be made, let us make it, for I will do anything but submit to the shame and terror of delivering up the future Louis XIV. to this crowned subject. Yes," said she, reddening and pressing the hand of the young Dauphin; "yes, brother, and you, gentlemen, advise me; speak, where are we? Must I go? Tell me openly. As a woman, as a wife, I was ready to weep, so grievous was my situation; but now, as a mother, I weep no more; I am ready to give you all necessary orders."

Never had Ann of Austria appeared so beautiful as at this moment,

and her enthusiasm appeared to electrify all present, who wanted but a word from her mouth to speak. The Duke of Bouillon cast a rapid glance upon Monsieur, who decided on taking up the speech.

"Egad," said he, deliberately, "if you give orders, sister, I should like to be your captain of the guards, upon my honour; for I also am tired of the torment caused me by this wretch, who still dares to pursue me to break off my marriage, and is ever shutting up my friends in the Bastille, or occasionally assassinating them; and besides, I am indignant," said he, casting down his eyes and assuming a more solemn air, "I am indignant at the misery of the people."

"Brother," replied the princess, quickly, "I take you at your word, for so one must take you, and I hope that together we shall be sufficiently strong; do only like the Count of Soissons, but survive your victory; agree with me as you did with Montmorency, but leap the ditch."

Gaston felt the force of this remark; he remembered his too well-known characteristic, when the unfortunate rebel of Castelnaudary leaped, nearly alone, a large ditch, and found on the other side, seventeen wounds, a prison, and death, in the sight of Monsieur, motionless as his army. The queen's rapid utterance had not left him time to examine whether she said this proverbially or intentionally, but at all events, he determined not to notice it, and was hindered by the queen herself, who continued, looking at Cinq-Mars:

"But, before all things, let us not be panic-stricken; let us know well what is our position. The Master has just left the king, have we much fear?"

Effiat had not ceased to observe Marie of Mantua, on whose expressive features were painted all her ideas, more rapidly and as surely as words; he read there her desire to hear him speak, with the intention of deciding the queen and prince; an impatient movement of her foot ordered him to finish and regulate the whole conspiracy. His brow became paler and more thoughtful; he recoiled a moment, for he felt that his destiny hung upon his decision. De Thou looked at him and trembled, for he knew him; he wished to tell him one word, a single word; but Cinq-Mars had already raised his head, and spoke thus:

"I do not think, madam, that the king is so ill as you have been told; God will long preserve that prince, I hope, and am certain of it; he suffers, it is true—he suffers much; but above all, his mind is diseased, and of a malady nothing can cure—of a malady a man would not wish his greatest enemy, and which would make the whole world pity him if it were known. Yet, the end of his misfortunes, I may say of his life, will not happen for a long time. His languor is entirely mental; a great revolution has taken place in his heart; he wishes to accomplish it and cannot: he has felt for some years his hatred increase towards a man to whom he believed he owed acknowledgments, and it is this internal struggle betwixt his goodness and his anger, which devours him. Year by year have been deposited at his feet, on the one side the works of this man, on the other his crimes.

But now the first are outweighed by the last; the king sees it and is indignant: he wishes to punish; but suddenly he stops, and his tears flow. If you could see him thus, madam, you would pity him. I have seen him seize the pen with which to write his exile, dip it into the ink with a steady hand, and wherefore? to felicitate him by a letter. Then he applauds himself of his goodness as a Christian; he curses himself as a sovereign judge; despises himself as a king; he seeks refuge in prayer, and plunges himself into meditations on the future; he starts up, appalled at the horror of the punishment which this man deserves, for no one knows so well as he how much he deserves condemnation. You should hear him accusing himself of culpable weakness, and crying that he will be himself punished for not having been able to punish others. It seems sometimes as if he saw shadows which ordered him to strike, for he lifts his arms in his sleep. In short, madam, the storm rages in his heart, but destroys only himself, the lightning cannot escape."

"Well, let us conduct it!" cried the Duke of Bouillon.

"He who touches it may die!" said Monsieur.

"But what spirited devotion!" said the queen.

"How I shall admire him!" said Marie, lowly.

"That shall be me," replied Cinq-Mars.

"It shall be us," said de Thou, in his ear.

Young Beauvau had approached the Duke of Bouillon.

"Sir," said he, "forget you the sequel?"

"No, by heavens! I forget it not," replied the latter, lowly; and addressing the queen—"Accept, madam, the offer of the Master; he is more able to decide the king than we are; but hold yourself in readiness, for the cardinal is too skilful to sleep. I do not believe in his illness; I do not believe in his silence and want of motion, of which he has wished to persuade us these two years; I should not believe even in his death, till I had thrown his head into the sea, like Ariosto's giant. Expect every trick; let us make haste, above all things. I showed my plans to Monsieur just now; here is a summary of them: I offer you Sedan, madam, for you and my lords your sons. The Italian army is mine; it shall enter if necessary. Cinq-Mars is master of half the camp of Perpignan; all the old Huguenots of Rochelle and of the South are ready at the first sign to seek him: all has been organized by me a year ago, in case of events.

"I do not hesitate," said the queen, "to put myself in your hands to save my children, if some evil happen to the king. But in this general plan you forget Paris."

"It is ours at all points: the people through the archbishop, without his having any idea of it, and through M. de Beaufort, who is its king; the troops by your guards and those of Monsieur, who will command all, if it please him."

"I!—I! oh dear no! I have not enough people, and I require a stronger retreat than Sedan," said Gaston.

"But the queen is satisfied with it," replied M. de Bouillon.

"Ah, that may be, but my sister does not risk so much as a man that draws his sword. Do you know that this is a bold business?"

"What! even when the king is with us?" said Ann of Austria.

"Yes, madam, yes, one knows not how long that will last; we must take care, and I do nothing without the treaty with Spain."

"Do nothing, then," said the queen, colouring; "for certainly I will never hear speak of it."

"Ah, madam, that will be so much the wiser, and Monsieur is right," said the Duke of Bouillon; "for the Count of San-Lucar offers us seventeen thousand veteran troops, and five hundred thousand crowns."

"What!" said the queen, in astonishment; "who has dared go there without my consent! what, already making treaties with foreigners!"

"The foreigners, sister! could one suppose that a Spanish princess would utter these words?" responded Gaston.

Ann of Austria arose, taking the Dauphin by the hand, and leaning upon Marie:

"Yes, Monsieur," said she, "I am Spanish; but I am the grandchild of Charles the Fifth, and I know that the country of a queen is around her throne. I leave you, gentlemen; go on without me; henceforth I know nothing."

She took some steps towards the door, and seeing Marie trembling and in tears, she returned:

"I solemnly promise you inviolable secrecy: but nothing more."

All were somewhat disconcerted, save the Duke of Bouillon, who, wishing to lose none of his advantages, bowing respectfully, said:

"We are grateful for that promise, and we wish no more, persuaded that after success, you will be altogether with us."

Not wishing to engage in a war of words, the queen bowed a little less coldly, and went out with Marie, who cast upon Cinq-Mars one of those looks which seem an embodiment of every thought. He imagined that he read in those lovely eyes the eternal devotion and unhappiness of a woman you had given herself up for ever, and he felt that, if he once thought of recoiling from his task, he should regard himself as the basest of men. As soon as the two princesses were out of sight:

"There, now, I told you so, Bouillon, you offend the queen," said Monsieur; "you have gone too far. You certainly will not accuse me of being weak this morning; I have shown, on the contrary, more resolution than I ought."

"I am full of joy and gratitude towards her majesty," replied de Bouillon, triumphantly; "we are sure of the future. What are you going to do, now, Cinq-Mars?"

"I told you, sir, that I will never recede; whatever may be the consequences to me. I will see the king; I will tell him all, to get his consent."

"And the treaty with Spain?"

"Yes, I will. . . . ."

De Thou seized Cinq-Mars's arm, and advancing suddenly, said solemnly:

"We have decided that it shall be signed after the interview with the king; for if the just severity of her majesty towards the cardinal permit it, we have thought it better not to expose so dangerous a treaty to discovery."

M. de Bouillon frowned.

"If I did not know M. de Thou," said he, "I should take this for evasion; but from him . . . ."

"Sir," replied the counsellor, "I will engage, upon my honour, to do what the Master shall do; we are inseparable."

Cinq-Mars looked at his friend, and was astonished to see upon his mild features the expression of blank despair; he was so struck, that he had not strength to contradict him."

"He is right, sirs," said he, with a cold but gracious smile, "the king will perhaps spare us many things: besides, my lord, and you, my lord duke," added he, with unshaken firmness, "fear not that I shall ever recede; I have burned all the bridges behind me: I must march forward; the cardinal's power, or my head, shall fall to the earth."

"It is singular—very singular!" said Monsieur; "I observe that every one here is deeper than I thought in this conspiracy."

"Not all, Monsieur," said the Duke of Bouillon; "they have but prepared that which you should accept. Observe, that there is nothing written, and you have but to speak, and nothing exists or has existed: according to your order, all this will be a dream or a volcano."

"Come, come, I am content, since it must be so," said Gaston; "let us talk of more agreeable things. Thank God, we have a little time before us: I avow that I wish all was already finished; I was not born for violent emotions, they will destroy my health," added he, seizing the arm of M. de Beauvau: "tell us whether the Spanish girls are still pretty, young man. They say you are a bit of a gallant. S'blood! I am sure they speak of you there. They say the women wear enormous farthingales. Well, they don't offend me at all. Indeed, they make the foot look little and pretty; I am sure Don Louis de Haro's wife is not handsomer than Madame Guémené, is she? Come, be frank, they tell me she looks like a nun. Ah! . . . . you do not answer, you are confused . . . . she has cast her eye on you . . . . or you fear to offend our friend de Thou by comparing her with the beautiful Guémené. Ah, well! let us speak of customs: the king has a charming dwarf, has he not? they put him in a pie. How happy the King of Spain must be! I never found one like him. And the queen, they say, is always served on bended knees, is it so? oh, that is a good custom; we have lost it; that is unfortunate, more unfortunate than is readily believed."

Gaston of Orleans had the courage to speak in such a strain for half

an hour to this young man, whose serious character could not accommodate itself to so light a conversation, and which, still filled with the importance of the scene he had just witnessed, and the great interests at stake, did not answer this outbreak of "wordy nothings:" he looked at the Duke of Bouillon with astonishment, as if to ask whether this were indeed the man whom they were about to put at the head of one of the boldest enterprises conceived for some time, whilst the prince, unwilling to perceive that he remained unanswered, often replied to himself and spoke with volubility, walking up and down and leading him into his chamber. He feared a renewal of the terrible conversation about the treaty; but none desired to attempt it, except, perhaps, the Duke of Bouillon, who, however, maintained a dogged silence. As to Cinq-Mars, he was led away by de Thou, who retreated, under cover of this twattling, without Monsieur appearing to notice their departure.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SECRET.

De Thou was at home with his friend, his room-doors were carefully shut, orders given to admit no one, and to excuse him to the refugees, if he allowed them to depart without seeing them; the two friends had not yet exchanged a word.

The counsellor had sunk into his chair in profound meditation. Cinq-mars, seated in the high chimney-place, with sadness and seriousness, awaited the end of this silence, when de Thou, looking at him fixedly, and crossing his arms, said, in a hollow, dismal tone:

"Here, then, is what we are come to! behold the consequences of your ambition! You are going to exile, perhaps to kill a man, and introduce a foreign army into France; I shall see you an assassin, and traitor to your country! By what path did you arrive at this? by what steps have you descended so low?"

"Another man would not have spoken thus twice," said Cinq-Mars, coldly; "but I know you, I like this explanation; I desired it, and I have provoked it. You will now be my entire friend. At first, I had another thought, perhaps a better one, more worthy of our friendship, more worthy of friendship; friendship, which is the second thing on earth!"

He raised his eyes to heaven as he spoke, as if in search of that divinity.

"Yes, it would have been better. I would have said nothing until I had succeeded; it was a painful task to keep this silence. I would have conducted all without you, and have shown you the work achieved; I would always have held you without the circle of my dangers; but shall I avow my weakness? I feared to die badly judged by you, if I have feared to die: now I can bear the idea of the curses of the world, but not yours; it is that which has determined me to avow all."

"What! and without this thought you would have had the courage to hide it still from me! Ah, my dear Henry, what have I done that you should take such care of my days? What fault have you committed that I deserve to live if you die? You have had the strength to deceive me for two whole years; you have shown me only the sunny side of your life; you have entered into my solitude only with a laughing face, and each time adorned with a new favour! ah, this must be either very blameable or very virtuous!"

"Do not give me credit for more than you observe; I have deceived you; but it was the only quiet joy I had in the world. Forgive me for having robbed my destiny of these moments, alas! so brilliant. I was happy at the happiness you supposed I possessed; yours rested upon that dream; and I am now guilty of coming to destroy it, and showing what I was. Listen to what I am about to say; I shall not be long, the history of an impassioned heart is always very simple; once before, I remember, when I lay wounded under my tent, my secret had nearly escaped me: it would perhaps have been better if it had. Yet, how would advice have served me? I should not have followed it; in a word, my secret is my love of Marie of Gonzaga."

"What! she who is to be Queen of Poland?"

"If she is to be queen, it can only be after my death. But hear me: for her I was a courtier; for her I have nearly reigned in France; it is for her I am about to succumb—perhaps to die."

"Die! succumb! when I reproach you for being triumphant!—when I weep over the mournfulness of your victory!"

"Ah! you scarcely know me, if you believe that I am duped by fortune when she smiles upon me; if you believe that I have not seen to the very bottom of my fate! I struggle against it, but I feel it the stronger; I have undertaken a task beyond the strength of man, and I shall fall!"

"But can you not stop? Of what service is the mind in the affairs of the world?"

"Of none, unless it be to warn us of our fall, and enable us to foresee the day on which we shall fall. In short, I cannot recede. When one faces an enemy such as Richelieu, to turn is to be crushed. To-morrow I shall strike the last blow; did I not just now engage to do so?"

"And it is that very engagement which I wish to combat. What confidence have you in those to whom you thus deliver up your life? Have you not read their secret thoughts?"

"I know them all; I have read their hope in their feigned rage; I know that they tremble whilst they are threatening; I know that they are almost ready to make their peace by giving me up; but it is I who sustain and decide the king: it must be so, for Marie is my affianced, and my death-warrant lies signed at Narbonne. It is freely, with a foreknowledge of my fate, that I thus place myself between the scaffold and supreme happiness. I must tear it from the hands of

fortune or die. I taste at this very moment the pleasure of having destroyed uncertainty; and yet you blush not at having believed me guilty of an ambition as vilely egotistical as that of the cardinal: ambitious through the puerile desire of an insatiate power! I am ambitious but because I love. Yes, I love, and all is in that word. But I accuse you wrongly: you have embellished my secret intentions, you have laid before me noble designs, (I remember them,) high political conceptions; they are beautiful, they are vast, without doubt; but, shall I tell it you? those vague projects for rendering corrupted society perfect, still seem to crawl very far below the devotion of love. When the whole soul vibrates, full of this one thought, it no longer has room for the finest calculations of general interests; for the very highest points of the earth are under heaven."

De Thou hung down his head.

"What say you?" said he. "I do not understand you; your reason is disorder, your thoughts fire, your calculation error."

"Yes," said Cinq-Mars, "far from destroying my strength, this inward fire has unfolded it; I have calculated all; a slow course has led me to the end which I am about to attain. Marie holds me by the hand; shall I recede? Before the world I could not do it. All was well till now; but an invisible barrier arrests me: I must break this barrier; it is Richelieu. I just now undertook that task; perhaps I was too hasty: I think so. Let him rejoice; he expects me. Doubtless he has foreseen that it will be the youngest who will be wanting in patience; if it be so, he has guessed well. However, had it not been for the love which has hastened me on, I should have been stronger than he, although by right means."

Here an almost sudden change came over the features of Cinq-Mars; twice he turned red and pale, and the veins of his forehead were raised like blue lines traced by an invisible hand.

"Yes," he added, rising and clasping his hands with a force which announced the violence of the despair concentred in his heart, "all the punishments with which love can torture its victims, I bear in my breast. This young and timid girl, for whom I would shake empires, for whom I have submitted to all, even to the favour of a prince, (and who perhaps has not felt all that I have done for her,) can never be mine. She is mine before God, and yet I am estranged from her;—estranged, did I say? why, do I not hear daily discussed before me, which of the thrones of Europe will suit her best, in conversations wherein I cannot even have a voice and raise an opinion; so far are they from putting me in their ranks, that they disdain to listen even to princes of the royal blood, who are so much above me. I must hide like a culprit, to hear through the bars the voice of her who is my wife; in public I must bow before her!—her husband in the dark, her servant in the face of day! It is too much; I can not live thus; I must take the last step, whether it raise or destroy me for ever."

"And, for your personal happiness, you would overthrow the state?"

"The happiness of the state agrees with mine. In destroying the king's tyrant, I procure that happiness. The horror with which this man inspires me has become part of my being. On my first going to him, I met midway his greatest crime; he is the unhappy king's evil genius, and I will exorcise him; I shall be able to become the good angel of Louis XIII. This is one of Marie's thoughts—her most cherished idea. But I do not think I shall be able to triumph over the fickle mind of the monarch."

"Upon what, then, do you reckon?" said de Thou.

"Upon a cast of the dice; if his will last the same for a few hours, I have won; it is the last calculation upon which my destiny hangs."

"And that of your Marie!"

"Have you thought of her?" said Cinq-Mars impetuously. "No, no! If he abandon me, I shall sign the Spanish treaty, and raise the war."

"Ah! how horrible!" said the Counsellor; "what war? a civil war, and a foreign alliance?"

"Yes, 'tis a crime," replied Cinq-Mars, coldly; "ah! did I ask you to take a part in it?"

"Cruel! ungrateful!" replied his friend; "can you speak thus to me? know you not—have I not proved to you, that my heart is filled only with friendship? can I survive not only your death, but even the least of your misfortunes? Yet let me turn you—let me hinder you from striking France. Oh, my friend, my only friend, I conjure you, on my knees, let us not be parricides—let us not assassinate our country;—I say *us*, for never will I separate myself from your actions; let me preserve my self-esteem, for which I have so long laboured; soil not my life and my death which I have vowed to consecrate to you."

De Thou had fallen at the feet of his friend; and the latter, no longer having strength to preserve his affected coldness, threw himself into his arms, and said in a suppressed tone:

"Ah! why love me so much? what have you done, my friend? why do you love me? you are wise, pure, and virtuous; you, who are not urged by an insensate passion, and the desire of vengeance; you whose mind is nourished only by religion and science, why do you love me? what has my friendship given you but uneasiness and pain? must it now throw heavier dangers upon you? Separate from me, we are no longer of the same nature; you see that the court has corrupted me; I am no longer candid, I am no longer good; I meditate evil towards a man; I know how to deceive a friend; forget me, disdain me; I no longer wish a place in your thoughts; how should I be worthy of your peril?"

"By swearing not to betray the king and France," replied de Thou. "Know you that you are going to divide your country? know you, that if you deliver up our fortresses, they will never be returned? know you, that your name will be the horror of pos-

terity? know you, that French mothers will curse you, when they shall be obliged to teach their children a foreign tongue? know you that. Come!"

And he led him towards the bust of Louis XIII.

"Swear before it, and (it is the effigy of your friend!) swear never to sign that infamous treaty."

Cinq-Mars coloured, and, with downcast eyes, and inflexible tenacity, replied:

"I have told you, if I am forced, I shall sign it."

"De Thou turned pale, and dropped his hand; he made two turns in his room with crossed arms, and inexpressible anguish. At last, he advanced solemnly towards the bust of his father, and opened a great book placed at its foot; he looked for a page already marked, and read aloud:

"*I think, therefore, that M. de Lignebœuf was justly condemned to death by the Parliament of Rouen, for not having revealed the conspiracy of Catteville against the State.*"

Then, taking the book respectfully in his hand, and contemplating the image of President Thou, whose memoirs he held;—"Yes, father," continued he, "your thought was good; I am going to be a criminal; I am going to deserve death; but can I do otherwise? I will not denounce this traitor, because that also would be to betray my friend, and he is unfortunate."

Then advancing towards Cinq-Mars, and again taking his hand:

"I do much for you, hereby," said he; "but expect no more on my part, sir, if you sign that treaty."

Cinq-Mars was profoundly moved by the scene, because he felt all that his friend must suffer in repulsing him. However, he stopped a tear which started to his eyes, and replied, embracing him:

"Ah! de Thou, I find you as perfect as ever—yes, you do me a service in estranging yourself from me—for, had your lot been bound up with mine, I should not have dared to have disposed of my life, and I should have hesitated to have sacrificed it, if it had been necessary; but now I will assuredly do so; and I repeat that, if they force me, I will sign the treaty with Spain."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HUNTING PARTY.

THE king's illness threw France into that consternation, which badly established states always feel at the approach of the death of princes. Though Richelieu was the centre of the monarchy, still he reigned only in the name of Louis XIII., as if wrapped up in the brilliancy of the name which he had aggrandized. Absolute as he was over his master, he feared him nevertheless; and this fear secured the nation against the ambitious desires to which the king himself was the immovable barrier. But the prince dead, what would

be done by the imperious minister? where would this man stop, who had dared so much? accustomed to wield the sceptre, who would hinder him from always carrying it, and from inscribing his name alone at the foot of the laws which he alone had dictated? These terrors disturbed every mind. The people sought in vain over the whole kingdom for those colossuses of the nobility at whose feet they were accustomed to shelter themselves from political storms; they saw only their new-made graves; parliament was mute, and felt itself nothing in opposition to the monstrous increase of this usurping power. No one was completely deceived by the affected sufferings of the minister. No one was touched by that hypocritical agony which had too often deceived the public hope, and distance did not hinder the weight of the finger of the terrible upstart from being felt.

The love of the people was awakened towards the son of Henry IV.; they rushed into the churches, and prayed, and even wept. Unfortunate princes are always loved; the melancholy of Louis, and his mysterious sorrow, interested all France; and still living, they already regretted him as if each had desired to be the confidant of his pain, before he carried away with him the great secret of what is suffered by men in high places, that they see as their destiny only the tomb.

The king, wishing to assure the whole nation, announced the temporary re-establishment of his health, and wished that the court should repair to a great hunting party given at Chambord, a royal domain, where his brother, the Duke of Orleans, prayed him to repair. This beautiful retreat was a favourite of the king, doubtless, because, like himself, it united grandeur and sadness. He often passed whole months without seeing any person, reading, and re-reading incessantly mysterious papers, writing unknown things, which he shut up in an iron chest, of which he alone had the secret key. He was sometimes pleased to be served by a single domestic only, so as to forget himself by the absence of his followers, and to live for many days as a poor man, or an exiled citizen, liking to figure to himself misery or persecution, the better to enjoy royalty afterwards. Another day, suddenly changing his mind, he would be in more absolute solitude; and when he had interdicted every human being from approaching him, clothed in the habit of a monk, he would shut himself up in the vaulted chapel; there reading the life of Charles V., he fancied himself at St. Just, and chanted over himself that mass for the dead which had before brought death upon the head of the Spanish emperor. But even in the midst of these songs and meditations, his feeble mind was followed and distracted by contrary images. Never had the world and life appeared more beautiful to him than in the solitude and silence of the tomb. Between his eyes, and the pages which he compelled himself to read, passed brilliant pageants, victorious armies, and people transported with love; he thought himself powerful, fighting, triumphant, and adored; and if a ray of the sun, creeping through the windows, fell

upon him, suddenly raising himself from the altar, he felt himself carried away by a thirst for day and the open air, which should tear him from these sombre and stifling places; but returned to life, he was again disgusted and wearied, for the first men he encountered reminded him of his power by their respect. It was then that he believed in friendship, and called it to his aid, but hardly had he become truly possessed of it, than a great scruple suddenly appeared in his mind; this was whether too strong an attachment for any creature would not turn him from the divine adoration; or oftener still, he would reproach himself in secret for estranging himself too much from state affairs; the object of his temporary affection seemed therefore a despotic being, whose power turned him from his duty; he created an imaginary chain, and complained to himself of being oppressed; but, unfortunately for his favourites, he had not strength to manifest his resentment against them by anger, which they could have averted; but continuing to caress them, he stirred up by this constraint the secret fire of his heart, which urged him to hatred; there were moments in which he was capable of doing anything against them.

Cinq-Mars knew perfectly well the weakness of that mind which could not continue firmly in a straight line, and the wavering of that heart which could neither love nor hate completely; thus the position of the favourite envied by all France, the object of the jealousy even of the great minister, was so precarious and so miserable, that, but for his love for Marie, he would have broken his golden chain with more joy than a convict feels when he sees the last link fall which he has filed for two years, with a saw that he has had concealed in his mouth. This impatience to meet the fate which he saw so near, hastened the explosion of that patiently sunk mine, as he had avowed to his friend; but his situation was that of a man placed beside the book of life, who sees all day passing over it the hand which may trace his condemnation or salvation. He departed with Louis XIII. for Chambord, determined to choose the first favourable opportunity for his design. It presented itself.

On the very morning of the day fixed for the hunt, the king told him that he should expect him at the Ladder of Lys; perhaps it will not be useless to speak of this astonishing construction.

Four leagues from Blois, and a league from the Loire, in a small and deep valley, between dirty marshes, and a wood of noble oaks, far from any road, the traveller suddenly, or rather, as if by magic, is confronted by a royal castle. It seems as if, led by some wonderful lamp, a geni of the East had raised it in one of the "thousand and one nights," and robbed the country of the sun of it, to hide it in the land of fogs and mists, as the abode of the mistress of a handsome prince. This palace is buried like a treasure; but its blue domes, its elegant minarets, rounded off from the large walls, or thrown into the air; its long terraces commanding the woods, its light spires, waving in the breeze; its colonnades, decorated with

innumerable crescents, would transport him into the regions of Bagdad or Cachmere, if the blackened walls, their moss or ivy-covered sides, and the grey and mournful appearance of the sky, did not attest a rainy country. He was indeed a genius who raised those buildings; but he came from Italy, and his name was Primaticio; he was, indeed, a handsome prince, whose love was hidden there; but he was a king, and named Francis I. His salamander casts its flames around; it sparkles through the vaults, and multiplies its flames like the stars of heaven! it upholds the capitals with its burning crown! it colours the windows with its fires! it winds up the secret stairs, and seems everywhere to devour with its burning glances the triple crescents of a mysterious Diana, that Diana of Poitiers, twice a goddess, and twice adored in those voluptuous woods!

But, like the monument, its base is full of elegance and mystery; it has a double staircase, built in two spiral columns, interwoven from the foundation to the highest stone of the edifice, and terminates in a lantern, or glazed cabinet, crowned by a colossal fleur-de-lys, visible afar off; two men may ascend at the same time without seeing each other.

This staircase seems an isolated temple; like our churches, it is supported and protected by arcades of slight, transparent, and figured wings. The obedient stone seems to have bent under the finger of the architect; it appears, as it were, petrified according to the caprices of his imagination. It is almost inconceivable how the plans were traced, and in what terms the orders were explained to the workmen; it seems a fugitive thought, a brilliant reverie, suddenly corporealized; it is a dream realized.

Cinq-Mars slowly ascended the broad steps which led to the king, and stopped longer on each step the nearer he approached, whether in disgust at meeting a prince, to whose new complaints he had to listen daily, or to consider what he was about to do, when the sound of a guitar struck his ear. He recognised the cherished instrument of Louis, and his sad voice, full and tremulous, echoing through the vaults; he seemed trying one of those romances which he himself composed, and repeated again and again, with hesitating hand, an imperfect refrain. The words were hardly distinguishable, and he heard only such as *forlornness, weariness of the world*, and *lady-fair*.

The young favourite shrugged his shoulders.

"What new sorrow rules thee?" said he; "let us once more look into that frozen heart which seems never satisfied!"

He entered the narrow chamber.

Clothed in black, half reclining in a large chair, with his elbows supported on cushions, the prince feebly touched the strings of his guitar; he ceased humming on seeing the master of the horse, and, casting his large eyes upon him reproachfully, shook his head for some time without speaking, then, in a pathetic, though rather emphatic tone:

"What have I learned! Cinq-Mars?" said he; what have I learned of your conduct? what pain do you give me in thus forgetting all my advice! You have concocted a guilty intrigue; was it from you that I ought to expect such things?—you, whose piety and virtue had so much attracted me!"

Full of the thought of his political projects, Cinq-Mars saw he was discovered, and could not defend himself in a moment of trouble; but, perfectly master of himself, he answered, without hesitation:

"Yes, sire, I am going to declare it to you! I am accustomed to open my heart to you!"

"Declare it to me!" cried Louis XIII., growing red and white, as if under the action of a fever; "would you dare to shock my ears with such frightful confidences, sir! and are so calm in speaking of your disorder! go, you deserve to be condemned to the gallies like Rondin; you have committed high treason by your want of faith towards me! I had rather you had been a coiner like the Marquis of Coucy, or at the head of the Croquants, than have done thus; you will dishonour your family, and the memory of your father, the marshal."

Cinq-Mars, seeing himself lost, put the best face he could upon the matter, and said, with resignation:—

"Well, sire! send me then to be judged and put to death; but spare me your reproaches."

"Do you mock me, you petty country squire?" replied Louis; "I know very well that you have not incurred the penalty of death from men; but it is at God's tribunal that you will be judged."

"Heavens! sire!" replied the impetuous young man, whom the injury had aroused; "let me return into my province, which you despise so much, as I have often attempted! I will go; I can no longer support the life I lead with you—an angel could not do it. Once more, try me if I be guilty, or let me hide myself in Touraine. It is you who have destroyed me, by attaching me to your person; if you have led me to conceive too great hopes, which you afterwards overthrow, is it my fault? Ah! why have you made me master of the horse, if I ought not to have been raised so high? In short, am I, or am I not your friend? and if I be, can I not be a duke, a peer, and even constable, as well as de Luynes, whom you loved so much, because he trained your falcons? why am I not admitted to the council? I should speak as well as any of your old wiseacres; I have new ideas, and a stronger arm to serve you. It is your cardinal who has hindered you from summoning me to it; and it is because he estranges you from me that I detest him," continued Cinq-Mars, clenching his fist, as if Richelieu had been before him: "yes, if necessary, I could kill him with my own hand."

D'Effiat, his eyes sparkling with anger, stamped his foot as he spoke, and turned his back to the king like a sulky child, leaning against one of the little columns of the lantern.

Louis, who recoiled before the least resolution, and who always feared an irreparable affront, took his hand.

O weakness of power! caprice of the human heart! it was by this infantine petulance, by this defect of age, that this young man governed a king of France, as well as the first politician of the time. This prince believed, and upon some ground, that a character so hasty must be sincere, and even his anger did not vex him. The latter, besides, did not object to these true reproaches, and he pardoned him his hatred of the cardinal. The very idea of the jealousy of his favourite against his minister pleased him, because he supposed it sprang from his attachment to him, and all he dreaded was his indifference. Cinq-Mars knew it, and desired to escape thereby, thus preparing the king to consider all he had done as child's play, and the consequence of his friendship for him; but the danger was not so great; he breathed again, when the prince said to him:

"Never mind the cardinal, I like him no more than you do; but it is for your scandalous conduct I reproach you, and which I shall have much trouble to pardon. What, sir! I learn that instead of giving yourself up to the exercises of piety to which I have habituated you, when I believed you at the *Benediction* or *Angelus*, you were gone to St. Germain, where you went to pass a part of the night .... with whom!—dare I tell it without sin? with a woman of lost reputation, whose relation with you cannot but be pernicious to the salvation of your soul, and who receives latitudinarians into her house; in a word, Marion de Lorme! What can you answer? speak!"

Letting his hand remain in that of the king, but still leaning against the column, Cinq-Mars replied:

"Is it then so blameable to quit grave occupation for others still graver? If I visit Marion de Lorme, it is to hear the conversation of the learned men who assemble there. Nothing is more innocent than that assembly; it is true, lectures are delivered there which sometimes trench deep into the night, but which, far from corrupting, rather elevate the mind. Besides, you have never ordered me to tell you everything. I should have informed you long ago if you had wished."

"Ah! Cinq-Mars, Cinq-Mars! where is confidence? feel you not the want of it? It is the first condition of perfect friendship, such as ours ought to be, such as my heart yearns for."

Louis's voice was more affectionate; and the favourite, looking at him over his shoulder, seemed less irritated, but still wearied and resigned to listen.

"How many times have you deceived me?" pursued the king: "may I trust you? are not these gallants and beaux whom you see with this woman? do not courtezans go there?"

"Good God! no, sir! I often go there with one of my friends, a gentleman of Touraine, named René Descartes."

"Descartes! I know that name; yes, he is an officer who distinguished himself at the siege of Rochelle, and who dabbles in writing; he has a very good reputation for piety, but he is connected with

Desparreaux, who is a free-thinker. I am sure you find many people there who are not fit company for you; many young men of no family or birth. Come, tell me who you saw there on your last visit?"

"I cannot undertake to remember all their names," said Cinq-Mars, looking up; "sometimes I do not ask . . . . First, there was one Groote, or Grotius, a Dutchman."

"I know him, a friend of Barnevelt. I gave him a pension; I like him well enough, but the Card . . . . . but they tell me he is a religious reformer."

"I saw also an Englishman, named John Milton; he is a young man on his way from Italy to London; he scarcely speaks."

"Unknown, perfectly unknown; but I am sure he is a reformer. And who are the Frenchmen?"

"The young man who wrote *Cinna*, and who has been thrice refused by the *High Academy;* he was vexed at Ryer's being put in his place. He is called Corneille . . . . ."

"Well!" said the king, crossing his arms, and looking at him triumphantly, and with reproach; "I ask you what are these people? Is it in such a circle that you ought to appear?"

Cinq-Mars was annoyed at this observation, which piqued his self-love, and approaching the king, said:

"You are right, sire; but, to pass an hour or two with tolerably good men cannot be very wrong. Besides, courtiers go there, such as the Duke of Bouillon, Aubijoux, Count Brion, Cardinal Vallette, Montresor, and Fontrailles; and illustrious men of science, as Mairet, Colletet, Desmarets, author of *Ariadne;* Faret, Doujat and Charpentier, who wrote the beautiful Cyropédie; Giry, Besons, and Baro, the continuer of *Astrea*, all academicians."

"Ah! now you mention men of real merit," replied Louis; "against them I have nothing to say; their society cannot but be advantageous. Their reputations are made; they are men of weight. Stick by them, child; I will allow you to go sometimes, but do not deceive me any more; you see that I know all. Look here."

So saying, the king took from an iron chest, placed against the wall some enormous bundles of paper, covered with very fine writing. Upon one of them was written *Baradas*, upon another, *Hautefort*, upon a third, *La Fayette*, and finally, *Cinq-Mars*. He stopped at this, and continued:

"See how many times you have deceived me! These are your faults, which I have myself registered for the two years that I have known you. I have written out our daily conversations. Sit down."

Cinq-Mars seated himself with a sigh, and had the patience to listen for two long hours to a summary of what his master had had the patience to write for two years. He several times raised his hand to his mouth during the reading, as we should all certainly do if it were necessary to report these dialogues, which were found in perfect order at the king's death, beside his will. We need only say that it ends thus:

"Ah! here is what you did the 7th December, three days since. I was speaking to you of falconry and hunting, of which you know nothing; I told you, according to *The Royal Hunt*, the work of Charles IX., that after the hunter had accustomed his dog to follow the game, he ought to think that he will desire to return into the wood, and he must not be rebuked or beaten to make him go well on the track; and that, in order to teach a dog to beat up well, he must not be allowed to run into by-places, or on false scents, without putting his nose to it.

"Here is your answer (and it was in an angry tone, remark that):—Egad, sire, rather give me regiments to conduct than birds and dogs. I am sure we should be ridiculed if it were known how we occupy ourselves. And on the 8th, ... come, listen, yes, on the 8th, whilst we were singing vespers together in my chamber, you threw your book into the fire in a rage that was impious; and afterwards you told me you had let it fall. Sin, mortal sin; see I have written underneath—*lie*, underlined. I am never deceived, I assure you."

"But, sire! . . . ."

"Stay a moment, stay a moment; you said just now that the cardinal had burned a man unjustly for his personal hatred."

"And I repeat, maintain, and will prove it, sire: it is the greatest crime of that man whom you hesitate to disgrace, and who makes you miserable. I saw all, heard all myself at Loudun: Urban Grandier was assassinated rather than judged. Hold, sire, since you have these memorials in your hand, read again all the proofs which I have previously given you."

Louis sought out the page, and going back to the journey from Perpignan to Paris, read the whole account with attention; presently he cried:

"What horrors! How could I have forgotten this! That man must indeed fascinate me. Thou art my true friend, Cinq-Mars. What horrors! my reign will be stained with them. He has stopped the letters of all the nobility, and principal men of the country from reaching me. Burn, burn alive! without proof! and for revenge! A man, a people has invoked my name uselessly, a family now curses me. Oh! how unfortunate are kings!"

The prince, as he finished, threw down his papers, and wept.

"Ah, sire! the tears you shed are thrice blessed!" cried Cinq-Mars, with sincere admiration: "would that all France saw with my eyes! it would be astonished at the sight, which it would scarcely believe."

"Astonished! then France knows me not?"

"No, sire," said d'Effiat, frankly, "no one knows you; I myself, like the rest, have often accused you of coldness and indifference."

"Of coldness! when I die of sorrow! of coldness! when I cut myself off from the world for their interest! Ungrateful nation! I have sacrificed all for thee, even pride, even the pleasure of self-will,

because for thee I feared to die; I have lent my sceptre to a man whom I hate, because I thought his hand was stronger than mine; I have borne the evils he has done me, thinking that he did my people good; my tears have flowed to wipe away theirs; and now I see that my sacrifice was greater than I thought, for they have not perceived it; they have thought me incapable because I was timid, and powerless because I mistrusted my own strength; but no matter, God sees me, and knows my thoughts."

"Ah! sire, show yourself to France in your true colours; take back the power which has been usurped over you; out of love she will give you what fear could not tear from her; return to life, and mount your throne again."

"No, my dear friend, my sand has nearly run; I am no longer capable of wielding the supreme power."

"Oh, sire, 'tis that very thought deprives you of your strength. It is full time that we should cease to confound power with crime, and call their union genius. Let your voice be raised to announce to the world that with your reign has commenced the reign of virtue; and that henceforth those enemies which vice has so much trouble to reduce, will fall before the outspoken words of your heart. It has not yet been calculated how much the sincerity of a king of France can do for his people, that people whom imagination and warm-heartedness lead so quickly towards all that is beautiful, and who are ever ready for acts of devotedness. Your royal father led us by a smile; what shall we not do for one of your tears! you need but speak to be obeyed."

During this discourse the surprised monarch often coloured, coughed and gave signs of great embarrassment, as he always did when he was pressed to decide; he felt also that they were approaching a conversation of too high an order, into which his weakness of mind hindered him from engaging; and often putting his hand upon his breast, and knitting his brows, as if feeling the utmost sorrow, he endeavoured by feigning illness to escape the troublesomeness of an answer; but whether from eagerness, or resolution to play the last throw, Cinq-Mars continued without uneasiness, and with a solemnity which imposed on Louis. The latter, forced from his vantage ground, at last said:

"But, Cinq-Mars, how is a minister to be defeated who has for eighteen years surrounded me by his creatures?"

"He is not so powerful," replied the master of the horse; "and his friends will be his cruellest adversaries, if you but nod your head. All the old league of the *Princes of Peace* still exist, sire, and it is but the respect due to your majesty's choice, which hinders them from rising."

"Ah! say you so? thou mayst tell them not to stop for me; I shall not trouble them, they will not accuse me of being a cardinalist. If my brother will enable me to replace Richelieu, I will do it with all my heart."

"I believe, sire, that he will speak to you to-day of the Duke of Bouillon; all the royalists have confidence in him."

"I do not dislike him," said the king, arranging his cushions, "I do not at all dislike him, though he is rather factious. We are relations. Knowest thou, my dear friend," and he uttered this favourite expression with more emphasis than ordinary, "knowest thou that he is descended from St. Louis, by Charlotte of Bourbon, daughter of the Duke of Montpensier? knowest thou that seven princes of the blood royal have married into his house, and that eight of his own, one of whom was queen, have been married to princes of the blood? Oh! I don't at all object to him; indeed, I never said I did."

"Well, sire!" said Cinq-Mars, confidently, "MONSIEUR and he will explain to you during the hunt how all is prepared, who are the men to be put in the place of his creatures, who are the commanders and colonels who can be depended upon against Fabert and all the cardinalists of Perpignan. You will see that the minister has few people with him. The queen, Monsieur, the nobility, and the parliament are of our party; and since your majesty no longer opposes, the affair is settled. It is proposed to put Richelieu out of the way, like Marshal Ancre, who deserved it less than he."

"Like Concini?" said the king. "Oh! no, it must not be .... really I cannot. .... He is a priest and a cardinal; we shall be excommunicated. But if it could be done in another manner, I should greatly desire it; thou canst speak of it to thy friends, and I will think of it on my part."

This word once uttered, and Louis gave himself up to resentment, as if he were satisfied, and the blow already struck. Cinq-Mars was vexed, because he feared that his anger, spreading thus, would not last long. Yet he believed in his last words, especially when, after interminable complaints, Louis added:

"In short, wouldst thou believe that it is two years since the death of my mother, since that day when he so cruelly played with me before all my court by asking for her recal when he knew she was dead; since that day I have vainly endeavoured to have her buried in France with my forefathers! He has exiled her very ashes!"

At this moment Cinq-Mars thought he heard a noise upon the stairs; the king coloured slightly.

"Go," said he, "go and prepare thyself for the hunt; thou shalt ride near my carriage; go quickly, go."

And he pushed Cinq-Mars towards the staircase, and towards the door at which he had entered.

The favourite went out, but his master's uneasiness had not escaped him.

He descended slowly, trying to ascertain the cause, when he thought he heard the footsteps of a single person ascending the opposite stair, as he descended the other: he stopped, the other stopped; he went up again, and it seemed to him that the other

descended; he knew that he could see nothing between the open work of the balustrades, and he decided on leaving, impatient at this by-play, but very uneasy. He wanted to have stopped at the door to see who appeared. But hardly had he drawn aside the curtain which divided him from the guard-room than he was surrounded by a crowd of courtiers, and obliged to give them orders, or receive their attentions, confidences, solicitations, presentations, recommendations, embraces, and that torrent of flatteries which surrounds a favourite, and to which he must pay immediate and sustained attention, for a moment's distraction may cause great misfortunes. Therefore he presently forgot the little circumstance, which might have been imaginary, and giving himself up to the sweets of a kind of continual apotheosis, mounted a horse in the court-yard, followed by noble pages, and surrounded by the most brilliant gentlemen.

Monsieur soon arrived, followed by his people; and an hour had not elapsed before the king appeared, pale, languishing, and supported by four men, Cinq-Mars, dismounting, assisted him to get into a kind of very low carriage, called a *brouette*, and in which Louis XIII. himself drove two very quiet horses. The yeoman prickers held the dogs in leashes; and at the first blast of the horn, hundreds of young men sprang to horse, and departed for the place of meeting.

This was at a farm called Ormage, which the king had fixed on, and all the court, accustomed to his ways, scattered themselves over the park, whilst the king slowly followed an isolated route, having near him the master of the horse, and four persons whom he had signed to approach him.

The aspect of this pleasure party was somewhat doleful; the approach of winter had robbed the great oaks of nearly all their leaves, and the dark branches seemed to hang from the gray sky like funeral torches; a slight fog seemed to portend rain; across the leafless wood and sad branches were seen the lumbering carriages of the court, filled with women uniformly clothed in black,* and compelled to await the result of a chase which they could not see; the pack was heard in the distance, and the horn sometimes came upon the air like a sigh; a cold and cutting wind made all wrap up well; and some women, putting upon their faces a veil, or velvet mask, to preserve them from the wind, which was not checked by the curtains of their carriages, (for they had no glass windows then,) seemed to wear what we call *dominos*. All seemed sad and sorrowful. Now and then some groups of young men, eager for the chase, flew past the extremity of an alley like the wind, uttering cries or blowing horns; then all relapsed into silence, as, after the explosion of a mine, the heavens appear more gloomy.

In a path parallel to that slowly followed by the king, were some young courtiers wrapped in their cloaks; appearing to be little occupied

* An edict of 1639 had determined the costume of the court. It was simple and black.

about the chase, they kept up with the king's brouette, and did not lose sight of it. They spoke, in a whisper:

"Capital, Fontrailles, capital; victory! The king is continually taking his hand. See how he smiles on him. There, the Master has dismounted, and is seated beside him. Come, come, the old fox is lost this time."

"Oh, that is nothing; did you not see how the king saluted Monsieur? He made you a sign, Montrésor; Gondi, look now."

"Look! it's very easy to say, look; but I see not with my own eyes, I have only those of faith, and yours. Well, what are they doing? I wish I were not so blind. Tell me what they are doing."

Montrésor replied:

"The king is stooping to the ear of the Duke of Bouillon, and speaks to him, ... he is still speaking, he gesticulates incessantly. Oh, he will be minister."

"He will be minister," said Fontrailles.

"He will be minister," said Count Lude.

"Oh, there is no doubt of it," replied Montrésor.

"I hope that he will give me a regiment, and I will marry my cousin," cried Oliver d'Entraigues, with the quickness of a page.

Abbé Gondi, sneering and looking up to heaven, began to sing a hunting song:

". . . . I think, gentlemen, you are more short-sighted than I, or that miracles are being worked in the year of grace 1642; for Bouillon is no nearer being prime minister than I, although the king embraces him. He has great qualities; but he will not pass, there is too much sameness in him; yet I think well of his large and foolish town of Sedan; it is a good home for us."

Montrésor and the rest were too attentive to all the prince's gestures to answer him, and they continued:

"There, the Master has taken the reins, and is driving."

The abbé continued the same tune:

If you drive my brouette,
Postilion, do not overthrow it,
Tra la, tra la, tra, tra, la, la, la.

"Oh, abbé, your songs will drive me mad," said Fontrailles; "have you tunes for all the events of life?"

"I will furnish you with events suitable to all the airs," replied Gondi.

"I'faith, the air of these pleases me," replied Fontrailles, lowly; "I shall not be obliged by Monsieur to carry his devil of a treaty to Madrid, and I am not sorry for it; it is rather an ugly commission; the Pyrenees are not passed so easily as he thinks, and the cardinal is on the road."

"Ah!—ah!—ah!" cried Montrésor.

"Ah!—ah!" said Oliver.

"Well, what? ah!—ah!" said Gondi; "what have you discovered so fine?"

"Now for the blow! the king has shaken hands with Monsieur; God be praised! gentlemen, we may now look upon the defeat of the cardinal: the old boar is beaten. Who will undertake to get rid of him? He must be thrown into the sea."

"That is too good for him," said Oliver; "he must be tried."

"Certainly," said the abbé; "how! shall we want accusers of an insolent fellow who dared to dismiss a page?"

Then checking his horse, and letting Oliver and Montrésor pass, he leaned towards du Lude, who was speaking to two more serious persons, and said:

"In truth, I am tempted to let my valet also into the secret: I never saw people treat a conspiracy so lightly. Great enterprises demand mystery; this would be admirable if they bestowed pains on it. Our party is finer than any I have read of in history; there is that in it which would overthrow three kingdoms if it were desired, and the boobies will spoil all. It is really shameful; I shall die of regret for it. My taste inclines me to these sort of affairs, and I am heartily attached to this, which has much grandeur, that can't be denied. Aubijoux, Montmort, what is your opinion?"

During this discourse, several great heavy carriages, with four and six horses, followed the same road, at about two hundred steps from these gentlemen; the curtains were open on the left side to see the king. In the first was the queen; she was seated alone, on the back seat, clothed in black, and veiled. Opposite to her sat the Marchioness d'Effiat, and at the queen's feet sat the Princess Marie, seated sideways, upon a stool, her gown and feet protruded from the carriage, supported upon a gilded footboard, for there were then no doors, as we have already said. She also looked through the trees at the king's movements; and often stooped, to avoid the sight of the Prince Palatine and his suite, who continually passed and re-passed.

This northern prince was apparently sent by the King of Poland to negotiate important matters, but, in reality, to prepare the Duchess of Mantua to espouse the old king, Uladislas VI.; and he displayed to the court of France all his native luxury, then called *barbarian* and *Scythian* at Paris, and justified those names by strange and eastern costumes. The Palatine of Posnania was very handsome, and wore, like the gentlemen of his suite, a long thick beard; his head was shaved in the Turkish fashion, and covered with a fur cap; he wore a short vest, enriched with diamonds and rubies; his horse was painted red and decked with feathers. He was followed by a company of Polish guards, dressed in red and yellow, wearing great cloaks with long sleeves, which were allowed to hang loosely from the shoulder. The Polish lords who accompanied him were clothed in gold and silver brocade, and at the back of their shaven heads floated a single lock of hair, which gave them an Asiatic and Tartaric appearance, as unknown at the court of Louis XIII. as that of the Muscovites. The women thought all this somewhat wild and rather frightful.

Marie of Gonzaga was annoyed by the profound bows and oriental favours of this stranger and his retinue. Every time he passed before her he thought himself bound to pay her a compliment in broken French, or to jumble awkwardly some words of hope and royalty. She found no other means of defeating him than to put her handkerchief to her nose, saying, loud enough for the queen's ear:

"Indeed, madam, these gentlemen have an odour about them that makes one's heart sick."

"You must strengthen your heart, then, and accustom yourself to them," replied Anne of Austria, drily. Then, thinking she had afflicted her—"You will become accustomed to them, as we are," continued she gaily; "and you know that in the matter of scents I am very difficult to please. Mazarin told me the other day that my punishment in purgatory would be to breathe bad ones, and to sleep between Dutch linen sheets."

Despite some joyous words, the queen was very grave, and relapsed into silence. Throwing herself back in her carriage, wrapped in her cloak, and apparently taking no interest in anything that was passing around her, she mused to the rocking motion of the carriage. Marie, still occupied with the king, spoke lowly to the Marchioness d'Effiat; each endeavoured to give the other hopes which she had not, and to deceive her out of friendship.

"Madam, I congratulate you; the Master is seated by the king; never has he stood so high," said Marie.

Then she was silent for a long time, and the carriage rolled sadly on over the dead and withered leaves.

"Yes, I am very glad to see it; the king is so good!" responded the Marchioness; and she sighed deeply.

A long and mournful silence then succeeded; they looked at each other and found their eyes bathed in tears. They dared not speak, and Marie, dropping her head, saw only the brown, damp earth which flew beneath the wheels. A sad reverie occupied her mind; and though before her eyes she beheld the first court of Europe at the feet of him she loved, all conspired to affright and trouble her with dark presentiments.

Suddenly a horse passed her like the wind; she raised her eyes and had time to see the face of Cinq-Mars. He looked not at her; he was pale as a corpse, and his eyes were hidden under his frowning brows and the shadow of his lowered hat. She followed him with unsteady look; she saw him stop in the midst of a group of cavaliers who preceded the carriages, and who received him bare-headed. A moment after, he plunged into a copse with one of them, looked at her from afar, and followed her with his eyes until the carriage had passed: then he seemed to give the man a roll of papers, disappearing into the wood. The fog hindered her from seeing more of him. This was one of those mists so frequent on the banks of the Loire. The sun appeared at first like a blood-red moon, wrapped in a ragged shroud, and hidden for half an hour under so thick a veil that Marie

could hardly distinguish the first horses of the carriage, and the men who passed a few paces off looked like grisly shadows. This chilly vapour turned at once to a penetrating rain and a cloud of fetid odour. The queen seated the beautiful princess by her side; quickly and in silence they returned to Chambord. They soon heard the horns sounding the return and recalling the scattered hounds; the huntsmen passed the carriage rapidly, seeking their way in the fog, and calling to one another in a loud voice. Marie often saw that the head of a horse or of a man appeared through the dull vapour of the woods, and sought in vain to distinguish some words. At length, her heart beat; they called for Cinq-Mars: "*The king is inquiring for the Master,*" they repeated; "*where can the Master of the Horse be gone?*" One voice said, very near her, "*He has just caused his destruction.*" And these simple words made her shudder, for to them her harassed mind gave a terrible meaning. This thought followed her to the castle, and into the apartments into which she ran and shut herself up. Presently she heard the noise of the return of the king and Monsieur, then, in the forest, some gun-shots, but she saw not the flash. She looked in vain from the narrow windows; they seemed covered on the outside by a black drapery which excluded the day.

Meanwhile, at the extremity of the forest, towards Montfrault, were two horsemen, fatigued with seeking the road to the castle in the monotonous sameness of the trees and paths. They were going to stop near a pool, when they were surrounded by eight or ten men, who sprang from the underwood, threw themselves upon them, and before they had time to draw, bound them to their horses, hand and foot, so as to render them completely defenceless. At the same time, a gruff voice coming through the fog, exclaimed:

"Are you royalists or cardinalists? Cry—'Long live the Master!' or you are dead men."

"Villains!" replied the first horseman, feeling for the holsters of his pistols, "I will hang you for abusing my name."

"Dios es el Señor!" cried the same voice.

All the men immediately left their prey, and fled into the forest; a burst of savage laughter rang through the wood, and a single man approached Cinq-Mars.

"Amigo, do you not recognise me? 'tis but a freak of Jacques, the Spanish captain."

Fontrailles whispered to the Master:

"This, sir, is an enterprising fellow; I advise you to employ him; nothing must be neglected."

"Hear me," replied Jacques Laubardemont, "and speak quickly. I am not a phraseologist, like my father. I remember that you have served me, and later still you have been useful to me, as you always are, without knowing it; for I have somewhat repaired my fortune in your little risings. If you wish, I can render you an important service; I command some brave fellows."

"What service?" said Cinq-Mars; "we will see."

"To begin, then, with advice. This morning, as you came down from the king on one side of the stairs, Father Joseph went up on the other."

"Oh, Heaven! here, then, is the secret of his sudden and inexplicable change! Can it be! a King of France! and he has let us trust him with all our secrets!"

"Well, is that all? Do you give me no instructions? You know I have an old affair to settle with the Capuchin."

"What matters!" and he dropped his head, absorbed in a profound reverie.

"It matters much to you, since, if you say the word, I will put him out of your way ere thirty-six hours, though he be now very near Paris. We can add the cardinal, if you desire."

"Leave me: I want no daggers," said Cinq-Mars.

"Ah, yes, I understand you," replied Jacques; "you are right: you would rather he were despatched quietly. It is just; he is worth the trouble, we owe it to his rank. It would be more convenient for great lords to undertake him, and that he who shall help him downwards may be in a fair way of becoming a marshal. But I have no pretension that way; a man must not have too much pride, whatever merit he may have in his profession: I ought not to touch the cardinal, that is a morsel for the king."

"Nor any others," said the Master of the Horse.

"Oh, leave us the Capuchin," replied Captain Jacques, beseechingly.

"If you refuse this offer, you are wrong," said Fontrailles; "it is done daily. Vitry began upon Concini, and he was made a marshal. We see people high in favour at court who have killed their enemies with their own hands, in the streets of Paris, and you hesitate to put away this wretch! Richelieu has his villains, you must have yours; I do not understand your scruples."

"Do not torment him," said Jacques, abruptly; "I know all this; I thought as he does when I was a child, before the dawn of reason. I would not even kill a monk; but I will speak to him."

Then, turning to Cinq-Mars—

"Listen: When men conspire, they desire the death, or at least the downfall, of some one, ... Eh?"

And he paused a moment.

"Now, in that case, one is either quarrelling with God, or agreeing with the devil . . . . Eh?

"*Secundo*, as they say at the Sorbonne, it costs no more when one is condemned, whether it be for much or little . . . . Eh?

"*Ergo*, it is no matter whether we kill a thousand or one. I defy you to answer that."

"No one could have said it better, Doctor Cut-and-Thrust," replied Fontrailles, half laughing, "and I see you will be a good travelling companion. I will take you with me into Spain, if you like."

"I am well aware that you are to take the treaty there," replied

Jacques, "and I will conduct you into the Pyrenees by roads unknown to man; but I should be mortally sorry not to have twisted this old goat's neck before starting, and whom we leave behind like a knight in the midst of a game of chess. Once more, my lord," continued he, with apparent compunction, again addressing himself to Cinq-Mars, "if you are religious, do not refuse; and remember the words of our venerable theologians, Hurtado of Mendoza, and Sancho, who have proved that a man may secretly kill his enemy, since thereby he avoids two sins: that of exposing his life, and that of fighting a duel. According to this great consolatory principle I have always acted."

"Leave me, leave me," said Cinq-Mars, in a voice choked by rage; "I am thinking of other things."

"Of what more important?" said Fontrailles; "this may be a heavy weight in the scale of our fate."

"I am endeavouring to find out how much the heart of a king weighs in it," replied Cinq-Mars.

"You startle me," replied the gentleman; "we do not ask so much."

"I did not say so much as you think, sir," continued D'Effiat in a severe voice. "They complain when a subject betrays them,—'twas of that I was thinking. Let war, dread war! let foreign and intestine war light up its fires! as I hold the match, I'll fire the mine! Let the state perish, nay, let twenty kingdoms perish! ordinary evils are not enough when a king betrays a subject. Hear me."

And he dragged Fontrailles away.

"I had but charged you to prepare our retreat and succours in case of our being abandoned by the king. Just now I had a presentiment of it in his forced friendship, and I decided to send you off, because he ended his conversation by announcing his departure for Perpignan. I feared Narbonne; I now see that he is going there to surrender himself up a prisoner to the cardinal. Go at once. I add to the letters which I have given to you, the treaty; it is in fictitious names, but here is the counterpart; it is signed by Monsieur, by the Duke of Bouillon, and me. Count Olivarez wants only that. There are blanks for the Duke of Orleans, who will fill them up as you desire. Go; in a month I shall expect you at Perpignan, and I will open Sedan to the twenty-seven thousand Spaniards brought from Flanders."

Then walking up to the adventurer, he said:

"As to you, my brave fellow, since you must be a Hector, I entrust you to escort this gentleman to Madrid; you shall be well recompensed."

Jacques, curling his moustache, answered:

"You are not disgusted with me! you show tact and good taste. Know you that the great queen, Christina of Sweden, asked for me, and wished to have me near her as a confidential person? She has been brought up in the roar of cannon by the *Lion of the North*, Gustavus Adolphus, her father. She loves the smell of powder and

courageous men; but I would not serve her, because she was a Huguenot, and I have certain principles from which I will not stir;—as, for instance, I here swear to lead this gentleman through the passes of the Pyrenees to Oleron as surely as in this wood, and to defend him against the devil if necessary, as well as your papers, which we will carry back without a soil or a rent. For reward, I want none—I always find it in the action; besides, I never receive money, for I am a gentleman. The Laubardemonts are a very old and good family."

"Farewell, then, noble man," said Cinq-Mars, "be gone."

After having shaken hands with Fontrailles, he plunged with a sigh into the wood to return to the castle of Chambord.

CHAPTER XX.

THE READING.

A SHORT time afterwards, one evening, at the corner of the Palais Royal, near a small and rather pretty house, many carriages were seen to stop, and a little door, reached by three stone steps, was often opened. The neighbours went several times to the windows to complain of the noise made at that time of the night, in spite of the fear of thieves; and the watch often stopped in astonishment, retiring only when they saw with each carriage ten or twelve footmen, armed with sticks, and carrying torches. A young gentleman, followed by three lacqueys, entered, asking for Mademoiselle de Lorme; he wore a long rapier, ornamented with rose-coloured ribbon; enormous knots of the same colour, placed upon his shoes, almost entirely hid his feet, which he turned out very much, according to the fashion. He often turned up a little curly moustache, and combed, before entering, his slight pointed beard. An universal cry of recognition burst forth as he was announced.

"Come at last!" cried a young light voice; "it was time well spent in waiting for the amiable Desbarreaux. Come, be seated, place yourself at that table, and read."

The speaker was a woman about twenty-four years old, tall and handsome, in spite of her very woolly black hair and olive-coloured complexion. She had something masculine in her manners, received probably from those who surrounded her, all men. She took them abruptly by the arm, in speaking, with a liberty which communicated itself to them. Her conversation was animated, rather than joyous; her words often raised a laugh, but it was by dint of wit that she caused gaiety (if we may so express it); for her face, impassioned as it was, seemed incapable of smiling; and her large blue eyes, under her jet hair, gave her at first a foreign appearance.

Desbarreaux kissed her hand with gallantry; then he went with her round the room, wherein were assembled about thirty persons; some seated on large chairs, others under the immense chimney, while

others chatted in the embrasures of the windows, under the large curtains. Some were very obscure men, now very illustrious; others, illustrious men, now very obscure. Thus, among the latter, he bowed deeply to MM. Aubijoux, Brion, Montmort, and other very brilliant gentlemen, who were there as judges; shook hands tenderly, and with an air of esteem, with MM. Monteruel, Sirmond, Malleville, Baro, Gombauld, and other learned men, almost all called great men in the annals of the academy, of which they were the founders, and which was then called sometimes the *Academy of Wits*, at others, the *Academy of Eminent Men*.

But Desbarreaux scarcely made a patronizing nod to young Corneille, who was speaking in a corner to a foreigner, and a youth whom he presented to the mistress of the house under the name of Poquelin, son of the king's upholsterer. The one was Molière, the other Milton.*

Before the reading which was expected from the young Sybarite, a great contest arose between him and other poets or prose writers of the time; they spoke glibly, exchanging retorts in a language which would have been utterly incomprehensible to any simple-minded man who might have fallen suddenly and uninitiated among them; eagerly shaking each other's hands with affectionate compliments, and innumerable allusions to their works.

"Ah! you are here, too, illustrious Baro," cried the new comer. "I have read your last canto. Oh! what a canto! how it runs into gallantry and tenderness!"

"What say you about Tenderness?" interrupted Marion de Lorme. "Do you know that land? you stopped at the village of Great-Wit, and at that of Pretty-Verse, but you have not been further. If the governor of Notre-Dame de la Garde will show us his new chart, I will tell you where you are."

Scudéry arose in a bombastic and pedantic manner, and unrolling upon the table a sort of geographical chart, ornamented with blue ribbons, he himself showed the red ink lines which he had drawn.

"Here is the finest piece of Clælia," said he; "this chart is generally found very gallant, but 'tis only a simple relaxation of mind to please our little literary *cabale*. However, as there are strange persons in the world, I apprehend that all those who see it may not be sufficiently sharp to understand it. This is the road from *New Friendship* to *Tenderness;* and observe, gentlemen, that as we say Cumæ upon the Tyrrhean, we say Tenderness-upon-Inclination, Tenderness-upon-Esteem, and Tenderness-upon-Gratitude. To begin, we must dwell in the villages of *Great-Heart, Generosity, Exactness, Little-Cares.*"

"Oh! how pretty!" interrupted Desbarreaux. "In fact, you see the village is marked there: here are *Little-Cares, Gallantry,* and *Billet-Doux!*"

* Milton really passed through Paris in this year, on his return to England from Italy. (See *Teland's Life of Milton.*)

"Oh! how very ingenious!" cried Vaugelas, Colletet, and all the rest.

"And observe," continued the author, puffed up with this success, that *Complaisance* and *Sensibility* must be passed; and that if that road be not taken, you run the risk of reaching *Lukewarmness*, *Forgetfulness*, and fall into the lake of *Indifference*."

"Delightful! delightful! gallant in the extreme!" cried all the auditors. "Never was there a greater genius!"

"Well, madam," began Scudéry, "I declare in your house, that this work, printed in my name, is the production of my sister, who translated Sappho in so agreeable a manner." And, unasked, he recited with emphasis some verses ending thus:—

> **"Love is an agreeable illness,**
> **Of which my heart would not be cured;**
> **But when it should be curable,**
> **It would be sweeter to die."—(Read, *Chélie*, *t.* 1.)**

"Had the Greek so much wit as that?—I don't believe it," cried Marion de Lorme; "how far superior is Mademoiselle Scudéry! That idea is hers; she has put those charming verses into *Clœlia*; 'twill figure well in that Roman history!"

"Wonderful! it is perfect," cried all the savants; "Horatius, Aruncea, and the amiable Porsenna are such gallant lovers!"

They were all leaning over the map of Tenderness, following the amorous rivers in all their windings, when young Poquelin dared to raise his timid voice, and fine and melancholy face, and said:—

"And what is the object of this? is it to produce happiness or pleasure? The gentleman does not seem very happy, and I do not feel very gay."

The only answer he obtained was looks of disdain, and he consoled himself by meditating *les Précieuses Ridicules*.

Desbarreaux was preparing to read a pious sonnet which he was ashamed of, having made during illness; he appeared to blush at having thought for a moment of God; the mistress of the house stopped him:—

"It is not yet time to read your beautiful verses, you will be interrupted; we expect the master of the horse and other gentlemen; it will be murder to let so great a wit as you recite during such an uproar. But here is a young Englishman who is on his way from Italy to London. I am told he has written a poem, I know not what; he is going to read us some verses. Many of these gentlemen know English; and for the others there are copies of a translation by an old secretary of the Duke of Buckingham, of the passages which he will read."

So saying, she distributed them to all her learned visitors. They seated themselves, and were silent. It took some time to persuade the young stranger to speak, and to quit the embrasure of the window, where he seemed on good terms with Corneille. At last he came towards a seat placed at the table; he seemed somewhat

sickly, and fell rather than sat in the chair. He leaned his elbow on the table, and his hand covered his fine but half-shut eyes, reddened by vigils or tears. He repeated his fragments from memory; his mistrusting auditors regarding him with haughtiness, or, at least, patronizingly; the rest ran carelessly over the translation of his erses.

His voice, thick at first, grew clearer in the course of his harmonious recital; the breath of poetic inspiration soon sprang up within him, and his look, turned towards heaven, became as sublime as Raphael's young evangelist. He related in his verses man's first disobedience, and invoked the Holy Ghost, which prefers to temples a pure and simple heart, which knows all, and assisted at the birth of time.

Profound silence accompanied this opening, and a slight murmur followed the last idea. He heard it not, he saw but through a cloud, and was in the world of his own creation. He continued:—

He told of the infernal spirit bound in avenging flames with adamantine chains, time divided into nine parts the mortal nights and days during his fall; the visible darkness of the eternal prisons, and the flaming ocean in which floated the fallen angels; his sonorous voice began the speech of the prince of devils:—"Art thou he who was surrounded by transcendent light in the happy realms of day?—oh! how thou art fallen! . . . Come with me . . . What matters the field of our celestial battles? is all lost? An ungovernable will, a never-changing spirit of revenge, immortal hatred, courage which will never bend, preserve these; are they not victory?"

Here a lacquey announced in a loud voice MM. Montrésor and Entraigues. They bowed, spoke, and at last seated themselves. The auditors profited by their entrance to engage in half a dozen different conversations; scarcely anything was heard but words of blame and reproaches for bad taste; some wits, led by fashion, exclaimed that they did not understand it, that it was above them (never thinking how true was their remark), and by this false humility, getting compliments, and the poet an injury—a double advantage. Some voices even called it profanation.

The interrupted poet put his head between his hands, and his elbows on the table, so as not to hear all this noise of the compliments and critics. Three men alone approached him, an officer, Poquelin, and Corneille; the latter said in Milton's ear—

"Change the picture, I advise you: your auditors are not high enough for this." The officer took the hand of the English poet, and said:—

"I admire you with all my soul!"

The astonished Englishman looked at him, and saw a spiritual countenance, impassioned, and somewhat sickly.

He nodded to him, and endeavoured to collect himself in order to continue. His voice regained its sweet and melancholy tone; he spoke of the chaste happiness of the two beautiful creatures; he

painted their majestic nakedness, the candour and authority of their look, when walking amid the lions and tigers which disported at their feet; he told of the purity of their morning prayer, their enchanting smiles, the careless follies of their youth, and their loving converse, so grievous to the prince of devils.

Soft involuntary tears coursed each other down the cheek of the beautiful Marion de Lorme; nature had seized her heart in spite of her mind; the poetry had filled it with grave and religious thoughts, from which pleasure had ever turned her; the idea of virtuous love appeared to her for the first time in all its beauty, and she seemed as if struck by a magic rod, and changed into a pale and beautiful statue.

Corneille, his young friend, and the officer, were full of silent admiration, which they dared not express, for rather loud voices drowned that of the surprised poet.

"This is insipid enough to make one's heart sick!" cried Desbarreaux.

"And what a want of grace, gallantry, and the *bright passion!*" said Scudéry, coldly.

"Not like an immortal Urfé!" said Baro, the continuator.

"Where is *Ariadne,* where is *Astrea?*" cried Godeau, the annotator, groaning.

The whole assembly uttered these obliging remarks, but made in a manner to be heard by the poet as a murmur only of uncertain meaning; he understood, however, that he did not produce enthusiasm, and he essayed to touch another chord of his lyre.

At this moment the Counsellor de Thou was announced, who, bowing modestly, glided in silence behind the author, by Corneille, Poquelin, and the young officer. Milton continued.

He related the arrival of a celestial guest in the garden of Eden, like a second Aurora in the midst of day; shaking the feathers of his divine wings, he filled the air with ineffable odour, and revealed to man the history of the heavens; the revolt of Lucifer, clothed in impenetrable steel, raised upon a car brilliant as the sun, guarded by glittering cherubims, and marching against the Eternal. But Immanuel appeared upon the living car of the Lord, and the thousand thunders of his right hand rolled into hell with frightful noise the cursed and confounded army under the immense fragments of the riven firmaments.

This time they arose, and all was interrupted, for religious scruples joined false taste; nothing was heard but exclamations, which obliged the mistress of the house to move and endeavour to conceal them from the author. This was not difficult, for he was entirely absorbed in his elevated thoughts; at that moment his genius had nothing in common with earth; and when he re-opened his eyes upon those who surrounded him, he found by him four admirers whose voices he heard better than those of the assembly.

Corneille addressed him:

"If you desire present glory, do not hope from it from so beautiful a work. Pure poetry reaches very few minds; for the vulgar, it must be allied to the almost physical interest of the drama. I have been tempted to make a poem of Polyeucte, but I shall cut down this subject, leave out the heavens, and it will be but a tragedy."

"What matters the glory of the moment?" replied Milton; "I thought not of success, I sang because I felt myself a poet, I go whither inspiration leads me; what it produces is ever good. Should these verses be doomed to lie unread for an age after their author's death, I should still make them."

"Ah! I admire them before they are written," said the young officer; "I declare to God I have found their innate image in my heart."

"Who spoke so affably?" said the poet.

"I am René Descartes," mildly replied the soldier.

"What, sir!" cried De Thou, "are you so happy as to be related to the author of the *Principles?*"

"I am the author," said he.

"You, sir! but .... yet .... forgive me, but .... are you not a man of the sword?" said the counsellor, filled with astonishment.

"Ah! sir, but what has thought in common with habit of body? Yes, I wear the sword, and I was at the siege of Rochelle; I like the profession of arms because it upholds the soul in a region of noble ideas by a continued feeling of the sacrifice of life; yet it does not occupy the whole man; his thoughts cannot be continually employed in contemplating it; peace puts a stop to it. Besides, there is always the fear of seeing it interrupted by an obscure blow, or a ridiculous and untimely accident; and if the man be killed midway in the execution of his plan, posterity gives him credit for ideas not his, or which he had ill-conceived; and this is disheartening."

De Thou smiled with pleasure on hearing these simple words of that superior man, whom he loved better for his unaffected language; he seized the hand of the young sage of Touraine, and drew him into a neighbouring cabinet with Corneille, Milton, and Molière; there they had one of those conversations which make us look upon as lost, anterior and succeeding time.

For two hours they were enjoying their discourse, when they heard the sound of music, of guitars and flutes playing minuets, sarabandes, German and Spanish dances, which the young queen had made fashionable; the continual passing of groups of young women, and their bursts of laughter announced that the ball had begun. A very young and beautiful person, holding a large fan as if it were a sceptre, and surrounded by half-a-dozen young men, entered their little retired room with her brilliant court, which she directed like a queen, and put the studious talkers to the rout.

"Farewell, gentlemen," said de Thou: "give way to Mademoiselle de Lenclos and her mousquetaires."

"Really, gentlemen," said the young Nino, "you need not fear us. Have I disturbed you? you look like conspirators!"

"We are perhaps more so than these gentlemen, although we dance!" said Oliver d'Entraigues, giving her his hand.

"Oh! your conspiracy is against me, sir page," replied Nino, looking at another light horseman, and abandoning to a third her remaining hand, whilst the rest endeavoured to place themselves in the way of her errant glances; for she cast her brilliant looks upon them like the dancing light which is seen at the end of flame, illuminating them for an instant only to be plunged in greater darkness.

De Thou slipped away without any one thinking to stop him, and was descending the great staircase when he saw the little Abbé Gondi coming up, red, panting, and perspiring profusely, who stopped him abruptly with an animated and joyful manner.

"Holloa! holloa! where are you going? let the strangers and authors go, you are one of us. I am rather late, but our lovely Aspasia will forgive me. Why are you going? is it all ended?"

"It seems so; they are dancing, and the reading is finished."

"The reading, yes, but the oaths?" said the abbé, lowly.

"What oaths?" said De Thou.

"Is not the Master come?"

"I thought he would; but he is either not come or he has gone."

"No, no, come with me," said the heedless ecclesiastic; "you are one of us, egad! It is impossible to spare you; come."

De Thou, not daring to refuse, or to appear to deny his friends, even at pleasure parties, which were distasteful to him, followed him, opened two cabinets, and descended a little hidden stair. At each step he made, he heard more plainly the voices of assembled men. Gondi opened the door. An unexpected sight met his eyes.

The chamber which he entered, illumined by a mysterious light, seemed a most voluptuous place for such a meeting; on one side was a gilt bedstead, curtained, decorated with feathers, and covered with lace and ornaments; all the furniture, loaded with gold, was of greyish silk, richly braided; cushions of velvet lay at the feet of each chair, upon the thick carpet. Small mirrors, joined to one another by silver ornaments, seemed like a single piece of glass, a luxury then unknown, and everywhere multiplied their brilliant faces. No external noise could penetrate into this delightful place; but the people assembled there seemed to have other thoughts than it had power to excite. A crowd of men, whom he recognised as members of the court and army, pressed towards the door of this chamber, and dispersed into a neighbouring apartment, which appeared more roomy; they contented themselves with devouring with their eyes the spectacle offered in the first saloon. There, ten young men, holding their naked swords in their hands, the points downwards, stood around a table; their faces, turned towards Cinq-Mars, showed that it was to him they were addressing their oath; the master of the horse was alone, before the fire-place, his arms crossed, and seemingly absorbed in reflection. Standing near him, Marion de Lorme, grave and collected, seemed to have just presented these gentlemen to him.

When Cinq-Mars saw his friend, he ran towards the door, and casting a terrible look at Gondi, seized de Thou by the arms, and stopping him upon the last step:

"What do you here?" said he, in a half-choked voice; "who brought you? what want you of me? you are lost if you enter."

"What are you doing yourself? what do I see in this house."

"The consequences of what you know; retire, I implore you; this air is poisonous to all who breathe it."

"It is too late. I am already observed; what will be said if I retire? I should discourage them; you will be lost."

This dialogue was whispered precipitously; at the last word, De Thou, pushing his friend aside, entered, and with a firm step crossed the apartment towards the fireplace.

Cinq-Mars, trembling with rage, returned to his place, hung his head, collected himself, and assuming a calmer countenance, continued a discourse which the entrance of his friends had interrupted.

"Be then with us, gentlemen; but there is no longer need of so much mystery; remember that when a firm mind embraces an idea, it should follow it through all its consequences. Your courage will meet a vaster field than a court intrigue. Thank me for it; in exchange for a conspiracy I give you a war. Bouillon is gone to put himself at the head of his Italian army; in two days, and before the king, I quit Paris for Perpignan; all of you must come, the royalists of the army expect us."

He cast around him calm confiding looks; he saw joy and enthusiasm in the eyes of all those who surrounded him. Before allowing his own heart to be gained by contagious emotion, which precedes great enterprises, he wished to assure himself of them, and repeated, with a grave air:

"Yes, war, gentlemen, think of this, an open war. Rochelle and Navarre prepare to awaken their religious warriors; the Italian army will enter on one side, the king's brother will come to join you on the other; the man will be surrounded, conquered, crushed. The parliament will march in our rear, bearing their petition to the king, an arm as strong as our swords; and, after victory, we will throw ourselves at the feet of Louis XIII., our master, to favour and pardon us for having delivered him of an ambitious and bloodthirsty wretch, and for hastening his resolution."

Looking around him, he saw increasing assurance in the eyes and attitude of his accomplices.

"What!" continued he, crossing his arms, and still with an effort restraining his own emotion, do you not recoil before this resolution, which would appear a revolt to any other men? Think you not that I have abused the power remitted me by you? I have carried this matter far; but there is a time when kings must be served despite themselves. You know that all is provided for. Sedan will open its gates, and we are assured of Spain.

"Twelve thousand veteran troops will enter with us as far as

Paris. No place will be delivered to the foreigner; all will be garrisoned with Frenchmen, and will be taken in the king's name."

"Long live the king! hurrah for the union! the new union, the holy league!" cried all the assembled young men.

"Now," cried Cinq-Mars, with enthusiasm, "has come the most glorious day of my life. O youth, youth, ever called improvident and giddy from age to age! of what wilt thou be accused to-day? With a chief of twenty-two years is conceived, matured, and is about to be executed, the vastest, the justest, and the most salutary of undertakings. Friends, what is a great life, but a thought of youth, executed by ripe age? Youth looks steadfastly at the future with its eagle glance, traces a large plan, lays the foundation-stone; and all that can make our existence entire, is to approach the completion of this grand design. Oh, when could great projects be born, if not when the heart beats strongly in the breast? The mind will not suffice, it is but an instrument."

A new explosion of joy followed these words, when a grey-bearded old man came from the crowd.

"Bah!" said Gondi, in a whisper, "here is the old knight of Guise coming to give us the benefit of his age, and freeze us."

In fact, the old man, shaking the hand of Cinq-Mars, said slowly and painfully, after placing himself near him.

"Yes, my child, and you, my children, I see with joy that my old friend Bassompierre will be delivered by you, and that you are about to avenge the Count of Soissons and young Montmorency. . . But it becomes youth, ardent as it is, to listen to those who have seen much. I have seen the league, my children, and I tell you that this time you cannot take, as they took before, the title of *Holy League, Holy Union,* of *Protectors of St. Peter,* and *Pillars of the Church,* because I see you reckon on the support of the Huguenots; neither can you put upon your great green seal an empty throne, since it is occupied by a king . . ."

"You may say by two," interrupted Gondi, laughing.

"Still it is of great importance to take a name to which the people is attached; that of *War for the public good* has been taken formerly, *Princes of Peace* latterly; it is necessary to find one. . .. "

"Well! *the war for the king,*" said Cinq-Mars.

"Yes, that's it! *the war for the king,*" said Gondi and all the young men.

"But," persisted the old leaguer, "it will be essential also to gain the approval of the theological faculty of Sorbonne, which formerly sanctioned even the *haut-gourdiers* and the *sorgueurs,** and put in force its twelfth proposition: that the people may disobey the magistrates and hang them."

"Ah, sir, that is not the question," cried Gondi; "let the Master speak; we no longer think according to Sorbonne, nor to your St. Jacques Clement."

* Terms of the Leaguers.

They laughed, and Cinq-Mars replied:

"I desired, gentlemen, to conceal from you none of the projects of Monsieur, of the Duke of Bouillon, or myself, because it is just that a man who hazards his life should know at what game; but I have shown you the greatest risks, and I have not detailed our strength for there is not one of you who knows the secret. Is it you, Montresor and St. Thibal, whom I need teach what riches Monsieur puts at our disposal? Is it you, M. d'Aignou and de Mouy, whom I need tell how many young men have wished to join your companies of men-at-arms and light horsemen to fight the cardinalists? How many in Touraine and in Auvergne, where are the lands of the house of Effiat, and whence have sprang two thousand lords with their vassals? Baron Beauveau, shall I tell you over again, of the zeal and valour of the cuirassiers whom you gave to the unhappy Count of Soissons, whose cause was ours, and whom you saw assassinated, in the midst of his triumph, by him whom he had conquered with you? Shall I tell the joy of Count Olivarez, at the news of our movement, and the letters of the cardinal infanta to the Duke of Bouillon? Shall I speak of Paris to Abbé de Gondi, to Entraigues, and to you, gentlemen, who daily see its misfortunes, its indignation, and its desire to rise up? Whilst all foreign kingdoms ask peace, which Cardinal Richelieu always destroys by his insincerity, (as he did by breaking the treaty of Ratisbonne,) all orders of the state groan beneath his violence, and dread that colossal ambition which soars towards the spiritual and even the very temporal throne of France."

An approving murmur interrupted Cinq-Mars. There was a moment's silence, and they heard the sound of the wind instruments and the measured footsteps of the dancers.

This noise caused a momentary distraction, and some laughter among the assembled young men.

Cinq-Mars profited by it, and raising his eyes—

"Pleasures of youth," cried he, "love, music, joyous dancing, why fill you not alone our leisure hours! Why are you not our sole ambition! What must be our resentment, to make us utter cries of indignation louder than cries of joy, our formidable secrets in the asylum of love, and our oaths of war and death in the midst of the intoxication of feasts and life!

"Curses upon him who saddens the youth of a people! When wrinkles furrow the brow of youth, it may be boldly said that the finger of a tyrant has made them. The other difficulties of youth give despair not consternation. Observe the daily passing of those sad and mournful students, whose foreheads are yellow, whose paces are slow, and voices weak; it seems as if they feared to live, and to make a step towards the future. What is there, then, in France? A man too many.

"Yes," continued he, "I have for two years followed the insidious and profound strides of his ambition. His strange proceedings, his secret commissions, his judicial murders are known to you: princes,

peers, marshals, all have been crushed by him; there is not a family in France but can show some grievous trace of his passage. If he regard us all as enemies of his authority, it is because he would leave standing in France only his own house, which, twenty years since, was the pettiest fief in Poitou.

"The humiliated parliament is voiceless; the presidents of Nismes, Novion, and Bellièvre have displayed to you their courageous but useless resistance to the condemnation to death of the Duke of La Vallette.

"The presidents and councils of the sovereign courts have been imprisoned, driven out, interdicted—unheard of thing!—because they spoke up for the king or for the public.

"Who fills the highest offices of justice? infamous and corrupt men, who suck the blood and money of the country. Paris and the maritime towns taxed; the fields ruined and desolated by the soldiers and exchequer agents; the peasants, reduced to use the food and litter of the animals killed by pestilence or famine, fly to a foreign country: such is the work of this new justice. These worthy agents have even coined money bearing the effigy of the cardinal duke. Here are his royal pieces."

The Master of the horse threw down a score of gold doubloons on which Richelieu was represented. A new murmur of hatred towards the cardinal arose in the saloon.

"And think you that the clergy are less crushed and less discontented? No. The bishops have been judged, against the laws of the state and the respect due to their sacred persons. We have seen the Algerine corsairs commanded by a bishop. The meanest men have been raised to the cardinalate. The minister himself, engrossing the holiest things, has obtained the election to the generalship of the orders of Cîteaux, Cluny, and Prémontré, casting into prison the monks who refused to raise their voices in his favour. Jesuits, Carmelites, Franciscans, Augustines, and Jacobines have been forced to elect vicars-general in France, so as no longer to communicate with Rome through their own superiors, because he would be patriarch in France, and chief of the Gallican church."

"He is a schismatic—a monster!" cried several voices.

"His path is visible, gentlemen; he is ready to seize both temporal and spiritual power; he has fortified himself, by degrees, against his very king, in the strongest places of France; he has seized the mouths of the principal rivers, the best sea ports, the salt-pits, and all the keys of the kingdom; the king, then, must be delivered from this oppression. '*The King and peace!*' shall be our cry. Providence will do the rest."

Cinq-Mars greatly astonished the whole assembly, and even de Thou himself, by this discourse. No one had until then heard him speak continuously even in familiar conversation; and never had he shown by a single word the least aptitude for public affairs; he had, on the contrary, affected very great ignorance in the eyes of those

whom he persuaded to serve his projects, showing them only virtuous indignation against the violence of the minister; but affecting not to put forward any of his own ideas, in order not to show his personal ambition as the end of his labours. The confidence which they testified in him rested upon his favour and his bravery. The surprise was therefore great enough to cause a momentary silence; it was soon broken by all those transports which are shown by Frenchmen, whether young or old, when a chance of war is presented to them, for whatever purpose it may be.

Among those who shook the hand of the young chief, the Abbé de Gondi bounded about like a roe.

"I have already enrolled my regiment," cried he; "I have superb men."

Then addressing Marion de Lorme:

"Egad, mademoiselle, I want to wear your colours; your gray ribbon and your order of Allumette. The device is charming:

'We burn only to burn others.'

"And I would that you could see all our doings, if we fortunately come to blows."

The fair Marion, who liked him but little, began to speak over his head to M. de Thou, a mortification which always exasperated the little abbé; so he quitted her abruptly, turning up and pulling his moustache disdainfully.

Suddenly, silence reigned in the assembly. A roll of paper had struck the ceiling, and fallen at the feet of Cinq-Mars. He picked it up and unfolded it, after having looked quickly around him; they sought in vain whence it had come; all those in front wore on their faces an expression of great astonishment and curiosity.

"Here is my name wrongly written," said he, coldly.

A CINQ-MARCS,*

CENTURIE DE NOSTRADAMUS.

"Quand *bonnet rouge* passera par la fenêtre,
A *quarant onces* on coupera la tête,
Et *tout* finera."

"There is a traitor among us, gentlemen," added he, throwing down the paper. "But what matters? we are not men to be afraid of his sanguinary witticisms."

"Let us find him, and throw him out of the window," said the young men.

Yet the assembly had experienced a disagreeable sensation. They spoke only in whispers, and each looked at his neighbour with mistrust. Some persons withdrew; the meeting was thinned. Marion de Lorme ceased not to tell every one that she would discharge her servants, who alone ought to be suspected. In spite of her efforts,

* This sort of punning prediction was published three months before the conspiracy. See an explanation of this in a note to chapter xxvi.

there was a momentary coldness in the room. The first sentences of Cinq-Mars' discourse left them in uncertainty with regard to the intentions of the King, and this untimely freedom had a little shaken the determination of the less firm.

Gondi whispered to Cinq-Mars:

"Believe me, I have carefully studied conspiracies and assemblies; there are some purely mechanical matters to be learned in regard to them; follow my advice here: I am indeed become versed in such affairs. Address another word to them, and in a spirit of contradiction; that always succeeds in France: you will warm them thus. Seem not to want them, and they will stand by you."

The Master of the horse thought this recipe good, and advancing towards those whom he knew most pledged, said to them:

"However, gentlemen, I do not wish to force any one to follow me; enough brave men await us at Perpignan, and all France is of our opinion. If any wishes to secure a retreat let him speak; we will give him the means of putting himself, for the present, in safety."

None would hear of this proposition, and the commotion it occasioned caused the renewal of the oaths of hatred against the minister.

Cinq-Mars continued to interrogate persons whom he knew would not refuse, for he ended with Montrésor, who cried that he would have passed his sword through his own body if he had had such a thought, and Gondi, looking fiercely around, said:

"Sir master of the horse, my retreat is the archbishopric of Paris and the Isle of Notre-dame; I will make it too strong for them to carry me off."

"And you?" said he to de Thou.

"At your side," replied he, mildly, lowering his eyes, not wishing even to give importance to his resolution by the firmness of his look.

"If you wish, I accept it," said Cinq-Mars; "my sacrifice is thereby greater than yours."

Then turning towards the assembly—

"Gentlemen," said he, "I look upon you as the last men of France; for after the Montmorencys and Soissons, you alone dare still to raise a head free and worthy of our ancient freedom. If Richelieu triumph, the ancient foundations of the monarchy will crumble with us; the court will reign alone, instead of the parliaments, the ancient barriers, and at the same time the powerful supports of the royal authority; but should we be conquerors, France will owe to us the preservation of its ancient manners and its safety. However, gentlemen, it would be grievous to spoil a ball for all that; the music awaits you; the ladies expect you; let us go and dance."

"The cardinal shall pay the piper," added Gondi.

The young men laughingly applauded, and all ascended towards the dancing saloon as they would have done to a fight.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE CONFESSIONAL.

It was on the morrow of the day on which the assembly had taken place at Marion de Lorme's. A deep snow covered the roofs of Paris, and stood in its streets and large gutters, where it was piled in gray heaps, furrowed by the chariot-wheels.

It was eight o'clock in the evening, and the night was gloomy; the tumult of the town was silent in consequence of the thick carpet which winter had laid down on it. It stopped the noise of the wheels upon the stones, as well as that of the steps of horse and man. In a narrow street which wound around the old church of St. Eustace, a man wrapped in his cloak, walked slowly and sought to distinguish if aught appeared about the place; he often seated himself upon one of the church posts, sheltering himself from the snow under the upright statues of the saints which stood out under the eaves of the temple, and extended almost the whole width of the path, like birds of prey which, ready to alight, hang upon the wing. Often did the old man, unfolding his cloak, beat his arms against his breast, to warm them; or blow his fingers, which were badly protected from the cold by a pair of leather gloves reaching to the elbow. At last, he perceived a little shadow cast against the snow and gliding along the wall.

"Oh, Santa Maria! what horrid countries are these of the North!" said a small, trembling voice. "Ah! the Duchy of Mantua, would that I were there, my dear Grandchamp."

"Come, come, do not speak so loud," replied the old domestic abruptly; "the walls of Paris have cardinalist ears, and especially the churches. Has your mistress gone in? My master waits for her at the door."

"Yes, yes; she has entered the church."

"Silence!" said Grandchamp; "the clock bell is cracked; that's a bad sign."

"That clock has struck the hour of meeting."

"To me it sounds like a knell. But be quiet, Laura, there are three cloaks passing."

They were passed by three men. Grandchamp followed them, found out the road they took, and returned to his seat; he sighed heavily.

"The snow is cold, Laura, and I am aged. The Master might have chosen another of his servants to stop sentinel whilst he makes love. It is all very well for you to carry love letters and little ribbons, and portraits, and other such rubbish; they should treat me with more consideration, and the marshal would not have done it. Old domestics should be respected by a house."

"Has your master been here long, *caro amico?*"

"Yes! *cara! cara!* leave me alone. We had been freezing for

an hour before you came. I should have had time to smoke three Turkish pipes. Do your business, and go and see at the other doors of the church if any suspicious people lurk about; as there are but two videttes, they must keep a good look out!"

"Ah, to have no one to say a friendly word to one when it is so cold! And my poor mistress came on foot from the Hôtel de Nevers. Ah! *Amore! qui regna amore!*"

"Come, Italian, right about face; let me hear no more of thy musical tongue."

"Oh, how rough thou art, dear Grandchamp! You were much more amiable at Chaumont, in the Turena, when you and I spoke of *miei occhi neri.*"

"Hold thy tongue, noisy; once more, thy Italian is only fit for ballad-singers and rope-dancers, to amuse learned dogs."

Ah! *Italia mia!* Grandchamp, listen to me, and you will hear the language of the Divinity. If you are a gallant man, as he was who wrote this for such a Laura as I . . ."

And she began to sing in a low voice.

The old soldier was little accustomed to the voice of a young girl, and in general, when a woman spoke to him, the tone of his answer always floated between awkward politeness and ill-humour. However, this time, he seemed softened, and twirled his moustache, with him a sign of embarrassment and distress; he even uttered a chuckling noise, somewhat like a laugh, and said:

"That's enough, dear! Egad, that reminds me of the siege of Casal. But be quiet, little one; I have not yet heard Abbé Quillet come; that disturbs me. He must have arrived before the two young people, and for a long time . . ."

Laura, who was afraid of being sent alone over the place of St. Eustace, told him she was very sure that the abbé had entered already, and continued singing.

"Hum!" said the grumbling old man, "I have my feet in the snow, and a gutter running into my ear; I have cold in my head and death in my heart, and thou singest of violets, of the sun, of herbs, and love: be quiet."

And plunging deeper under the arches of the temple, he dropped his old white head upon his hands, pensive and motionless. Laura dared speak to him no more.

But whilst her maid went to seek for Grandchamp, the young and trembling Marie had pushed with a timid hand the door of the church; there she discovered Cinq-Mars, standing, disguised, and waiting with impatience. She had scarcely recognized him than she hurried into the temple, holding her velvet mask to her face, and sought refuge in a confessional, whilst Henry carefully closed the door of the church by which she had just entered. He assured her that no one could open it from without, and at the same time approached beside her as usual, to kneel at the place of penitence. Arriving an hour before her, with his old valet, he perceived that

this door was open, and made sure from this that his tutor, Abbé Quillet, waited for him in his accustomed place. The caution which was necessary to prevent any surprise, obliged him to remain himself to watch this entrance until Marie's arrival: glad to witness the good abbé's punctuality, he did not, however, wish to leave his post to go and salute him. To him the abbé was a second father, except when he had duties to perform, and his behaviour towards this good priest was never very ceremonious.

The old church of Saint-Eustace was gloomy; with the perpetual lamp, burnt four yellow wax candles, which, placed beneath the fonts and against the principal pillars, cast a red glare on the blue and black marble of the lonely basilisk. The light hardly penetrated to the hollow niches in the aisles of the sacred edifice. In one of these chapels, and the darkest, stood this confessional, of which an iron grating sufficiently raised and surrounded with thick boards, only permitted the small cupola and the wooden crucifix to be discernible. Here, on either side, kneeled Cinq-Mars and Marie of Mantua; they could scarcely see one another, and found that, according to his wont, Abbé Quillet, seated between them, had awaited them for some time. They could just discern the shadow of his cloak through the small gratings. Henry d'Effiat approached slowly; he came to resolve, and, as it were, to judge of his ultimate destiny. It was no longer before his king that he was about to appear, but before a sovereign more powerful—before her for whom he had undertaken his immense task. He was going to try her fidelity, and trembled. He shuddered above all when his young bride was kneeling in his presence; he shuddered because he could not, at the sight of this angel, help feeling all the happiness that he should lose. He dared not be the first to break the silence, and still paused an instant to look upon her head in the obscurity—that young head upon which rested all his hopes. In spite of his love, every time he saw it, he could not prevent himself from feeling some degree of dread at having undertaken so much for a child whose passion was but a feeble reflection of his own, and who had not perhaps appreciated all the sacrifices that he had made, his character bent for her sake into the easiness of a courtier, condemned to the intrigues and to the torments of ambition, given up to secret associations, to criminal meditations, to the dark and violent works of a conspirator. So far, in their secret and chaste interviews, she had always received each account of the progress of his career with transports of pleasure, but without appreciating the anxieties of each of these momentous steps made for preferment, and continually inquiring of him artlessly when he would be lord high constable, and when he would marry; as though she had asked when he would go to a revel, or if the weather were fine. So far he had smiled at these questions and at this ignorance, excusable in a young girl of eighteen, born to a throne, and accustomed to its splendor, thus rendered, as it were, natural to her, and found around her on entering life; but at this hour he weighed

her character more seriously, and when, quitting the imposing meeting of the conspirators, who represented all the orders of the realm, his ear, wherein still resounded the masculine voices which had sworn to undertake a great war, he was struck by the first words of her for whom it was begun; he was for the first time fearful that this kind of innocence was, in truth, thoughtlessness, and really did not reach further than the surface of the heart. He resolved to examine her deeper.

"Good, God, how frightened I am, Henry!" said she, on entering the confessional; "you bring me here without an escort or a carriage. I always tremble at the thought of being seen by my people leaving the Hôtel de Nevers. Will it be requisite much longer to conceal myself as if I were guilty? The queen was not pleased when I confessed it to her; if she speaks to me of it again, it will be with that severe manner which you know, and which always makes me shed tears: I am very much afraid."

She was silent, and Cinq-Mars replied only by a deep sigh.

"What! you do not speak to me?" said she.

"Are these, then, all your terrors?" said Cinq-Mars, with bitterness.

"Could I have greater? Oh, my love, in what tone, with what voice you speak to me! Are you angry that I came too late?"

"Too soon, madam; much too soon for the things that you are about to hear, for I perceive you will not comprehend them."

Marie, affected by the mournful and sad tone of his voice, wept.

"Alas! what have I done," she said, "that you call me madam, and that you treat me so harshly?"

"Ah! take courage," replied Cinq-Mars, ironically. "Indeed you are not culpable, but I am, I alone am to blame; it is not towards you, but for you."

"Have you, then, done anything wrong? Have you ordained the death of any one? Oh, no, I am certain of it; you are so good!"

"How!" said Cinq-Mars, "are you nobody in my projects? Have I misunderstood your thoughts when you saw me in the presence of the queen? Can I no longer read in your eyes? Was the fire which animated them a great affection for Richelieu? The admiration which you promised to him who would dare to tell all to the king, what has become of it? Is all this a dream?"

Marie melted into tears.

"You always speak to me in a constrained manner," said she; "I have not deserved it. If I said nothing to you of this fearful plot, do you imagine that I forget it? Do you not find me sufficiently unhappy? Do you desire to see my tears? Behold them! I have shed enough tears in secret, Henry. Do you believe that if I avoided at our last interviews this terrible subject, it was for fear of revealing too much? Have I any other thought than that of your dangers? Do I not know well that it is for me that you run into them? Alas! if you fight for me, have I not also to sustain attacks

no less cruel? Happier than I am, you have but to contend against hatred, whilst I wrestle against friendship; the cardinal will oppose you in men and arms, but the queen, the sweet Ann of Austria, employs only sweet councils, caresses, and sometimes tears."

"Affecting and invincible compulsion," said Cinq-Mars, bitterly, "to make you accept a throne. You must have had occasion for strong resolutions against such seductions. But, madam, it is of consequence that you should previously absolve yourself of your aths."

"Alas! Great God! What is there against us?"

"There is a God above us and against us," replied Henry, in a severe voice; "the king has deceived me."

The abbé sat uneasy at the confessional.

Marie exclaimed:

"That is what I dreaded; that is the calamity that I imperfectly saw. Is it I who am the cause of it?"

"He has deceived me under the guise of friendship," continued Cinq-Mars; "he has betrayed me through that vile wretch, Joseph, whom a man offered to stab for me."

The abbé made a movement of horror, half opening the door of the confessional.

"Ah! my father, fear nothing," continued Henry d'Effiat; "your pupil will never strike with such weapons. They will be heard afar off, those that I am preparing, and they will be used in the broad day; but it remains for me to fulfil a duty, a sacred duty; look at your child sacrificed before you. Alas! I have not seen much happiness in my short life; I am going to destroy it perhaps, by your hand, the same by which it was blessed."

As he spoke, he opened the slight grating which separated him from his old tutor; the latter, maintaining an astonishing silence, fastened his short cloak in front

"Restore," said Cinq-Mars, with a voice less firm, "restore this nuptial ring to the Duchess of Mantua; I cannot keep it until she confers it a second time, for I am no longer the same person whom she promised to marry."

The priest abruptly seized the ring, and passed it to her through the lozenges of the grating opposite; this mark of unconcern astonished Cinq-Mars.

"What! father," said he, "are you too changed?"

Marie meanwhile no longer wept; but, raising her angelic voice, which awakened a feeble echo along the corridors of the temple, like the sweetest note of the organ, said: "Oh, my love! be no longer angry; I do not understand you; could we break asunder that which God united? and could I leave you when I know you to be so unhappy? If the king no longer loves you, at least you are assured that he would not wish to do you an injury, since he has not injured the cardinal, whom he never loved. You believe yourself lost, because he did not perhaps wish to separate himself from his old ser-

vant? Well! wait for the return of his friendship; forget the conspirators who terrified me. If they have no hope, I thank God for it, I shall tremble no more for you. What possesses you then, love? why grieve uselessly? The queen loves us, and we are both very young; let us wait. The future is joyous, since we are united and sure of one another. Tell to me what the king told you at Chambord. I have been observing you some time with my eyes. Oh, how dull was that hunting party!"

"He has betrayed me! I tell you," answered Cinq-Mars; "and who could have imagined it, that saw him shaking hands, passing from his brother to me and to the Duke of Bouillon, that he might be the better instructed in the most minute details of the plot, of the very day when Richelieu would be arrested at Lyons? deciding upon the place of his exile, for he wished him to die; but the recollection of my father made me intercede for his life! The king said that he himself would direct all as far as Perpignan; and, notwithstanding, Joseph, that foul spy, issued from the cabinet of Lys! Oh, Marie! shall I confess to you? at the moment that I was apprized of it, my soul was distracted; I doubted everything, and methinks that the centre of the earth totters on witnessing truth quit the heart of a king. I saw our edifice crumble into dust, one hour more and the conspiracy would have passed away; I should lose you for ever; one way was left for me, I made use of it."

"Which?" said Marie.

"The Spanish treaty was in my hand; I signed it."

"Oh, heavens! tear it in pieces."

"It is gone."

"Who bears it?"

"Fontrailles."

"Recall it."

"It ought to have already passed the defiles of Oleron," said Cinq-Mars, rising. "All is ready at Madrid: all at Sedan; the armies expect me, Marie; the armies! and Richelieu is in the midst of them! He wavers, it requires but a single blow to overthrow him, and you belong to me for ever, to the triumphant Cinq-Mars."

"To the rebel Cinq-Mars," said she, sighing.

"Well! yes! rebel; but not less agreeable. Rebel, criminal, worthy of the scaffold, I know," ejaculated this passionate young man, falling on his knees; "but rebellious through love, rebellious for you, for whom my sword would vanquish everything."

"Alas! the sword that is steeped in the blood of its wearer's countrymen degenerates into a dagger!"

"In pity, stop, Marie; let kings abandon me, let warriors desert me, I will be firmer still; but I shall be vanquished by one word from you, and yet once more the time for reflection has passed away; yes, I am criminal, and that is why I hesitate to believe myself still worthy of you. Abandon me, Marie; take back this ring."

"I cannot," said she, "for I am your wife, whatever may befall you."

"You hear it, father," said Cinq-Mars, transported with happiness; "bless this second union, it is that of devotion, brighter than even that of love. That she may be mine as long as I shall live."

Without answering, the abbé opened the door of the confessional, went out hastily, and was outside the church before Cinq-Mars had time to get up to follow him.

"Whither are you going? what possesses you?" he exclaimed.

But no one appeared, nor did he make any answer.

"In the name of heaven, do not call," said Marie, "or I am lost; he has doubtless heard some one in the church."

But agitated and without answering, d'Effiat, rushing out beneath the arches, and seeking his tutor in vain, ran to a door which he found shut; drawing his sword, he paced round the church, and reaching the entrance which Grandchamp should have watched, he called and listened for him.

"Abandon him for the present," said a voice at the corner of the street; and horses started at a gallop.

"Grandchamp, wilt thou answer?" cried Cinq-Mars.

"Help, Henry, my dear child!" replied the voice of Abbé Quillet.

"Ah! whence come you? you will cause me to be discovered," said the master of the horse, approaching him.

But he perceived that his poor tutor in the snow which was falling, and without a hat, was not in a condition to answer him.

"They have stopped and plundered me," he ejaculated, "these villains, these assassins! they prevented me calling out, they stuffed a handkerchief into my mouth."

Grandchamp at last came up at this disturbance, rubbing his eyes like a man who had just awoke. Laura, terrified, ran into the church to the side of her mistress; all hurriedly entered to remove the fears of Marie, surrounding the old abbé.

"The villains! they bound my hands as you see; there were more than twenty; they took from me the key of this door of the church."

"What! just now," said Cinq-Mars; "and why did you leave us?"

"Leave you! for more than two hours they have forcibly kept me!"

"Two hours!" uttered Henry, alarmed.

"Ah! unhappy old man that I am," cried Grandchamp; "I slept during the danger of my master! it is the first time!"

"You were not then with us in the confessional?" continued Cinq-Mars, with anxiety, whilst Marie tremblingly leant upon his arm.

"What!" said the abbé, "did you not see the villain to whom they gave my key?"

"No! whom?" said they all at once.

"Father Joseph!" answered the good priest.

"Fly, you are lost!" ejaculated Marie.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE TEMPEST.

In the midst of that long and superb chain of the Pyrenees which forms the indented isthmus of the Peninsula, in the centre of these blue pyramids covered with snow, with forests and with green turf, runs a narrow defile, a pathway cut in the dry bed of a perpendicular torrent; it circulates among the rocks, glides beneath the bridges of congealed snow, winds to the brink of overflowing precipices, to climb the neighbouring mountains of Verdoz and Oleron, and rising at length over their rugged surfaces, toils to their cloudy heights; a new country, which has its mountains and its ravines, turns towards the right, quits France, and descends into Spain. Never did the iron hoof of the mule leave a foot-print in these windings: man could there scarcely keep his footing, he requires shoes made of cord to prevent him from slipping, and a thick spiked staff, which he thrusts into the crevices of the rocks.

In the beautiful months of summer, the young shepherd clad in his brown cloak, and the black long-bearded ram, leads hither his flocks, whose hanging wool sweeps the turf. In these great altitudes one hears but the tinkling noise of the sheep-bells, the unequal vibrations of which produce unexpected harmony, fortuitous gamuts, which astonish the traveller, and exhilarate the wild and silent shepherd. But when the long month of September arrives, a sheet of snow unrolls itself from the tops of the mountains to their base, and respects only the ravine so profoundly deep, some gorges opened by torrents, and some granite rocks, which lengthen their fantastic forms like the bones of a world entombed.

It is then that the flocks of nimble chamois, throwing their crooked horns over their backs, leap from rock to rock, as though the wind made them skip before it, and take possession of their airy desert; flights of ravens and crows wheel round without ceasing in the abysses and natural hollows which they transform into gloomy pigeon-houses; whilst the brown bear, followed by her shaggy family, gambols and rolls about upon the snow, and descends sluggishly from her retreat invaded by the hoar-frost. But there are more savage and more cruel denizens than those brought back by winter into these mountains; the smuggler builds himself a wooden habitation in this natural, as well as political barrier; there negotiations unknown, and clandestine exchanges take place between the two Navarres, in the midst of fogs and winds.

It was in this narrow defile, towards France, that about two months after the scenes that we have witnessed at Paris, two travellers coming from Spain stopped at midnight, fatigued and full of terror. The sound of musketry was heard in the mountain.

"The rascals! how they have pursued us!" said one of them; "I am done for! Without you I should have been taken."

"And you will be yet, as well as this damned paper, if you lose your time talking. Hark!—a second shot upon the rock of St. Pierre de-l'Aisle; they think us gone by the hill of Limaçon; but below, they perceive the contrary. Let us descend. It is a patrol, no doubt, who chases these smugglers. Let us descend."

"Why? how? I do not see where."

"Let us keep descending, and take my arm."

"Support me; my boots are getting slippery," said the first traveller, grasping the projecting points of the rocks, to satisfy himself of the solidity of the earth, before placing his foot there. "Come on, come on, said the other," shoving him; "there is one of those knaves passing above us."

In short, the shadow of a man, armed with a long gun, was visible upon the snow. The two adventurers remained motionless. He passed; they continued to descend.

"They will catch us!" said he who supported the other; "we are turned. Give me your devil of a parchment; I bear the appearance of a smuggler, and I will make myself pass for one by seeking a shelter with them; but you will not have the means with your laced coat."

"You are right," said his companion, stopping upon a point of rock; and stopping him in the middle of the declivity, he gave him a bundle of hollow wood.

The report of a gun was heard, and a ball, whistling and quaking, buried itself in the snow at their feet.

"Just missed!" said the first; "roll down: if you be not dead, you must go along the road. To the left of the ravine is Saint Marie's; but turn to the right; cross Oleron, and you are on the road to Pau, and saved. Be off! Roll away!"

As he spoke, he pushed his comrade, and without deigning to regard him, not wishing either to mount or descend, continued to walk horizontally along the side of the mountain, laying hold of the stones, branches, and shrubs with the dexterity of a wild cat, and soon found himself upon a solid hillock, before a small, square, boarded hut through which he saw a light. The adventurer turned about like a famished wolf round a sheepfold, and, applying his eye to one of the openings, saw objects which probably determined him, for, without hesitating, he pushed the rickety door, which was not fastened even with a slender latch. The whole hut shook with the blow he had given it; he then saw that it was divided into two cells by a partition. A large yellow wax candle lighted the first. There a young girl, pale, and dreadfully thin, squatted in a corner of the wet earth, where the liquid snow trickled through the planks of the cottage. Her black hair, all covered with dust, and very long, fell in disorder upon her coarse brown garment: the red hood of the Pyrenees covered her head and shoulders; she cast down her eyes, and spun with a distaff fastened to her waist. The intrusion of a man did not concern her.

"Now, lass! get up and give me something to drink! I am tired and thirsty."

The young girl did not answer, and, without raising her eyes, continued to spin ploddingly.

"Do'st thou hear?" said the stranger, pushing her with his foot. "Go and tell the landlord that I am a friend, and am come to see him; and, before doing so, give me something to drink. I shall sleep here."

She replied with a hoarse voice, still spinning:

"I drink the snow which melts upon the rocks, or the green froth which floats upon the watery moor; but, when I have spun well, they gave me water from the spring of iron.

"When I sleep, the clammy lizard crawls upon my face; but when I have cleansed the mule well, they throw me hay; the hay is warm—the hay is good and warm; I put it to my marble feet."

"What story art thou telling me," said Jacques. "I do not speak of thee!"

She continued:

"They made me hold a man whilst they killed him. Oh! what blood I had on my hands! May God pardon them, if it be possible. They made me hold his head, and the bucket was filled with red water! Oh, heaven! I, who was the betrothed of the Creator! They flung their bodies into the abyss of snow; but the vulture found them; his nest was suspended with their hair! I see thee now full of life! I shall see thee bloody, ghastly, and dead!"

The adventurer, shrugging his shoulders, began to whistle on entering, and pushed at the second door. He found a man whom he had seen through the crevices of the hut; he wore the blue woollen cap called the *Berret* of Basque over his eyes, and enveloped in an ample cloak, sat astride a mule's saddle, bent over a large furnace, smoked a cigar, and drank out of a leather bottle at his side. The glare of the burning coal illumined his fat and yellow face, as well as the room, round which were ranged the mules' saddles, like chairs. He lifted his head without moving.

"Halloo! Is it thee, Jacques?" said he; "it is indeed thee! Though it is four years since I have seen thee, I know thee again; thou art not altered, robber; thine is always the great face of an idle rascal. Sit down there, and let us drink a cup together."

"Yes, here I am once again; but why the devil art thou here? I thought thou wast a judge, Houmain!"

"Me! I really believed thee a Spanish captain, Jacques!"

"Ah! I was so for some time, that's true, and made prisoner; but I can pull the trigger very prettily, and I have taken to the old life, the life of freedom, the good old smuggling."

"Bravo! bravo! *Jaleo,*" exclaimed Houmain; "we dare-devils, we are good for anything! Ah here! but . . . thou hast then always come through the other *ports?** for I have not seen thee since I have taken to the trade."

* Names of roads which lead from France into the Pyrenees.

"Yes, yes, I have passed where thou wilt never pass. Go to," said Jacques.

"And what dost thou deal in?"

"A ware little known; my mules come to-morrow."

"Is it silk, waistbands, cigars, or wool?"

"Thou shalt know by-and-by, friend," said the Bravo. "Give me the goat-skin bottle; I am thirsty."

"Here, drink; it is some true Valdepenas! We are so hearty here, we bandoleros! Ah! *Jaleo! Jaleo!** Drink thee, friends are coming."

"What friends?" said Jacques, dropping the goat-skin bottle.

"Do not make yourself uneasy. Drink away; I am going to tell thee, and afterwards we will sing the Andalusian Tirana."†

The adventurer took the skin-bottle, and seemed to drink quietly.

"Who is that great she-devil I saw at thy door?" replied he; "she seems half dead."

"No, no, she is only silly. Drink on, I will tell thee something."

And taking from his red band a long poniard, jagged like a saw on either side, Houmain began to rake and kindle the coal with it, and said gravely:

"Thou shouldst know first, if thou dost not know, that below (he pointed to the French side), that old wolf, Richelieu, carries it with a high hand."

"Ah! ah!" said Jacques.

"Yes, they call him *the king of the King*. Thou knowest, nevertheless, there is a little fellow who is very nearly as powerful as he is, and whom they call the Master. This little fellow commands nearly all the army of Perpignan at this moment, and he has been here this month; but the old sinner is always at Narbonne, and he is very sharp. For the king is sometimes this, and that (Houmain turned his hand upon the back and the palm); yes, between zist and zest; but pending his decision, I am for the zist, that is to say, cardinalist; and I have always transacted the affairs of my master from the very first, very nearly three years ago. I will relate it to thee. He needed persons of character, and of intelligence, for this short expedition, and sought me out for a criminal lieutenant.

"Ah! ah! it is a nice post, they tell me."

"Yes, it is a trade like ours, where they sell rope instead of thread; it is less honest, for they kill often; and it is more solid; everything has its price."

"That's true," said Jacques.

"Behold me, then, in a red robe. I gave a yellow sulphury one to a fine fellow who was curé at Loudun, and who was in a convent of nuns like a wolf in a sheep-pen; really he was well cooked."

"Ha, ha, ha, that's very odd!" cried Jacques, laughing.

"Drink," continued Houmain. "Yes, I assure thee, Jago, that I

* Common Spanish exclamation and oath, not translatable.

† A kind of ballad.

saw him, when the business was over, reduced to a little black heap like this charcoal; look at this coal at the end of my poignard; what are we ourselves? that's how we shall be when we go to the devil."

"Oh, none of that sort of joking," said the other, very gravely; "you know well that I am religious."

"Ah! I don't say you're not. That may be," replied Houmain in the same tone; "Richelieu is certainly cardinal! well, what does it signify. Thou shalt know that, as I was reporter, I reported that . . . ."

"Ah! thou witty rogue!"

"Yes, rather! I say that that yielded me five hundred piastres; for Armand Duplessis pays his people well; there is nothing to be said about it if the money does not belong to him; but we are all alike. So, faith, I have wished to place out this money in our old trade, and am come here. Business goes on capitally; the penalty is death if we're caught; and so the goods increase in value."

"What's that?" exclaimed Jacques; "a flash of lightning in this month!"

"Yes, the storms are coming on, there have been two already. We are in darkness; dost hear the rolling about? that's nothing; come, drink; it is nearly one o'clock in the morning; we will make an end of the bottle and the night together. I told thee then that I made acquaintance with our president, a great knave, named Laubardemont; I do not know if thou knowest him?"

"Yes, yes, a little," said Jacques; "he is a proud miser; but it does not signify. Go on."

"Well, then, as we had nothing to conceal from one another, I told him my little trading schemes, and recommended him, when an opportunity for a good bargain turned up, to think of his comrade in office. He has not failed; I have nothing to complain of."

"Ha! ha!" said Jacques; "and what has he done?"

"Why, it is two years since he himself brought behind him his niece, whom thou sawest there at the door."

"His niece!" said Jacques, rising; "and thou treatest her like a slave! *Demonio!*"

"Drink," continued Houmain, gently stirring the charcoal with his poniard; "he himself desired it. Calm thyself."

Jacques quieted himself.

"I think," pursued the smuggler, "that he would not even have been vexed to know it . . . . thou understandest me? he would rather she were under the snow than above it; but he did not wish to place her there himself, because he is a good parent, as he said."

"And as I know," said the new comer; "but go on . . . ."

"One may well imagine that a man like him, who lives at court, does not like to have a crazy niece with him. That is quite natural; if I had continued to act my part of judge, I also could have brought forward a parallel case; but here we make no display, as thou seest, and I have taken her for a servant; she has shown more good sense than I should have imagined, though she has hardly said even a single

word, and she is besides of a delicate constitution. Now, she cleans down the mule like a lad; though for some days she has had a little fever about her; but that will end in some way or other. As to that, do not go and tell Laubardemont that she still lives; he would think that it is on the ground of economy that I have taken her as a servant."

"How! is he here?" returned Jacques.

"Drink," replied the phlegmatic Houmain, who set a striking example in this lesson, his favourite expression, and began to half close his eyes in a tender manner. "This, you must know, is the second affair that I have had with this good Laubar demon, devil, mountain,* as thou wilt. I love him as I do my life, and I wish to drink this good Jurançon wine here to his health; it is the wine of a jolly dog, the late King Harry. How jovial we are here! Spain on the right, France on the left, and in the middle the goat-skin and the bottle! The bottle! for it I have relinquished everything!"

He cracked the neck of a bottle of white wine. After having taken long draughts of it, he continued, whilst the stranger devoured him with his eyes:

"Yes, he is here, and he must have cold feet, for he has been searching the mountain with a body of soldiers, and our comrades thou knowest, are banditti, the true smugglers."

"And why did they search?" said Jacques.

"Ah! that is the joke of the thing!" replied the drunkard. "It was to stop two rascals who wished to bring here sixty thousand Spanish soldiers on paper, in their pockets. Thou dost not understand my wit, perhaps, my good fellow? eh? Well, it is, nevertheless, as I tell thee, in their own pocket!"

"Yes, yes, I understand," said Jacques, feeling for his poniard in his girdle, and looking towards the door.

"Well, devil's-son, let us sing the Tirana; take thy bottle, throw aside thy cigar, and sing."

At these words, the staggering innkeeper prepared to sing in Spanish, interrupting his songs with bumpers which he gulped down his throat as he lay down, whilst Jacques, still sitting, looked at him, with a gloomy dark eye, by the faint light of the charcoal pan, and meditated on what he should do.

> **"I, who am a smuggler, and who fear nothing,**
> **Behold me—I defy all, I keep on watch myself,**
> **And they all respect me.**
> **Ha, ha, ha, jaleo! young maidens, young maidens,**
> **Who'll buy my black thread?"**

A flash of lightning shot through a little window, and filled the room with the smell of sulphur; a fearful report immediately followed: the hut shook again, and a thunderbolt fell outside.

"Oh, the house!" articulated the tippler; "the devil's among us! our friends do not make their appearance?"

* A pun upon the name of Laubardemont, the two last syllables meaning *demon*(t), devil, or the last, *mont*, mountain.

"Let us sing," said Jacques, drawing the packsaddle upon which he was sitting, near to Houmain.

The latter drank, to give him courage, and went on—

"Jaleo, jaleo, my horse is tired! and
I go running on foot beside him.
Ha, ha, ha! the patrol comes, and the sound of musketry
Is heard in the mountain.
Ha, ha, ha! my poor horse, he drags me out of this danger,
Long live! long live my horse; my horse which has a white chanfrin!
Young maidens, jaleo! young maidens, buy my black thread."*

As he finished, he felt his seat tottering, and he fell backwards; Jacques, after having been thus freed, darted towards the door, when it opened, and his face came in contact with the livid and icy figure of the idiot. He drew back.

"The judge," said she, entering, and she fell stretched upon the cold earth.

Jacques had already passed a step beyond her, when another figure presented itself, livid and ghastly, that of a man of tall stature, enveloped in a cloak dripping with snow. He likewise drew back, and grinned with horror and rage—it was Laubardemont, followed by the soldiers. Both stared at him.

"Holloo—! ras—cal—of—a—com—rade," said Houmain, raising himself with difficulty, "thou art Royalist, by chance?" But when he saw these two men, who seemed petrified at the sight of one another, he held his tongue like them, being aware of his intoxication; and shuffled in order to lift up the crazy girl still stretched on the ground between the judge and the captain. The former began to speak.

"Are you not the same whom we chased just now?"

"It is he," said those of his watch all at once; "the other has made his escape."

Jacques stept back to the gaping boards which formed the tottering wall of the hut. Smothering himself in his cloak like a hunted bear against a tree before a great concourse of people, and wishing to divert attention, and to get a moment's time for reflecting, he replied with a loud and ominous voice—

"The first who passes this charcoal fire and the body of this girl, is a dead man!" and he drew forth from his cloak a long dirk.

* The energy and expression of Spanish romance are lost in any other language. It must be heard as sung by the voice, alternately nasal and clear, harsh and soft, lively and melancholy, of some Andalusian, caressing with his finger-ends the cords of a little guitar. The movement is that of a dance, and the ideas those of a war-song:—

"Yo que soï contrabandista
I campo por mi respeto,
A todos los desafio
Pues a nudie tengo miedo.

Ay jaleo! Muchachas
Quien me merea un hilo negro?
Mi caballo esta cansado,
Y yo me marcho corriendo.

Ay! ay! que viene la ronda,
Y se mueve el tiroteo;
Ay, ay, cavallito mio,
Ay, saca me deste aprieto.

Viva, viva mi cavallo
Cavallo mio carreto;
Ay, jaleo! Muchachas, ay, jaleo!"

At this instant Houmain knelt down, and turned round the head of the young woman; the eyes were closed; he drew her towards the fire, where the glimmering would shine upon her.

"Ah, Great God!" exclaimed Laubardemont, forgetting himself through fear; "Jeanne again!"

"Be not afraid, my lord," said Houmain, on attempting to raise her long black eyelids, which fell again, and the head fell back like a soddened plant; "be—quiet; do—not—be—alarmed, she is quite dead, quite dead."

Jacques placed his foot upon the body as he would upon a barricade, and, shaking his sides, laughed demoniacally close to the countenance of Laubardemont, saying, in an under tone—

"Let me pass, and I will not expose thee, courtier; I will not tell thee that she was thy daughter, and that I am thy son."

Laubardemont collected himself, observed the persons who crowded around him with their carbines inclined forwards, and, making sign to them to retire a few steps, answered, in a subdued voice—

"Deliver to me the treaty, and thou shalt pass."

"Here it is in my girdle; but if any one there dare to touch it, I will call thee for help, my father, as loud as I can. What will thy master say?"

"Give it me, and I will spare thy life."

"Let me pass, and I will pardon thee for having given it me."

"What still unaltered, brigand?"

"Yes, assassin."

"What signifies to thee, a child, who conspires?" said the judge.

"What signifies to an old man, who rules?" answered the other.

"Give me the document, I have sworn to have it."

"Let me keep it, I have sworn to carry it back."

"What and whom may be thy oath and thy God?" said Laubardemont.

"And thine," answered Jacques; "is it the ordeal of red-hot iron?"

But Houmain, placing himself between them, laughing, and staggering, said to the judge, slapping him on the shoulders—

"You are a very long time explaining yourself, friend; is it that you know him of old?"

"It is . . . . is a good youth."

"I?—No!" exclaimed Laubardemont, with a loud voice; "I have never seen him."

At this moment, Jacques, to whom the drunkennesss of Houmain and the smallness of the chamber afforded an embarrassing protection, threw himself against the feeble boards which formed the partition, kicked two out, and sprang through the gap which he had made. The whole of one side of the hut was split, and shook again; and the wind rushed in with impetuosity.

"Oh—oh! Demonio!—Santo Demonio! where are ye off to?" cried the smuggler; "thou pull'st my house to pieces, as if it were thine own."

All approached cautiously, tore away the beams which remained, and which hung over the declivity. They beheld an extraordinary sight: the storm raged in all its fury, and it was a storm only seen in the Pyrenees; amazing flashes darted together from the four quarters of the horizon, and they followed one another so quickly that there seemed no interval—that they appeared motionless and permanent; but for the burning vault being now and then suddenly extinguished, and then becoming a continuous blaze of light. It was not alone the radiance of light in the heavens that was so remarkable on this night; it was the profound darkness. It seemed that in this naturally bright sky momentary eclipses took place, so short was the absence of light. The lean and lengthy peaks—the bleached rocks, stood forth from this red foundation like blocks of marble upon a cupola of burning brass, resembling the prodigies of Vulcan in the midst of hoar frost; the water spouted like flames, and the snow flowed like a stream of dazzling lava. Amidst this moving mass was a struggling man, and his exertions forced him further in the whirling and liquid gulf; his knees were already no longer seen; in vain did he hold on, embracing an enormous pyramidal and transparent icicle, which the lightning made to sparkle like rock-crystal; the icicle grounded on its base and slowly glided over the declivity of the rock. Beneath the snowy cloth was heard the crash of the masses of granite as they rushed, tumbling headlong into the immense depths. Yet it was still possible to save him; it was barely the distance of four feet which separated him from Laubardemont.

"I sink," he cried out, "throw me something, and thou shalt have the treaty."

"Give it me, and I will hold to you this musket," said the judge.

"There, there," said the bravo, "since the devil is for Richelieu;" and relaxing his grasp of one hand from its slippery hold, he threw the bundle of wood into the hut.

Laubardemont re-entered, clutched the treaty like a wolf over its prey. Jacques had in vain stretched out his arm, he glided slowly with the thawing block, which crumbled under him, and sank, noiselessly, into the snow.

"Ah, wretch! thou hast deceived me!" cried he; "but no one has taken away the treaty from me .... I gave it thee .... Dost hear .... father?"

He disappeared beneath the thick and white bed of snow; nothing was visible in his place but this snowy ambush furrowed by the lightning; nothing was now heard but the rolling thunder and the splashing waters which dashed against the rocks, for these men, grouped around a corpse and a villain, in the hut half torn down, frozen with horror, and fearing that God had directed the lightning against them, were struck dumb.*

* He lived and died with brigands. Seest thou not a divine punishment in the family of this judge, as some sort of expiation of the cruel and pitiless death of poor *Grandier*, whose blood cries for vengeance?—(Patin, lett. lxv., 22 Dec., 1651.)

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE DEPARTURE.

WHICH of us has never experienced the charm of following with his eyes the clouds of Heaven? Who has never envied the freedom of their movement in the expanse above, whether when rolled into masses by the winds or tinged by the sun, they calmly move onward like a fleet of dark ships with their gilded prows; whether it be that, scattered in light clusters, they glide swiftly, stretching onward like birds of passage, translucent like vast opals detached from the treasures of the heavens, or dazzling with whiteness like the mountain snow which the winds transport on their wings? Man is but a slow traveller, who envies these rapid passengers; less rapid, indeed, than the flights of his imagination, they have witnessed, however, in a single day, every place that memory or hope clings to, those places which bear evidence of his happiness or of his sorrows, and beautiful scenes that have not yet been explored, and where it is hoped all will meet at some period or other of their lives. There is doubtless no ordinary spot on the earth's surface, as a wild rock, a parched plain, that we pass by with indifference, which has not been consecrated in the life of some man, and which has not been painted in his memory; for like shipwrecked vessels before complete destruction, we leave our fragments on every rock.

Where go these blue and overcast clouds of the storm in the Pyrenees? It is the wind of Africa which drives them before it with a parching breath; they fly about, they roll over one another, murmuring, shooting the lightning before them, like torches, and dropping in their track a long train of rain, resembling a robe of vapour. Disengaging themselves turbulently from the rocky defiles which a moment before impeded their course, they refreshen the land of Bearn, the picturesque patrimony of Henry IV.; of Guienne, the conquest of Charles VII.; of Saintonge, Poitou, Touraine, that of Charles V. and Philip-Augustus, and at last, exhausting themselves above the old domain of Hugh Capet, check their course, grumblingly, upon the steeples of Saint-Germain.

"Oh, madam!" said Marie of Mantua to the Queen; "do you see what a storm is approaching from the south?"

"You frequently look to that side, my dear," replied Ann of Austria, leaning on the balcony.

"It is the side of the sun, madam."

"And of tempests, you see," said the Queen; "believe me, my love, my child, these clouds could not bear with them any happiness for you. I would much prefer you should look towards Poland. Consider what noble people you could rule."

At this moment, to avoid the rain which was beginning, the Prince Palatine passed hastily under the windows of the Queen, accompanied by a numerous suite of Polish youth on horseback; their Turkish

vests, covered with buttons of diamonds, emeralds, and rubies, their green and gray cloaks, the lofty plumes on their horses, and their chivalrous appearance made them shine with singular effect, to which the court had without difficulty become accustomed. They stopped a moment, and the prince saluted twice, whilst the fiery animal on which he was mounted pranced from side to side, keeping, however, his front towards the princesses; his steed rearing and snorting, shook his long mane and seemed to salute them likewise, curving his neck over his chest and between his legs; every one of the suite repeating this evolution in passing. The Princess Marie at first drew herself back, fearful lest the tears on her cheek might be detected; but this brilliant and flattering spectacle urged her instinctively to return to the balcony, and she could not help exclaiming—

"How gracefully the Palatine rides that beautiful horse! It looks like a dream."

The queen smiled.

"He dreams of her who might to-morrow be his queen, if she would but nod her head, and cast upon his throne a glance of her large black eyes, instead of always receiving these poor strangers in a pouting, capricious manner, and looking sulkily as now."

Ann of Austria, in speaking, slightly patted Marie's lips with a fan; she could not prevent smiling likewise; but in a moment she drooped her head on being reproached, and composed herself for the purpose of explaining the cause of her sadness, which now began to leave her. She wished, even yet, to contemplate those massive clouds which glided over the castle.

"Poor child!" the queen added, "thou dost all thou canst to be faithful and constant, and to preserve thyself in thy romantic melancholy. Thou injur'st thyself by not sleeping, by weeping, and ceasing to eat at table; thou passest the night in thinking or in writing; but I warn thee thou wilt not prosper at anything, unless it be to become wasted, to be less pretty, and not to be queen. Thy Cinq-Mars is an ambitious one, who has ruined himself."

Observing Marie conceal her face in her handkerchief to weep again, Ann of Austria entered her chamber for a moment, leaving her on the balcony, and pretended to be occupied in looking around her toilette for some jewels; she soon returned, calmly and gravely, to place herself at the window; Marie was more tranquil, and sorrowfully regarded the scenery, the hills in the horizon, and the storm which was gradually extending.

The queen continued in a more serious tone:—"God has been better to you than your imprudence perhaps merited, Marie. He has saved you from a great calamity; you have wished to make great sacrifices, but fortunately they have not been accomplished as you had imagined. Innocence saved you from love. You resemble a person who, fancying that he was administering to himself a mortal poison, only drank pure water without danger."

"Alas, madame, what would you have me say? Am I not now sufficiently miserable?"

"Do not interrupt me," answered the queen; "you see your present position with the eyes of another. I am far from wishing to charge you with ingratitude towards the cardinal; I have too many reasons not to like him. I have myself seen the conspiracy spring up. Nevertheless, my dear, you should remember that he was the sole individual in France to desire, against the advice of the queen-mother and of the court, the war of the duchy of Mantua, which he wrested from the empire and from Spain, and gave to the Duke of Nevers, your father; here, in this same castle of Saint Germain, was signed the treaty which destroyed the Duke of Guastalla.* You were very young then. . . . . But it is right that you should know of it, for all that. Once for all, then, through love alone, (I wish to believe it like you,) a young man of twenty-two years of age, is ready to assassinate him."

"Oh, madame, he is incapable of it. I will swear to you that he has refused to do it . . . ."

"I have already begged of you, Marie, to allow me to speak. I am well aware that he is both generous and loyal; I wish to believe that, against the general opinion of our day, he may possess sufficient discretion not to go to that extreme, and to kill an old man, as the Chevalier de Guise did. Will it be the Master who will prevent him if he uses open force? It is what neither of us can divine more than he! God alone knows the future. At least is it certain that it is for you that he fights and makes preparations for a civil war, to spread devastation, which perhaps is raging at this very hour in which we are speaking? A hopeless war, which, whatever way it turns, cannot but succeed in doing evil; for Monsieur intends to abandon the conspiracy."

"What, madam!"

"Listen to me; I tell you, I am certain of it; I do not require to explain myself more. What will become of the Master of the Horse? The king—he has judged wisely—is gone to consult with the cardinal. To consult him, is to concede to him; but the Spanish treaty has been signed: if it be discovered, what can M. de Cinq-Mars achieve alone? Tremble not so; we will save him—we will save him in these few days, I promise you; there is time . . . . I trust . . . ."

"Ah, madam, you anticipate! I am lost!" shrieked Marie, weak and half fainting.

"Let us be seated," said the queen; and she placed herself next to Marie, at the entrance of the apartment. She continued:—

"Without doubt, Monsieur will stipulate for all the conspirators in stipulating for himself. But exile will be their least penalty—perpetual exile. There then will be the Duchess of Nevers and of Mantua, the Princess Marie of Gonzaga, wife of M. Henry d'Effiat, Marquis of Cinq-Mars, exiled!"

"Well, madam, I will follow him into exile; it is my duty; I am his wife!" exclaimed Marie, sobbing. "I would he were in safety!"

* The 19th of May, 1632.

"Dreams of eighteen!" said the queen, supporting Marie. "Awaken yourself, child! awaken yourself! You must do it! I do not wish to gainsay the good qualities of M. de Cinq-Mars; he has a noble character, an enlarged mind, a chivalrous courage; but he cannot longer be anything to you; and happily you are not either his wife or his betrothed."

"I am his, madam; his only . . . ."

"But without the religious ceremony," replied Ann of Austria; "without marriage, in short. No priest would ever dare to do it: yours even did not do it; he told me so. Be silent," rejoined she, putting her beautiful hands on Marie's mouth, "be silent! You tell me that God has listended to your prayers—that you cannot live without him—that both your destinies are inseparable, that death alone could sever your union! Prattle of your age! Delicious chimeras of a fleeting moment! which you will smile at one day, contented at not having to repent them for the remainder of your life. Of all the brilliant young women whom you see around me at court, there is not one who has not experienced, at your age, some enchanting love-dream like yours, who has not formed ties which she believed indissoluble vows, and in secret offered up eternal prayers. Well, then, these dreams have vanished, these bonds broken, these prayers forgotten; and, nevertheless, you see them wives and happy mothers; surrounded with all the distinctions due to their rank, they come every evening to laugh and dance. I guess what you wish to tell me . . . . they do not love so intensely as you do—is that not the case? Well, then, you deceive yourself, my dear child; they loved quite as much, and did not weep less. And this I consider it my duty to teach you, in order to fathom this great mystery which causes your despair, as you are ignorant of the mischief which consumes you. Our existence is twofold, my friend; our interior being, that of our feelings, which work within us irresistibly, whilst that of our external being controls us in spite of ourselves. We are never independent of men, and especially when we are in an exalted station. Alone, we imagine ourselves mistress of our destiny, but the unexpected arrival of two or three persons reminds us of our dependence when we recollect our rank and station. What do I say? Why, were you to shut yourself up and deliver yourself to all that the passions abound with—courageous and extraordinary resolutions, they will suggest to you surprising sacrifices; a lacquey who may come to receive your commands, will suffice to break the spell, and to recal you to your actual state. It is this struggle between your projects and your position now, which is undermining you. You yourself wish it inwardly; you load yourself with bitter reproaches."

Marie turned aside her head.

"Yes, you think yourself very criminal; pardon yourself, Marie! All men are beings so relative, and depending upon one another, that I do not know but if the great retreats of the world, which we some-

times see, were made for their use. Disappointment has its hiding place, and solitude its coquetry. They pretend that the most recluse hermits cannot refrain from getting information of what the world says of them. This yearning after public opinion is a good, inasmuch as it nearly always controls what is eccentric in our imagination, and comes to aid us in those duties which we too easily forget. We are sensible (you will feel it, I hope), of being reconciled to our lot in life, whatever that may be, after the sacrifices which result from a perversion of our reason, like the satisfaction of an exile, who returns to the bosom of his family, or of an invalid, who again sees the day and the sun, after a restless night caused by night-mare. It is this feeling of being reconciled, so to speak, to one's natural state, which affords that serenity of mind which you perceive in most of those eyes which have had their tears also; for there are few women who have not known yours. You would consider yourself perjured in renouncing Cinq-Mars? But nothing binds you; you are yourself even more than released towards him by refusing, for more than two years, the royal hands which have been offered to you. And what has this impassioned lover done after all? he has raised himself to obtain you; but could not the ambition, which here seems to you to have aided love, have been aided by it? This young man appears to be extremely profound, extremely calm in his political stratagems, extremely independent in his vast resolutions, in his monstrous enterprises, so that I think he must be equally occupied with his tender feelings. Had you been but the means instead of an end, what would you say?"

"I should still love him," answered Marie; "as long as he shall live, I shall belong to him, madam."

"But as long as I shall live, I," said the Queen with firmness, "I will oppose it."

At these last words, the rain and the hail fell violently on the balcony; the Queen took advantage of it briskly to quit the door, and to enter the apartments where the Duchess de Chevreuse, Mazarin, Madame de Guémené, and the Prince Palatine, for a moment awaited. The Queen walked in advance of them; Marie placed herself in the background, near a curtain, in order that they should not observe the redness of her eyes. Besides, she did not wish to mix in the too cheerful conversation; however, certain words attracted her attention. The Queen showed the Princess de Guémené the diamonds which she had just received from Paris.

"As for this crown, it does not belong to me at all; the King desired me to have it in preparation for the future Queen of Poland; no one knows who she will be."

Then turning towards the Prince Palatine:

"We saw you pass, Prince; to whom did you go?"

"To Mademoiselle the Duchess de Rohan," replied the Pole.

The insinuating Mazarin, who profited of everything to seek to

divine secrets, and to render himself all-important by his stolen confidences, said, on approaching the queen:

"That comes most timely, when we were discussing the kingdom of Poland."

Marie, who listened, could not bear such a word in her presence, and said to Madame de Guémené, who was near her:

"Is M. de Chabot King of Poland?"

The queen heard these words, and rejoiced within herself at this slight haughty movement; and, to develop the germ, she affected an approving attention to the conversation which followed, and which she encouraged.

"The Princess de Guémené!" she exclaimed. "Is such a marriage conceivable? we cannot get it out of our heads; in fact, this same Mademoiselle de Rohan, whom we all say is so fierce, after having refused the Count of Soissons, the Duke of Weymar, and the Duke of Nemours, to marry but a gentleman! That is really pitiable, in truth! What are we coming to? I really don't know what will become of us?"

Mazarin added in an equivocal tone:

"What! is it really true? to love at court!—a veritable profound attachment! Could it be believed?"

During this the queen continued to clasp and unclasp playfully the new crown.

"The diamonds would look well with black hair," said she; "let us see; show me your face, Marie! . . But she would be delighted," continued she.

"One would think it were made for the princess," said the cardinal.

"I would give my best blood for it to rest upon that forehead," said the Prince Palatine.

Marie allowed to be seen, through the tears that she had upon her cheeks, an infantine and involuntary smile, like a ray of sunshine through the rain; then, becoming excessively red, she ran into her apartments.

They laughed. The queen followed her with her eyes, smiled, gave her hand to the Polish ambassador to kiss, and withdrew to write a letter.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE WORK.

One evening, before Perpignan, there happened an unaccustomed event. It was ten at night, and all were asleep. The slow and nearly suspended operations of the siege had benumbed the camp and the town. The Spaniards concerned themselves little with the French communications, being free on the side of Catalonia, as in time of peace; and in the French army every mind was made anxious

by that secret uneasiness which announces important events. Nevertheless all was apparently tranquil; there were heard only the measured steps of the sentinels; there was seen through the darkness of the night only the small red light of the ever-smoking match of their muskets; when suddenly the trumpets of the mousquetaires, the light horse, and the gensdarmes sounded, nearly at the same time, the signal *to saddle and to horse!* All the sentries cried to arms, and the serjeants were seen carrying their torches, and going from tent to tent, with a long pike in one hand, to awaken the soldiers, and to count and get them drawn up in line. The long platoons of soldiers marched in gloomy silence, circulating, as it were, in the streets of the camp, and went to join in order of battle. The clanking of heavy boots, and the trotting of squadrons, announced that the cavalry were also on the move. After half an hour's commotion the sounds ceased, the torches were put out, and all became again calm, only that the army was up and ready.

The torches inside one of the last tents of the camp made it shine like a star; one could have distinguished on approaching the small white and transparent pyramid, two shadows which went and came. Without, several horsemen waited; within, were de Thou and Cinq-Mars.

On seeing the pious and sage de Thou up and armed at that hour, one would have taken him for one of the chiefs of the revolt. But on looking nearer at his serene face and melancholy appearance, one soon understood that he condemned it, and suffered it to be projected or compromised through an extraordinary resolution, which enabled him to surmount the horror he possessed against the expedition itself. Since the day when Henry d'Effiat himself had opened his heart, and entrusted his secret to him, he saw clearly that all remonstrance was useless towards a young man so strongly resolved. He had even comprehended more than Cinq-Mars had told him, and he had seen in the secret union of his friend with the Princess Marie, one of those ties of love, the frequent and mysterious errors, the voluptuous and involuntary abandonments which could not be too soon purified by the public ceremony of marriage. He understood that torment which it would be impossible to be endured much longer by a lover, the adored master of this young person, and who was daily condemned to appear before her as a stranger, and to receive the political secrets of marriages which were suggested for her. The day on which he received the whole confession, he had attempted to prevent Cinq-Mars proceeding in his schemes as far as a foreign alliance. He had invoked the gravest reminiscences, and his better feelings, without any other result than to demonstrate more stubbornly in his presence the invincible resolution of his friend. We may remember that Cinq-Mars harshly said to him: "Ah! *have I entreated you to take part in the conspiracy?*" and he wishing only to promise not to impeach it, collected all his resolution against his friendship, for the purpose of saying: "*Do not*

expect more from me if you sign this treaty." Cinq-Mars, nevertheless, had signed it; and de Thou was still at his side.

The habit of familiarly discussing the projects of his friend had perhaps rendered them less odious to him; his contempt for the vices of the first minister, his indignation at the subjection of the parliaments to which his family belonged, and of the corruption of justice; the powerful names, and, above all, the noble characters of the personages who directed the enterprise, had all conspired to assuage his first and painful impressions. Having once promised secrecy to M. de Cinq-Mars, he considered that he was entitled to receive in detail all collateral secrets; and since the accidental event which compromised Marion de Lorme among the conspirators, he regarded himself as bound in honour with them, and held to inviolable secrecy. Since this time he had seen Monsieur the Duke de Bouillon and Fontrailles; he was accustomed to speak before them without fear, and to be heard without anger. Now, the dangers of his friend turned him away into a vortex like an all-powerful magnet. His conscience suffered; but he followed Cinq-Mars wherever he went, without wishing, through excessive delicacy, to risk henceforth the single reflection that he had been capable of a personal fear. He had tacitly given his life, and had judged it unworthy of both to show any sign of a wish to retract.

The Master of the Horse was in his cuirass, armed and booted. An enormous pistol, with a lighted match, was resting upon the table between two torches; a heavy watch, in its brass case, was lying before him. De Thou, wrapped in a black cloak, stood motionless, with crossed arms; Cinq-Mars was pacing to and fro, his arms behind his back, observing the time indicated by the hour-hand, too slow to his mind; he opened his tent, looked at the sky, then returned.

"I do not see my star on high," said he; "but no matter! she is here, in my heart!"

"The weather is gloomy," said de Thou.

"Say that the time advances; it marches, my friend!—it marches! twenty minutes yet, and all will be accomplished. The army awaits the report of this pistol to commence."

De Thou held in his hand an ivory crucifix, and divided his attention between the cross and the sky:

"Now is the hour," said he, "to fulfil the sacrifice; I do not repent, only that the cup of sin brings bitterness to my lips! I have consecrated my days to innocence and to works of the mind; and now, behold me here, ready to commit crime, and to take up the sword."

But taking with vehemence the hand of Cinq-Mars:

"It is for you!—it is for you!" rejoined he, with the transports of a heart blindly devoted: I shall applaud any errors if they redound to your glory—if I see but your happiness in my crime. Pardon me a moment for going back to the deep-rooted ideas of my whole life."

Cinq-Mars regarded him fixedly, and a tear slowly trickled down his cheek.

"Virtuous friend," said he, "would that your fault could but fall upon my head! But let us hope that God, who forgives those who love, will be for us; for we are criminal! I through love, and you through friendship."

But suddenly looking at the watch, he took the long pistol in his hands, and examined the smoking match with a savage look. His long hair fell upon his face like the mane of a young lion.

"Do not consume thyself," cried he; "burn slowly. Thou art going to raise a conflagration which all the billows of the ocean would not be able to extinguish; the flame will soon light one-half of the world; it is capable of reaching the feet of thrones. Burn slowly, precious flame, the winds which agitate thee are violent and formidable—love and hatred; take care of thyself, thy explosion will resound afar, and will find echoes in the cottage of the poor man and in the palace of the king. Burn, burn, poor flame, thou art for me the sceptre and the thunder-bolt."

De Thou, still holding the little ivory crucifix, said, in a low voice—

"Lord, pardon us for the blood that will be spilt; we shall combat the bad and the impious!"

Then raising his voice—

"My friend, the cause of virtue will triumph," said he; "she will triumph alone. It is God who has permitted that the iniquitous treaty shall not succeed; that which constitutes it as a crime is destroyed; shall we not fight? God will change the heart of the king."

"Now is the hour," said Cinq-Mars, his eyes fixed upon the watch with a kind of exulting rage; "four minutes still; and the cardinalists of the camp will be crushed; we will march upon Narbonne —they are there . . . ."

". . . . Give us this pistol."

At these words, he opened his tent abruptly, and took the match of the pistol.

"Courier from Paris! courier from the court!" cried a voice without; and a man covered with sweat, and gasping for breath, flung himself from his horse, entered, and presented a small letter to Cinq-Mars.

"From the queen, my lord," said he.

Cinq-Mars turned pale, and read—

"Monseigneur le Marquis de Cinq-Mars,—I write you this letter to conjure and beg you to wait upon our well-beloved and adopted daughter and friend, the Princess Marie, of Gonzaga, whose affection for you has hitherto deterred her from the throne of Poland, which has been offered to her. I have sounded her heart; she is still very young, and *I have reason to think* she will accept the crown *with less difficulty and sorrow than you perhaps imagine.*

"It is for her that you have undertaken a war which will put to

fire and sword my beautiful country of France; I conjure and supplicate you to act as a gentleman, and to forgive the Duchess of Mantua nobly of the promises she may have made to you. Thus rendering repose to her soul, and peace to our dear country.

"The queen, who throws herself at your feet, if it be necessary.

"ANN."

Cinq-Mars calmly replaced the pistol upon the table; his first movement had been to turn the barrel against himself! however, he replaced it, and seizing a pencil, quickly wrote on the reverse of the same letter—

"MADAME,—Marie of Gonzaga, being my wife, cannot become Queen of Poland but after my death; I die.

"CINQ-MARS."

And, as though he had not wished to give himself a moment's reflection, forcibly placed it in the hand of the courier.

"To horse! to horse!" said he, in a furious tone; "if you remain an instant longer, you are a dead man." He saw him leave, and reentered.

Alone with his friend, he remained a moment standing, but pale, with a fixed eye looking down upon the earth like a maniac. He felt himself falling.

"De Thou!" exclaimed he.

"What would you, friend, dear friend? I am near you; you are on the point of being great, very great! glorious!"

"De Thou! be still," he exclaimed, in a horrible voice, and he fell with his face upon the earth, like an uprooted tree.

Vast tempests assume different aspects, according to the climates through which they pass; those which, in northern countries, have spread over an awful breadth, gather together, they say, in one vast cloud in the torrid zone, and are for that reason so much the more dreadful, though they afterwards leave the horizon in all its pureness, and the waves in their fury reflect the azure of the heavens, while stained with the blood of man. So it is with the great passions of human nature; they have strange aspects, according to our dispositions; but they are terrible in vigorous hearts, which have retained all their force, though shrouded under the veil of social forms! When youth and despair are united, one cannot say how far they will go, or where will be their sudden resignation; one is at a loss to know whether the volcano will burn up the mountain, or will be suddenly extinguished in its bowels.

The terrified de Thou raised his friend; blood gushed from his nostrils and ears; he would have thought him dead but for the torrents of tears which flowed from his eyes; it was the only sign of life; when suddenly he opened his eyelids, stared around him, and, with an extraordinary force of intellect, regained all his thoughts and the power of his will.

"I am in the presence of men," said he; "I must end with them.

My friend, it is half-past eleven; the signal hour is passed; give the order to return to quarters; it was a false alarm which I will explain this very night."

De Thou had already perceived the importance of this order: he went out and returned from the field; he found Cinq-Mars seated, tranquil, endeavouring to remove the blood from his face.

"De Thou," said he, steadily looking at him, "do you retire; you disturb me."

"I do not leave you," replied the latter.

"Fly, I tell you, the Pyrenees are not far. I am not able to speak long with you; but if you remain with me, I warn you, you will die."

"I remain," de Thou still said.

"May God preserve you, then," replied Cinq-Mars, "for I am able to do nothing, the time is gone. I leave you here. Call Fontrailles and all the conspirators, distribute to them these passports, that they may fly from the field; tell them all is baffled, and that I thank them. To you, once more, fly with them—I insist upon it; and, whatever you may do, upon your life, do not follow me. I swear to you I have no intention of putting an end to my existence."

At these words, pressing the hand of his friend, without regarding him, he hastily rushed out of the tent.

Meanwhile, at some leagues distance, was held another conversation. At Narbonne, in the same cabinet where we formerly saw Richelieu discussing with Joseph questions of state, these two men were again seated; the minister, however, seemed much older, from three years of suffering, and the capuchin also was harassed at the result of the journeys about which his master was so tranquil.

The cardinal, seated in his arm-chair, his legs tied up, surrounded with heated cloths, and his body muffled up, held upon his knees three kittens, which rolled and tumbled themselves about upon his red robe; from time to time, he would take one, and place it upon the others, to spur them on to play; he laughed while watching them; at his feet was couched the mother, with lively-coloured fur, like an enormous muff. Joseph, seated beside him, renewed the account of all that he had heard in the confessional, even turning pale at the danger which he ran in being discovered or killed by Jacques. He concluded with these words—

"In short, my lord, I cannot help being troubled from the very bottom of my heart when I recal the perils which threatened, and still threaten your Eminence. The bravos offered to poniard you; I see in France all the court risen against you, half of the army, and two provinces; abroad, Spain and Austria offer to furnish troops; everywhere snares or tumults, daggers or cannons! . . . ."

The cardinal yawned three times without ceasing his play, and said—

"A cat is an extremely pretty animal! it is the tiger of the drawing-room what agility! what extraordinary subtlety! Look at this

little yellow fellow who pretends to sleep so that the other striped one should not watch him, and fall upon his brother; and see there, how he tears him! look how he inserts his claws into its side!"

"He will kill it, I think; he would eat it, if he were larger! it is very pleasant! what very pretty animals!"

He coughed, sneezed a pretty long time, then continued:

"Master Joseph, I have already asked you not to talk to me of state-affairs until after my supper; I am now hungry, and it is not my hour; my doctor, Chicot, enjoined me to be regular, and I have my pain on the side. This shall be my evening," rejoined he, looking at the clock; "at nine we will arrange the affairs of the Master; at ten I will have myself carried round the garden to breathe the air by moonlight; then I will sleep for an hour or two; at midnight the king will arrive, and at four o'clock you could call again to receive the different orders of arrest, condemnations, or other things, which I shall have to give you for the provinces, for Paris, or the army of his Majesty."

Richelieu said all this with the same tone of voice and uniform pronunciation, only altered by the weakness of his chest, and the loss of several teeth.

It was seven o'clock in the evening; and the capuchin withdrew. The cardinal supped with the greatest composure, and when the clock struck half-past eight, he called Joseph, and when he was seated near the table, said to him:

"Behold all that has been done against me during more than two years! They are poor people, in truth! The Duke of Bouillon even, whom I thought sufficiently trustworthy, has lost himself in my good opinion by this treaty; I have watched him with my own eyes, and I ask thee, has he done an act worthy of a statesman? The king, monsieur, and the rest, have put their heads together against me, and they have only elevated one man. There is but this little Cinq-Mars who has a train of ideas; all that he has done was conducted in a most surprising manner. We must do him justice, he has good qualities; I would have made him my pupil, if it had not been for the inflexibility of his character; but he has fallen out with me, I am very sorry for him. For two years I have suffered them to swim in deep water; now let us draw the net."

"It is time, my lord," said Joseph, who, in speaking, often trembled involuntarily; "do you know that from Perpignan to Narbonne, the way is short? do you know that if you had a strong army here, your soldiers in camp are desponding, and not to be depended upon? that the young nobility are furious, and that the king is not to be depended upon?"

The cardinal looked at the clock.

"It is still only half-past eight, Joseph; I have already said that I will not occupy myself with this matter till nine o'clock. In the mean time, as it is essential that justice be done, you will go and write what I dictate to you, for I have a very good memory. There

still remain in the world, as I see by my notes, four of the judges of Urban Grandier; he was a man of true genius that Urban Grandier," added he, maliciously; Joseph bit his lip; "all the other judges died miserably; Houmain remains, who will be hung up like a smuggler; we could let him rest quietly: but here is this horrible Lactantius, who lives in peace with Barré and Mignon. Take a pen and write to the Archbishop of Poitiers:

"My Lord,—The good pleasure of his Majesty is, that the fathers Barré and Mignon be deprived of their curacies, and sent with the shortest delay to the town of Lyons; father Lactantius, capuchin, is suspected of certain criminal intentions towards the state, to be there tried before a special tribunal."

Joseph wrote with the same coolness as a Turk would decapitate a man at the bidding of his master.

The cardinal said to him, on signing the letter:

"I would have you know how I wish they should disappear; for it is important to efface all traces of this ancient process. Providence has well served me in raising all these men: I finish its work. Here is all that will be known to posterity."

And he read to the capuchin that page of his memoirs, wherein he relates the witchcraft of the magician.*

During his slow reading, Joseph could not help looking at the clock.

"Art thou in a hurry to come to the Master?" said the cardinal at last; "well! to please thee, let us pass to him. Thou thinkest then that I have not my reasons for being quiet? thou thinkest that I have allowed these poor conspirators to go too far? No. Here are the bits of paper which will remove thy fears, if thou knowest them. Above all, in this bundle of hollow wood is the treaty with Spain, seized at Oleron. I am extremely satisfied with Laubardemont, he is a clever fellow!"

The fire of ferocious jealousy darted from under the thick eyelashes of Joseph.

"Ah, my lord," said he, "knowest thou not from what man he tore it; it is true that he left him to die, and in that respect we have nothing to fear; but, in fact, he was the agent of the conspiracy; it was his son."

"Do you tell the truth?" said the cardinal, severely; "yes, for you would not venture to tell an untruth to me. How did you know this?"

"Through the persons in his employ, my lord; here are their accounts. They tally."

The cardinal examined these new papers, and added:

"Then we will still employ him to try our conspirators, and afterwards you can do as you like; I give him to you."

Joseph was gratified; he took up his precious denunciations, and continued:

* See the Mémoires de Richelieu, Collect. des Mem., t. xxviii., p. 189.

"His eminence speaks of trying men still armed and on horseback?"

"They are not all. Read this letter of MONSIEUR to Chavigny; he asks pardon; he has had enough of it; he dare not even address himself to me, and did not lift up his prayers higher than the knees of one of my attendants.* But the next day he took courage, and sent this one to me personally,† and a third for the king. His scheme is stifled; he could not carry it out. But they will not pacify me at so small a cost; there must be a detailed confession, or I will drive him out of the kingdom. I have written to him this morning."‡

As to the magnificent and powerful Duke Bouillon, sovereign of Sedan, and general-in-chief of the Italian armies, he was seized by his officers in the midst of his soldiers. There remains only my two young neighbours. They imagine themselves to have the camp entirely at their command, and the red companies surround their dwelling-place; all the rest, being at the pleasure of Monsieur, will not act, and my regiments will arrest them. Nevertheless I have permitted that they should seemingly obey them. If they give the signal at half-past eleven, they will be arrested in the first instance, else the king will deliver them up this evening. . . . Do not look astonished; he is going to deliver them to me, I tell thee, between midnight and one in the morning. You see that all is done without you, Joseph. We ourselves go through with it very well; and, as

* *To M. Chavigny.*

"MONSIEUR DE CHAVIGNY,

"As I believe that you are dissatisfied with me, and that you have reason to be so, I do not neglect to pray you to bring about an accommodation between his eminence and me, and I expect this from the real affection you have for me, and which I think will be greater than your anger. You know the need I have to be drawn out of the trouble I am in. You have already done it twice between his eminence and me. I swear to you that this is the last time that I will give you such employment.

"GASTON D'ORLEANS."

† *To his Excellency the Cardinal-Duke.*

"COUSIN,

"This ungrateful Master is the guiltiest man in the world for having displeased you; the favours which he received of his majesty have always made me wary of him and all his artifices; but it is for you, cousin, that I preserve my esteem and my entire friendship . . . . I am touched with true repentance at having failed in the fidelity which I owe to the king, my lord, and I take God witness the sincerity with which I shall all my life be the most faithful of your friends, and with the same passion that I am,

"COUSIN, your affectionate cousin,

"GASTON."

‡ *The Cardinal's Answer.*

"MONSIEUR,

"Since God wills that men have recourse to an ingenious and entire confession to be absolved from their faults in this world, I teach you the way you must take to get out of this trouble. Your highness has begun well, that is the way to do it. This is all I can say."

yet, I do not see that we have received great assistance from you: you are neglectful."

"Ah, my lord, did you know what toil was necessary to discover the road which the messengers of the treaty had taken! I could not have known it without risking my life. What with these two young persons . . . ."

The cardinal at this commenced laughing with a jeering air, shaking the very bottom of his elbow-chair.

"Thou must have been very ridiculous and very frightened in that box, Joseph, and I think it must have been the first time in thy life that thou heardst love spoken of. Dost thou like that language, father Joseph? and, tell me, dost thou understand it clearly? I hardly think that thou couldst find a very poetical idea."

Richelieu, with arms folded, gazed with pleasure at the confused capuchin, and continued in the bantering tone of a grand seignior, which he assumed sometimes, gratifying himself in expressing the noblest expressions with the impurest lips.

"Let us see, Joseph; give me a definition of love according to thy ideas! What may that be? for thou seest that it exists elsewhere than in the romances. This little young man has brought about all these little conspiracies through love. Thou hast heard of it thyself, through thy worthless ears. Let us see: what is love? I really know nothing about it."

This man was humbled, and looked at the chimney-piece with the stupid eye of an ignoble animal. After having stared about a long time, he at length replied in a drawling nasal tone of voice:

"It must be some malignant fever which scares away the brains; but in truth, my lord, I assure you that until now I have never reflected about the matter, and I have always been embarrassed in speaking to a woman; I should wish that they could be removed from society, for I do not see in what way they are useful, unless it be to tell secrets, like the little duchess, or like Marion de Lorme, whom I cannot recommend too well to your eminence; she has thought of everything, and cast with much address our little prophecy into the midst of the conspirators. We did not fail in the *marvellous* this time; as for the siege of Hesdin, we need only find a window for you to pass through on the day of execution."

"There again, sir, is one of your stupidities," said the cardinal; "you will make me as ridiculous as yourself, if you continue. I am too strong to ask the help of Heaven; think of that no more. Do not busy yourself except with the persons of whom I speak to you. I have allotted your share for you already. When the Master of the Horse is captured, you will cause him to be judged and executed at Lyons. I do not wish to mix myself up with it further. This matter is too insignificant for me; it is a pebble under my foot, about which I should not think so long."

Joseph kept silent; he could not understand this man, surrounded

by armed enemies, speaking of the future as he disposed of the present, and of the present as a thing passed, and of which he had nothing further to fear. He did not know whether to believe him mad or a prophet—inferior or superior to humanity. His surprise redoubled when Chavigny precipitately entered, and knocking his heavy boots against the table of the cardinal, in such a manner as to run the risk of falling, cried out in a very uneasy manner,—

"My lord, one of your servants has arrived from Perpignan, and he saw the camp alarmed, and your enemies on horseback . . . ."

"They march on foot, sir," replied Richelieu, replacing his stool; "you appear to have lost your coolness."

"But . . . but . . . my lord, will it not be necessary to apprize M. de Fabert?"

"Leave him to sleep, and retire to bed yourself, as well as Joseph."

"My lord, another extraordinary thing—the king is coming!"

"Indeed, it is extraordinary," said the minister, looking at the clock; "I did not expect him for two hours. Do you both leave."

Shortly after was heard a noise of boots and arms, which announced the arrival of the prince; they opened the two folding doors; the guard of the cardinal struck their pikes three times upon the floor, when the king appeared.

He entered leaning on one side upon a cane, and the other upon the shoulders of his confessor, father Sirmond, who retired and left him with the cardinal. The latter rose with the utmost difficulty, and could only take one step towards the king, his weak limbs being wrapped up; he made a gesture to assist the prince to a seat near the fire opposite him. Louis XIII. fell into a great arm-chair furnished with cushions, demanded and drank a glass of elixir prepared to strengthen him against the frequent swoonings occasioned by his languid malady, motioned every one to leave, and, alone with Richelieu, discoursed with him in an enfeebled tone of voice.

"I am going, my dear cardinal; I perceive that I am going to heaven; I grow weaker every day; neither summer, nor the air of the south have restored my strength."

"I shall precede your majesty," answered the minister; "death has already made a conquest of my legs—you see it; but as long as he spares my head to think and my hand to write, I shall still be at your service."

"And I am sure that your intention was to add, 'and the heart to love' me," said the king.

"Could your majesty possibly doubt it?" replied the cardinal, frowning and biting his lips with the impatience which this commencement gave him.

"Sometimes I doubt it," replied the prince. "Attend; I want to speak to you with an open heart, and to complain of you to yourself. There are two things that I have had upon my mind for the

last three years. Never have I spoken to you of them, but I have often wished to do so in secret; and even if anything had been capable of making me consent to propositions contrary to your interests, it would have been this remembrance."

There was in this that kind of freedom proper to weak characters, which thus, as it were, make amends to themselves, by vexing their rulers, when they dare not do them positive evil, and revenge themselves of their subjection by a puerile controversy. Richelieu well knew from these words that he had run great danger, but he saw at the same time the necessity of giving vent, as it were, to all his ill-will; and in order to facilitate the explosion of these important avowals, he accumulated the protestations which he thought most proper to tire out the patience of the king.

"No, no," at last exclaimed the latter, "I will not believe anything, until you have explained these two things, which are always uppermost in my mind, of which I have been again spoken to, and which I cannot justify by any course of reasoning. I wish to speak about the trial of Urban Grandier, of which I was never very well informed, and the motives for your hatred of my unhappy mother, a hatred which you have even against her ashes."

"Is that all, sire?" said Richelieu. "Are these my only faults? They are easily explained. The first affair ought to be withdrawn from your majesty's eyes, from the horrible and disgusting details connected with it. There was, certainly, skill, which perhaps could not but be regarded as culpable, in calling *magic*, crimes the names even of which shock modesty, and the narration of which would have revealed to innocence dangerous mysteries. It was a pious artifice, to hide from the eyes of the people these impurities which . . . ."

"Enough; it is quite sufficient, cardinal," said Louis XIII., turning away his head, lowering his eyes, and reddening: "I cannot hear more; I comprehend you; these descriptions hurt me; I approve of your motives, it is well. They did not tell me that; they concealed these hideous vices. Have you convinced yourself that those crimes were proved?"

"I had them all under my hands, sire; and as to the glorious queen Mary Medicis, I am astonished that your majesty forgets how much I was attached to her. Yes, I do not fear to avow it. It is to her I owe my elevation. She was the first who condescended to cast her eyes upon the bishop of Luçon, who was then only twenty-two, and to bring him into her favour. How much I suffered when she compelled me to oppose her for the interest of your majesty! But as this sacrifice was made for you, I had not, and I shall never have, any scruple."

"For you, 'tis very well; but for me!" said the prince, bitterly.

"Ah, sire!" cried the cardinal, the Son of God* himself set you

* In 1639, the king asked his advice about the prayer of his exiled mother to return to France; Richelieu replied:

"Who can doubt that a prince may be permitted to separate from his mother

the example; it is the model of all perfection that we should regulate our counsel; and if the monuments due to the precious remains of your mother are not yet raised, God is my witness that it was through the fear of afflicting your heart, and reminding you of her death, that we delayed the undertaking. But blessed may be this day in which it is permitted to me to speak to you about it! I will myself say the first mass at St. Denis, when we shall see it deposited there if Providence leave me strength."

Here the king assumed a more affable countenance, but still cold: and the cardinal judged that he would not go on persuading that evening, but suddenly resolved to make the most powerful diversion, and to attack the enemy in front. Continuing then to look steadily at the king, he said, coldly:

"Is it then for this that you have agreed to my death?"

"Me?" said the king. "They have deceived you; I have, indeed, heard of the conspiracy, and I wished to speak about it to you; but I have ordered nothing to be done against you."

"That is not what the conspirators say, sire! nevertheless, I am bound to believe your majesty; and I am very glad that I am deceived. But what advice would you deign to give me?"

"I . . . wished to tell you openly, and between ourselves, that you would do well to beware of Monsieur. . . . . ."

"Ah, sire! I cannot believe it now; for here is a letter which he sent me for you, and he would seem to have been even culpable towards your majesty."

The king, astonished, read:

"My Lord,—I am in profound despair at having been still wanting in the fidelity which I owe to your majesty. I very humbly implore you to accept a thousand pardons, with a promise of submission and of repentance.

"Your very humble subject,

"Gaston."

"What does that mean?" exclaimed the king? "dare they arm themselves against me also?"

"*Also!*" said the cardinal, in a low tone, biting his lips; then replied: "Yes, sire, also; that is what makes me believe in this roll of papers up to a certain point."

And as he said this, he drew a roll of parchment from a piece of hollow elder-wood, and displayed it to the eyes of the king.

"It is simply a treaty with Spain, which I do not think your majesty has subscribed. You can see the twenty articles in proper

for important considerations? . . . . the Son of God made no difficulty in separating for a time from his mother, and leaving her in trouble for some days. The answer which he made to his mother when she complained, teaches kings that those to whom God has committed the care of the general good of a kingdom ought always to prefer it to all particular obligations."—*Relation de M. de Fontrailles.*

order. All is provided, the place of refuge, the number of the troops, the succours in men and money."

"The traitors!" exclaimed Louis, agitated; "they must be seized! my brother renounces and repents; but let the Duke of Bouillon be arrested....."

"Yes, sire."

"It will be difficult in the midst of his Italian army."

"My head shall be answerable for his arrest, sire;" but is there not another name?"

"Which? ..... what? ..... Cinq-Mars," said the king, stammering.

"Precisely, sire," said the cardinal.

"I see .... but .... I think we should be able ....."

"Listen to me," said Richelieu, suddenly, with a thundering voice: "It will be necessary for all to be finished to-day. Your favourite is on horseback, at the head of his party: choose between him and me. Deliver up the child to the man, or the man to the child; there is no medium."

"Ah! what would you then, if I favoured you?" said the king.

"His head, and that of his confidant."

"Never! ..... it is impossible!" replied the king with horror, and falling into the same irresolution which he showed when he was with Cinq-Mars opposed to Richelieu. "He is my friend, like yourself; my heart grieves at the thought of his death. Why were not you both of the same opinion? why this division? It is he who has brought us to that. You have completed my despair!—you, and he. You render me the most miserable of men."

Louis, in speaking, concealed his head in his two hands, and perhaps he may have shed tears; but the inflexible minister followed him with his eyes like one who watches his prey, and, without pity, without giving him a moment's breathing time, took advantage of this trouble to speak further.

"Is it thus," said he, in a hard and cold tone, "that you call to mind the commandments that God has given you through the mouth of your confessor? You tell me one day that the church commands you expressly to reveal to your first minister all that you may have heard against him; and I have never known from you of my near death. It was absolutely necessary that my most faithful friends should come to apprize me of the conspiracy; that the guilty themselves, by a stroke of Providence, should deliver themselves up to me, and make an avowal of their errors. One alone, the most hardened, the least of all, still resists; and it is he who has conducted all: it is he who delivers France to the foreigner—who pulls down in one day my twenty years' labour; stirs up to rebellion the Huguenots of the south; calls to arms all the orders of the state; resuscitates long crushed pretensions, and kindles, in short, the League extinguished by your father; for it is that, if I be not mis-

taken there—it is that which raises up all its heads against you. Are you ready for the fight? where then is your club?"

The king, overcome, did not answer, and still hid his face in his hands. The inexorable cardinal folded his arms, and continued:

"I fear that you will think that it is for myself that I speak. Do you really believe that I do not know myself, and that such an adversary is of little consequence. In truth, I do not know, why I should not let you act, and place this immense burden of the State into the hands of this stripling. You know well that, for this twenty years I have known your court; I am not without being certain of some retreat where, in spite of you yourself, I should be able, in this manner, to finish the six months, perhaps, which is left of my life. Such a reign would be a curious spectacle for me. What would you answer, for example, when all these little potentates, rising up as soon as I shall cease to weigh upon them, shall come in the train of your brother, and tell you, as they dared to tell Henry IV. upon his throne: 'Divide with us the sovereignty and hereditary titles, and we will be contented.'* You will do it, I do not doubt it; and it is the least thing you could concede to those who shall have delivered you from Richelieu; and it will be perhaps pleasanter to govern the Isle de France, which they will doubtless leave you as an original domain; and your new minister will not need so many papers."

As he spoke, he pushed with rage the vast table which nearly filled up the room, and which was overloaded with papers and portfolios without number.

Louis was drawn from his apathetic meditation by the tremendous audacity of this discourse; he raised his head, and seemed for a moment to have taken one resolution through fear of taking another.

"Well, sir," said he, "I shall reply that I wish to reign by myself alone."

"Very good," said Richelieu; "but I must apprize you that the affairs of the moment are difficult. It is now the hour when they bring me my ordinary work."

"I take it upon myself," replied Louis; "I will open the portfolios; I will give my orders."

"Try, then," said Richelieu; "I retire, and if anything stops you, you will call me."

He rang; the same instant even, and as though they had waited for the signal, four vigorous valets entered, and carried his arm-chair and himself into another apartment; for we have already observed he could no longer walk. In passing through the chamber where the secretaries worked, he said, in a loud voice:

"Take the orders of his majesty."

The king remained alone. Strong in his new resolution, and proud of having once resisted, he wished to begin his political work imme-

* Mémoires de Sully, 1595.

diately. He walked round the immense table, and saw as many portfolios as there were empires, kingdoms, and governments in Europe; he opened one, and found it divided into compartments, the number of which equalled those of the subdivisions of all the countries to which it was attached. All was in order, but in a frightful order for him, because each note only comprehended the quintessence of each affair, if one might so say, and only touched the exact point of the relations important to France. This laconism was very nearly as enigmatical to Louis as the letters in ciphers which covered the table. There, all was confusion; with the decrees of banishment and of expropriation of the Huguenots of Rochelle were found thrown the treaties with Gustavus-Adolphus and the Huguenots of the north against the empire; with notes concerning General Bannier, concerning Walstein, the Duke of Weimar, and John de Wert, were rolled, pell-mell, the detail of letters found in the small strong box of the queen; the list of necklaces and of jewellery which it contained, and the twofold interpretation that could be given to each phrase of these small notes. Upon the margin of one of them were these words—"With four lines of a man's handwriting he can be tried as a criminal." Farther on was heaped up the denunciations against the Huguenots, the plans of the republic which they had determined on, the division of France in circles under the annual dictatorship of a chief; the seal of this project was joined to it, representing an angel leaning upon a cross, and holding the Bible in one hand, which he raised to his forehead. By the side was a list of cardinals whom the Pope had formerly named on the same day with the Bishop de Luçon (Richelieu). Among them appeared the Marquis of Bédemar, ambassador and conspirator at Venice.

Louis XIII. vainly exhausted his energies upon the details of another epoch, seeking uselessly the papers relative to the conspiracy, and fit to show him his real difficulty and what they had attempted against him, when a man small in stature, of an olive-coloured countenance, a crooked shape, an hypocritical and stiff gait, entered the cabinet: this was a secretary of state, named Desnoyers; he advanced, bowing:

"May I speak to his majesty upon the affairs of Portugal?" said he.

"Of Spain, consequently," said Louis; "Portugal is a province of Spain."

"Of Portugal," insisted Desnoyers. "Here is the manifesto that we have this instant received;" and he read—

"'Don John, by the grace of God, King of Portugal, of Algarves, kingdoms on this side of Africa, Lord of Guinea, the conquest, the navigation, and the commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and the Indies.'"

"What is all that?" said the King; "who speaks in this way?"

"The Duke of Braganza, King of Portugal, already crowned . . . .

he has been so for some time, sire, by a man called Pinto. Hardly mounted upon the throne, he held out his hand to revolted Catalonia."

"Catalonia revolted also? Has king Philip IV., no longer for first minister the count-duke?"

"On the contrary, sire, it is because he still retains him. Here is the declaration of the Catalonian states-general to his Catholic majesty, reporting that the whole country has taken up arms against his sacrilegious and excommunicated troops. The King of Portugal . . . ."

"Say the Duke of Braganza," replied Louis; "I know no rebels."

"The Duke of Braganza, then, sire," said the minister of state, coldly, "sends his nephew to the principality of Catalonia, Don Ignatius of Mascarenas, to take possession of the country for its protection, (and of its sovereignty, perhaps,) which he would adjudge to him who has reconquered it. Now your majesty's troops are before Perpignan."

"Well! what matters that?" said Louis.

"The Catalonians are in heart more French than Portuguese, sire, and there still is time to extend this protection to the King of . . . . the Duke of Portugal."

"I succour the rebels! do you dare! . . . ."

"It was the project of his eminence," pursued the councillor of state; "Spain and France are at war elsewhere, and M. d'Olivarèz has not hesitated to proffer his Catholic majesty's hand to the Huguenots."

"That is good; I will think about it," said the king; "leave me."

"Sire, the states-general of Catalonia are crushed, the Arragonese troops marched against them."

"We shall see . . . . I will decide in a quarter of an hour," replied Louis XIII.

The little secretary of state left, somewhat displeased and discouraged. His place was filled by Chavigny, who presented himself, carrying a portfolio with the British arms.

"Sire," said he, "I ask your majesty's orders relative to the affairs of England. The parliamentarians under the command of the Earl of Essex, have raised the siege of Gloucester; Prince Rupert has fought a disastrous and profitless battle for his Britannic Majesty at Newbury. The parliament will not be prorogued, and on its side are the great towns, the seaports, and all the presbyterian population. King Charles I. asks succour, which the Queen no longer finds in Holland."

"I must send troops to my brother of England," said Louis. But he wished to see the previous papers, and, in running over the notes of the cardinal, he found that, on the occasion of the first demand of the King of England, he had written with his own hand:

"We must reflect some time and wait: the Commons are strong; King Charles counts upon the Scotch; they will sell him."

"We must take care. There was a warrior came to see Vincennes, and said that '*princes ought never be struck but on the head.*' REMARKABLE," added the cardinal. Then he erased that word and substituted, "FORMIDABLE."

And lower down:

"This man rules Fairfax;—he inspired him; he will be a great man. Succour refused;—money lost."

The king then said:—"No, no, be not precipitate; I will wait."

"But, sire," said Chavigny, "events speed rapidly, if the courier but delays an hour, the loss to the King of England might advance a year."

"Is it so critical?" demanded Louis.

"In the camp of the independents, they preach the republic, Bible in hand; in that of the Royalists, they do not dispute it, but laugh at it."

"But a moment's success might save everything!"

"The Stuarts are not fortunate, sire," replied Chavigny, with deference; but in a tone of voice which left much to opine.

"Leave all to me," said the king, pettishly. The secretary of state went out slowly. It was then that Louis XIII. became aware of his incapacity, and was frightened at his own nothingness. At first, he cast his eyes upon the pile of papers which surrounded him, passing from one to the other, meeting with dangers everywhere, and never finding them greater than in the resources which he invented. He rose up, and, changing his place, leaned or rather flung himself over a geographical chart of Europe: he there found all his terrors collected—in the north, to the south, in the heart of his kingdom; revolutions appeared to him like Eumenides; under each country he thought he saw the smoke of a volcano; he seemed to hear the cries of distress of the kings who called to him, and the cries of fury of the people; he thought he perceived the soil of France crack and break under his feet; his weak and fatigued sight troubled him; his sickly head was seized with dizziness, which drove back the blood towards his heart.

"Richelieu!" cried he, in a choked voice, ringing a bell; "recall the cardinal!"

And he fell, fainting, into an arm-chair.

When the king opened his eyes, reanimated by powerful scents and salts which they applied to his lips and temples, he saw the pages for a moment; they withdrew when he had opened his eyelids, and he again found himself alone with the cardinal. The hardened minister had caused his long arm-chair to be placed near the arm-chair of the king, like the seat of a physician by the bedside of his patient, and fixed his twinkling and scrutinizing eyes upon the pale face of Louis. As soon as he was able to hear, he began, in a gloomy tone of voice, the following dreadful dialogue:

"You have recalled me," said he; "what is your pleasure?"

Louis turned round upon his cushion, reopened his eyes, and

looked at him, then hastened to close them. That fleshless head, armed with two flashing eyes, and terminating in a sharp-pointed, whitened beard; that cap and the apparel, of the colour of blood and flame, all betokened an infernal spirit.

"Rule," said he, with a feeble voice.

"But . . . . deliver to me Cinq-Mars and de Thou?" pursued the implacable minister, approaching to read the bloodshot eyes of the prince, as a covetous heir pursues even to the grave the last glimpses of the will of a dying person.

"Rule," repeated the king, turning away his head.

"Sign, then," replied Richelieu; "this paper says: 'This is my command, to take them dead or alive.'"

Louis, with his head still reclining on the back of the easy-chair, suffered the fatal paper to fall from his hand, signed.

"Leave me, in pity: I die," said he.

"That is not all," continued he who is called the great politician; "I am not sure of you; I must henceforth have guarantees and pledges. Sign this, and I will leave you.

"'When the king shall go and see the cardinal, the guard of the latter are not to quit their arms; and when the cardinal visits the king, the guards shall share the post with those of his majesty.'"*

Further:

"'His majesty binds himself to place the two princes, his sons, as hostages in the hands of the cardinal, as a guarantee of the sincerity of his attachment.'"†

"My children!" ejaculated Louis, raising his head; "do you presume . . . ."

"Would you prefer that I should retire?" said Richelieu.

The king signed.

"Is it, then, finished?" said he, with a deep groan.

It was not finished; another sorrow was reserved for him. The door opened abruptly, and Cinq-Mars entered.

This time the cardinal trembled.

"What want you here, sir?" said he, seizing the bell, to call for help.

The Master of the Horse was as haggard as the king; and, without deigning to answer Richelieu, he advanced, calmly, towards Louis XIII. The former regarded him as one who looks upon a man come to receive his sentence of death.

"You must have found, sire, some difficulty in endeavouring to arrest me, for I have twenty thousand men with me," said Henry d'Effiat, in the mildest tone.

"Alas, Cinq-Mars!" said Louis, mournfully, "is it thou who hast done these things?"

"Yes, sire, and it is me, also, who brings you my sword, for you are here, no doubt, to deliver me," he said, unfastening his sword and

* Manuscrits de Pointis, 1642, No. 185.

† Mémoires d'Anne d'Autriche, 1642.

placing it at the feet of the king, who dropped his eyes, without saying a word.

Cinq-Mars smiled with sadness, but without bitterness, for he no longer belonged to this world. Afterwards, looking contemptuously at Richelieu:

"I surrender myself because I wish to die," said he; "but I am not conquered.

The cardinal clenched his fists with fury; but he restrained himself.

"And who are your accomplices?" said he.

Cinq-Mars looked fixedly at Louis XIII., and opened his lips to speak . . . .

The king hung down his head, and suffered at this instant a torment unknown to man.

"I have none," at length said Cinq-Mars, leaving the apartment, out of compassion for the prince.

He stopped at the first gallery, where were all the gentlemen; and Fabert rose on seeing him. He walked straight up to the latter, and said to him:

"Sir, give these gentlemen orders to arrest me."

All looked, without daring to approach him.

"Yes, sir, I am your prisoner. . . . . ."

"Yes, gentlemen, I am without a sword, and, I repeat to you, the prisoner of the king."

"I know not what I see," replied the general; "you are both come to surrender, but I have no orders to arrest any one."

"Both?" said Cinq-Mars; "it can but be de Thou! alas! from his devotedness this might have been expected."

"Ah! had I not also guessed thine?" cried the latter, coming forward, and throwing himself into his arms.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE PRISONERS.

Among those old castles of which France is, to her sorrow, yearly despoiled, like the gems of her crown, there was one of gloomy and wild aspect, standing upon the left bank of the Saône. It seemed like a formidable sentinel placed at one of the gates of Lyons, bearing the name of the enormous rock of Pierre-Encise, which rises to a peak, like a natural pyramid, and the ridges of which, bending over the road-way, and hanging almost upon the stream, were anciently joined, they say, to the other rocks that are seen on the opposite side of the river, like the arch of a natural bridge; time, the waters, and the hand of man, have left standing only the old pile of granite which served as a pedestal to the fortress, now demolished. The archbishops of Lyons had formerly erected it as temporal lords of the town, and made it their residence; afterwards it became a seat of

war, and, under Louis XIII. a state prison. A single colossal tower, into which the day-light could not penetrate, except by three long loopholes, commanded the edifice; and some irregular buildings, surrounded with thick walls, the lines and angles of which followed the form of the immense and perpendicular rock.

It was here that Cardinal Richelieu, greedy of his prey, wished shortly to incarcerate, and himself conduct, these young rebels. Leaving Louis to proceed to Paris, he carried them off from Narbonne, dragging them in his train to adorn his last triumph, and took the Rhône at Tarascon, just below its mouth, in order to prolong that vindictive gratification which men have presumed to ascribe to the gods; exposing to the spectators on both banks the luxury of his hatred, he slowly ascended the stream in barks propelled by gilt oars, and burnished with his coat-of-arms; reposing in the first, and towing his two victims in the second by means of a long chain.

Often in the evening, when the heat had abated, the two small boats were despoiled of their awnings, and there was seen in the one Richelieu, pale and emaciated, seated upon the poop; in that which followed, the two young prisoners, standing up, with calm brows, leaning upon one another, and watching the rapid waves of the river. In ancient times, the soldiers of Cæsar, who encamped upon these same banks, might have imagined that they saw the inexorable ferrymen of hell conducting the friendly shades of Castor and Pollux. Christians had not even the courage to reflect and to see a priest leading two miserable rebels to execution. It was the prime minister who passed. Indeed, he passed on, leaving them under guard in the very town where the conspirators had proposed to be themselves the instruments of his destruction. Thus he delighted in baffling destiny, and planting a trophy where it was intended to dig his grave. "He caused himself to be drawn," says a manuscript journal of this year, "against the stream of the river Rhône, in a vessel, in which was constructed a wooden chamber, covered with red crimsoned velvet, ornamented with foliage, the floor being of gold. In the same vessel was an antechamber in like style: there were a number of soldiers of his guard, fore and aft, wearing scarlet coats, embroidered with gold, silver, and silk, like so many lords of distinction. His eminence was reclining on a bed furnished with purple taffety. My lord Cardinal Bigni, and my lords the bishops of Nantes and Chartres, with a number of abbés and gentlemen, were in other vessels. In advance of them, a frigate cleared the way for the passage; following which, another vessel mounted with arquebusiers and officers to command them. When they approached an island, they placed soldiers in it to see if there were any suspected persons; and not meeting with any, they defended the banks, until the two vessels which followed had passed; they were filled with nobility and soldiers well armed.

"After them came the vessel of his eminence, at the stern of which a little boat was attached, in which were MM. de Thou and Cinq-Mars, guarded by an officer of the king's guard, and twelve guards

of his eminence. Next to this came three barks, in which were the baggage, and the silver plates and dishes of his eminence, with several gentlemen and soldiers.

"Upon the banks of the Rhône, in Dauphiné, ten companies of light horse marched both on the Languedoc, as well as on the Vivarais side: there was likewise a fine regiment of foot, which marched into the town, where his eminence intended to enter or sleep. He was greatly pleased to listen to the trumpets which played on the Dauphiné side, with the responses of those of Vivarais, and the reverberation of the echoes from both rocks; it is said that every one attempted his best."

In the middle of one night in the month of September, while every one appeared to be slumbering in the impregnable tower of the prisoners, the door of one of the chambers turned noiselessly upon its hinges, and upon the threshold appeared a man, habited in a brown robe, girded with a cord. His feet were sandaled, and a bundle of huge keys were in his hand—it was Joseph. He looked round cautiously, without advancing, and silently reconnoitred the apartment of the Master of the Horse. Large and splendid hangings concealed the walls of the prison; a bed of red damask was prepared, but the captive was not in it, but seated near a tall mantelpiece, in a great arm-chair, dressed in a long gray robe, like that which priests wear, his head bowed down, his eyes fixed upon a small golden crucifix, beside the flickering light of a lamp, absorbed in meditations so profound, that the capuchin had sufficient time to approach directly up to him, and to place himself in front of the prisoner before he perceived him. At last he suddenly raised his head, and exclaimed:

"What dost thou here, miserable man?"

"Young man, you are passionate," answered the mysterious visitor in a very bass voice; "two months of imprisonment should have been able to have calmed you. I come to tell you important things. Listen to me: I have thought of you a good deal; and I do not hate you so much as you believe. The moments are precious; I will tell you all in a few words. In two hours they come to interrogate you, to judge you, and to put you to death with your friend; this is inevitable, as it is necessary that all should terminate on the same day."

"I know it," said Cinq-Mars, "and am resigned."

"Well! I can yet rescue you from this, for I have reflected much concerning it, as I have already said, and I come to make propositions which will be agreeable to you. The cardinal has not six months to live; let us not be mysterious; between ourselves we must be open. You see whither I have led you for him, and you may judge from that to what point I will conduct him for you if you wish; we could cut off the six months which remain to him. The king loves you, and would call you back to him with transports if he knew you were living. You are young; you will be happy and

powerful for a long time; you will protect me—you will make me a cardinal."

Astonishment kept the young prisoner silent; he could not understand such language, and seemed to have some trouble in descending from the loftiness of his meditations. All that he could say was:

"Your benefactor! Richelieu?"

The capuchin smiled, and continued in a low voice, drawing near to him:

"There are no favours in politics: there are interests—that is all. A man employed by a minister ought not to be more grateful than a horse mounted by a groom is at being preferred to others. My behaviour has suited him; now, it suits me to cast him to the ground. Yes, this man loves only himself; he has deceived me, I see clearly, by always retarding my elevation; but now I have sure means to effect your escape without molestation. I fear all here. I can put in the place of men on whom he calculates, other men that he has doomed to death, and who are near here in the northern tower, the Dungeon tower, which stretches under the water. These creatures will replace his people. I despatched a physician, an empiric, who belonged to me, to the glorious cardinal, of whom the most skilful of the faculty at Paris had despaired. If you will associate with me, he will bring a universal and efficient remedy."

"Begone!" said Cinq-Mars; "begone, infernal monk!—thou canst not be a man—thou art not a man—thou walkest in the darkness with a furtive and silent step; thou goest through walls to preside over secret crimes; thou placest thyself between the hearts of lovers to separate them for ever. Who art thou? thou resemblest the tortured soul of the damned."

"Romantic child!" said Joseph, "you would have had great qualities had you been without your erroneous ideas. Perhaps there is neither a damnation nor a soul. If those of the dead came back to complain, I should have thousands around me, and I have never beheld them even in a dream."

"Monster!" said Cinq-Mars, in an under tone.

"Hear a few more words," replied Joseph; "there is neither a monster nor a virtuous man. You and De Thou, who stimulates you to what you call virtue, have failed to cause the death of perhaps a hundred men in a body, and in open day, for nothing; whilst Richelieu and I have caused many less to perish in detail, and at night, to establish a great power. When we wish to remain pure, we must not interfere in the actions of other men; or rather, what is most reasonable is, to see that which is, and to say, like me: it is possible that the soul has no existence; we are the sons of chance; but, in dealing with other men, we have passions which must be satisfied."

"I breathe," cried Cinq-Mars; "he does not believe in God."

Joseph continued:

"Now, Richelieu, you, and I were born ambitious; everything must therefore be sacrificed to this idea."

"Wretch! do not confound me with yourself!"

"It is the pure truth, nevertheless," replied the capuchin; "and you see that at present our system is worth more than yours."

"Unhappy man! it was through love . . . ."

"No! no! no! no! It was not that. That is but a word; you have thought so perhaps yourself, but it was for yourself; I have heard you speak of this young girl, you only think of yourselves; you neither of you love one another; she only dreams of her rank, and you of your ambition. It is to hear it said that one is perfect, and to see oneself adored when one wishes to be loved; it is still and ever will be blessed egotism, which is my god."

"Cruel serpent!" said Cinq-Mars; "was it not enough to make us die? why comest thou to fling thy poison upon the life which thou art about to take? what demon has taught thee thy horrible analysis of the heart?"

"The hatred of all that are superior to me," said Joseph, with a low and false laugh; "and the desire to tread underfoot all those whom I hate, have made me ambitious and ingenious in finding the weak side of your dreams. There is a worm at the heart of all this fine fruit."

"Great God! hearest thou this?" cried Cinq-Mars, rising, and extending his arms towards heaven.

The solitude of his prison, the pious conversations of his friend, and above all the presence of death, which came like the light of an unknown star to give different hues to all the treasured objects of his affections; the meditations on eternity, and (shall we say it?) the great efforts to change heart-rending regrets into immortal hopes, and to direct towards God all that energy of love which had been led astray upon the earth; all had made in him a strange revolution; and, like those ears which are ripened suddenly by a single ray of the sun, his soul had imbibed the most vital light, exalted under the mysterious influence of death.

"Great God!" repeated he, "if this man and his master are men, am I also a man? Contemplate, contemplate two ambitions united, the one egotistical and bloody, the other consecrated and spotless; theirs fanned by hatred; ours inspired by love. Behold, Lord; behold, judge, and pardon. Pardon, for we are very criminal to walk in the same path a single day, when we can leave but a name in the world, whatever may be the destiny prescribed for us."

Joseph interrupted him harshly, stamping his foot:

"When you have finished your prayer," said he, "you will tell me if you wish me to assist you, and I will save you that moment."

"Never, impure villain, never," said Henry d'Effiat; "I will not associate with thee and with an assassin. I have refused it when I was powerful, and powerful even over thee."

"You have been to blame; you may be master now."

"Ah! what happiness should I have with my power, shared as it would be with a woman who does not understand me, who loves me lukewarmly, and will prefer a crown to me? After her abandonment, I have not wished to be indebted to authority for victory; judge if I will accept it from crime!"

"Inconceivable folly!" said the capuchin, laughing.

"All with her, nothing without her; there laid my whole soul."

"It is through infatuation and pride that you persist; it is impossible!" replied Joseph; "it is not in nature."

"Thou who wouldst deny devotedness," replied Cinq-Mars, "at least understandest that of my friend."

"It has no better foundation; he has wished to follow you because . . . ."

Here the capuchin, somewhat embarrassed, considered a moment.

"Because . . . . because . . . . he has moulded you, you are his work . . . . He stands by you through the self-love of an author . . . . He was accustomed to preach to you, and he perceives that he could no longer find a pupil sufficiently docile to listen and applaud him . . . . Constant habit has persuaded him that his life depended on yours . . . . it is something like that . . . . he accompanies you from habit . . . . moreover this is not finished . . . . we shall see the termination and examination; he will assuredly deny that he knew anything about the conspiracy."

"He will deny nothing!" impetuously exclaimed Cinq-Mars.

"He knows it then; you avow it," said Joseph, triumphantly; "you have not yet said so much."

"Oh, heaven! what have I done!" sighed Cinq-Mars, hiding his face.

"Calm yourself; he is saved in spite of this confession, if you accept my offer."

D'Effiat was some time without answering. The capuchin continued:

"Save your friend . . . . . the favour of the king awaits you, and perhaps love misled for a moment."

"Man, if thou beest one, if thou hast something in thee resembling a heart," answered the prisoner, "save him; he is the purest of created beings. But let him be carried far from here while asleep, for if he awakens thou canst not remove him."

"How would that benefit me?" said the capuchin, laughing; "it is you and your favour which I need."

The impetuous Cinq-Mars rose, and, seizing the arm of Joseph, whom he regarded with a terrible glance, said:

"I would humble myself to thee for him: come, villain," continued he, lifting a tapestry which separated the apartment of his friend from his; "come, and doubt not of the devotedness and of the immortality of souls . . . . . Compare thy uneasy triumph to the calmness of our defeat; the vileness of thy reign to the grandeur of our captivity; and thy bloody watching to the sleep of the good."

A solitary lamp lighted De Thou. The young man was kneeling on a cushion, surmounted by a large ebony crucifix; he seemed to have fallen asleep while praying; his head, leaning backwards, was still raised towards the cross; his pale lips smiled calmly and divinely; and his body rested upon the carpet and cushion of the seat.

"Jesus, how he sleeps," said the stupified capuchin, blending forgetfully, in his frightful conversation, the celestial name which he was in the habit of pronouncing daily. Then suddenly he withdrew abruptly, holding his hand to his eyes, as though dazzled by a vision of heaven.

"What dotage," said he, shaking his head, and passing his hand across his face; "all this is childishness; what should I gain if I reflected? .... These ideas, like opium, may be good to tranquillize .... But that does not matter; say yes or no."

"No," said Cinq-Mars, thrusting him by the shoulder to the door; "I no longer desire to live, and do not repent having a second time lost De Thou; for he would not have wished for life at the price of an assassination; and when he delivered himself up at Narbonne, it was not to recoil at Lyons."

"Awaken him then, for here are the judges," said the furious capuchin, in a shrill sneering voice.

At this moment, by the flickering light of torches, and preceded by a detachment of Scotch guards, there entered fourteen judges habited in their long robes, and whose features were with difficulty distinguished. They seated themselves in silence to the right and left of the vast chamber; these were the commissioners delegated by the cardinal for this gloomy and solemn business. All sure men and *of trust* for cardinal Richelieu, who, from Tarascon, had chosen and instructed them. He had wished Chancellor Séguier himself to come to Lyons, *to avoid*, said he, in the instructions or orders which he despatched to King Louis XIII. through Chavigny, *to avoid all the obstacles which might occur if he were not there. M. de Marillac*, added he, *was at Nantes at the trial of Chalais:* M. de Châteauneuf. at Toulouse, on the death of M. de Montmorency; and M. de Bellièvre, at Paris, on the trial of M. de Biron. The authority and intelligence which these gentlemen possess of the forms of justice is all that is necessary."

That magistrate therefore came in haste; but at this moment they announced that he had orders not to appear, fearful that he would be influenced by the recollection of his ancient friendship for the prisoner, whom he would see alone. The commissioner and he had immediately and speedily received the sluggish depositions of the Duke d'Orleans, at Villefranche, in Beaujolais, then at *Vivey*,* two leagues from Lyons, where this unfortunate prince had had orders to repair, supplicating and trembling in the midst of his people, who were left with him out of pity, but well watched by French and Swiss guards.

* A house which belonged to one Abbé d'Esnay, brother of M. de Villeroy, says Montresor.

The cardinal had dictated to him his part and answers word for word; and on condition of this docility, they had formally spared him the pain of being confronted by Cinq-Mars and De Thou. Afterwards the chancellor and the commissioners had prepared M. de Bouillon, and were strong in their preliminary work, intended to fall with all their weight upon the two young culprits whom they did not wish to save. History has only preserved the names of the state-counsellors who accompanied Pierre Séguier, not those of the other commissioners, of whom it is only said that they were six of the parliament of Grenoble, and two presidents. The reporter, Laubardemont, counsellor of state, who had directed everything, was at their head. Joseph spoke to them frequently in whispers, with reverential politeness, looking at Laubardemont with a ferocious irony.

It was agreed that an arm-chair should serve as a bar, and they were silent to hear the answers of the prisoner.

He spoke with a mild and calm voice:—"Tell the chancellor that I ought to have the privilege of appealing to the parliament of Paris, and to challenge my judges, since there are among them two of my enemies, and at their head one of my friends, M. de Séguier himself, whom I have kept to his duty.

"But I will spare you much trouble, gentlemen, by acknowledging myself guilty of the whole conspiracy, solely conceived and directed by me. My wish is to die, I have, therefore, nothing to add myself; but if you wish to be just, you will spare the life of him whom the king even has called the honestest man in France, and who dies through me.

"Let him be introduced," said Laubardemont.

Two guards entered beside M. de Thou, and brought him forward.

He entered and bowed gravely, with an angelic smile which played upon his lips, and embracing Cinq-Mars:

"Here then, at length, is the day of our glory," said he; "we are going to win heaven and eternal happiness."

"We understand, sir," said Laubardemont, "we learn by the mouth even of M. de Cinq-Mars, that you have known all about the conspiracy."

De Thou replied instantly, and without any trouble, still with a placid smile and downcast eyes:

"Gentlemen, I have passed my life in the study of human laws, and I know that the evidence of one accused cannot condemn the other. I should repeat, also, what I have already said, that they would not have believed me, if I had denounced without proof the brother of the king. You see, then, that my life and my death are in my own hands. However, when I have attentively considered the one and the other, I am clearly convinced that whatever life I might still enjoy could not but be unhappy after the loss of M. de Cinq-Mars; I avow and confess, then, that I am acquainted with the conspiracy; I did all that I was able to hinder it. He has thought me his united and faithful friend, and I have not wished to betray

him; that is why I condemn myself, by those laws which my father himself has reported, and by whom I hope I am pardoned."

At these words, the two friends threw themselves into one another's arms.

Cinq-Mars exclaimed:

"Friend, friend, how I deplore that death which I have caused! I have betrayed thee twice; but thou shalt know how."

But De Thou, embracing and consoling him, answered, raising his eyes heavenward:

"Ah, how happy we are to end in this way! Humanly speaking, I could reprove you; but God knows well how I love you! What have we done to merit the grace of martyrs, and the happiness of dying together?"

The judges were not prepared for this meekness, and they looked on with surprise.

"Ah, if they had given me but a partisan," said a hoarse voice, (it was old Grandchamp, who had glided into the chamber, and whose eyes were red with fury,) "I would soon have rid my lord of every one of these black men."

Two halberdiers silently approached, and placed themselves near him; he was quiet, and to console himself went to a window by the side of the river, where the sun was not yet seen, and he appeared to take no further notice of what passed in the chamber.

Nevertheless, Laubardemont, fearing that the judges would be moved to pity, said in a loud voice:

"Now, according to the order of my lord the cardinal, we shall put these two gentlemen to the rack; that is to say, to the torture ordinary and extraordinary."

Indignation made Cinq-Mars reappear in his proper character, and crossing his arms, he took two steps towards Laubardemont and Joseph, which alarmed them. The first involuntarily placed his hand to his face."

"Are we at Loudun?" exclaimed the prisoner.

But De Thou, approaching him, took and pressed his hand; he was silent, and regarding the judges, in a calm tone he continued:

"Gentlemen, this seems to me very uncourteous, that a man of my age, and of my condition, should be subjected to all these formalities. I have said all, and I will state all again. I accept death thankfully, and with my whole heart; the torture is therefore unnecessary. It is not from souls like ours that you can extort secrets through the sufferings of the body. We come here as prisoners by our own consent, and at the hour appointed by ourselves; we have said all that will be necessary for you to condemn us to death, you shall know nothing more. We have obtained what we wish."

"What are you doing, friend?" interrupted De Thou. "He deceives himself, gentlemen; we do not refuse the martyrdom that God offers us; we ask it."

"But," said Cinq-Mars, "what need have we of these infamous

tortures to enter heaven? You, a martyr already, a voluntary martyr to friendship? Gentlemen, I alone can have important secrets; it is the chief of the conspiracy who knows. Put me alone to the rack, if we are to be treated like the vilest malefactors."

"In charity, gentlemen," resumed De Thou, "do not deprive me of the same sufferings as he. I have not followed so far to abandon him in this most precious hour, and not use every effort to accompany him even to heaven."

During this debate there was another between Laubardemont and Joseph; the latter, fearing that the pain would extort an account of his interview, was against the torture; the other, not finding his triumph complete by death, imperiously demanded it as a right. The judges surrounded and listened to these secret agents of the great minister; however, many things having made them suspicious that the credit of the capuchin was more powerful than that of the judge, they sided with him, and leaned towards humanity, as he finished with these words, pronounced in a low voice:

"I know their secrets; we shall not want to know them, because they are useless, and they cost too much. The Master has but to denounce the king, and the other the queen; with that it is much better that we should be unacquainted. Moreover, they will not speak; I know them; they will be silent, one from pride, the other out of pity. Let us leave them; the torture will wound them; they will be disfigured, and will not be able to walk further; that will spoil all the ceremony; it is necessary to let them be seen."

This last consideration prevailed: the judges retired to deliberate with the chancellor. As they went out, Joseph said to Laubardemont:

"I have left you sufficient gratification. Now you will have that of deliberating, and you will go to interrogate the three others in the northern tower."

They were the three judges of Urban Grandier. He said this with a loud laugh, and went out the last, pushing before him the astonished master of requests. Hardly had he threaded the gloomly tribunal when Grandchamp, delivered of his two footmen, hurried towards his master, and seizing him by the hand, said to him:

"In the name of heaven come upon the terrace, my lord. I will show you something; in the name of your mother, come . . ."

But nearly at the same moment the door opened to the old Abbé Quillet.

"My children, my poor children!" exclaimed the old man weeping; "alas! why have they not permitted me to enter till to-day? Dear Henry, your mother, your brother, your sister are here concealed."

"Hold your tongue, sir abbé!" said Grandchamp. "Come upon the terrace, my lord."

But the old priest retained his scholar, embracing him.

"We hope, we hope for much favour."

"I will refuse it," said Cinq-Mars.

" We hope only for the favour of God," replied De Thou.

" Be silent," interrupted Grandchamp, " the judges are coming."

In fact the door again opened to the sinister procession, from which Joseph and Laubardemont were missing.

" Gentlemen," exclaimed the good abbé, addressing himself to the commissioners, " I am happy to inform you that I come from Paris, that no one doubts that all the conspirators will be pardoned. I have seen, with his majesty Monsieur himself, and as to the Duke of Bouillon, his examination is not unfavor . . . ."

" Silence!" said M. de Seton, lieutenant of the Scotch guards; and the fourteen commissioners entered, and again took their seats in the chamber.

M. de Thou, hearing that they called the criminal registrar of the presidial court of Lyons to pronounce judgment, involuntarily broke out into one of those transports of religious joy never felt but by martyrs and saints at the approach of death, and, moving forward in front of this man, he cried out:

" *Quam speciosi pedes evangelizantium pacem, evangelizantium bona!*"

Then taking the hand of Cinq-Mars, he kneeled and bared his head to hear the sentence. D'Effiat remained standing, but they dared not interfere.

The sentence was pronounced in these words:

" Between the attorney-general of the king, plaintiff in the case of the crime of high treason, of the one part;

" And Henry d'Effiat de Cinq-Mars, master of the horse to the king of France, aged twenty-two years, and François Auguste de Thou, aged thirty-five, counsellor of the king in his councils, prisoners at the castle of Pierre-Encise of Lyons, defendants and accused, of the other part:

" Seeing the extraordinary charge made at the request of the aforesaid attorney-general of the king, against the said d'Effiat and de Thou, informations, interrogations, confessions, denials, and confrontations, and recognised copies of the treaty made with Spain; on consideration, this chamber of delegates declares:

" 1. That he who attempts the person of the ministers of princes is regarded by the ancient laws and constitutions of the emperors as guilty of high treason;

" 2. That the third ordinance of King Louis XI. decrees the pain of death against him who does not discover a conspiracy against the state;

" The commissioners, deputed by his Majesty, have declared the said d'Effiat and de Thou, attainted and convicted of high treason; know then that:

" The said d'Effiat de Cinq-Mars, for the conspiracies and attempts, leagues and treaties, done by him with strangers against the state;

" And the said de Thou, having had knowledge of the said

"For reparation of which crimes, they are deprived of all honours and dignities, and are condemned to have their heads struck off upon a scaffold, in order to which the same will be erected in the Place des Terreaux of this town;

"They have declared and declare all and each of their chattels, furniture, and real estate, released and confiscated to the king; and that those held by them immediately of the crown be annexed to the crown domain. Out of these is first of all to be taken the sum of 60,000 livres to be applied to pious uses."

After the pronunciation of the sentence, M. de Thou said, in a loud voice, "God be blessed! God be praised!"

"I have never been afraid of death," said Cinq-Mars, coldly.

Then, according to the form, M. de Seton, the lieutenant of the Scotch guards, an old man of sixty-six years, declared with emotion that he would place the prisoners in the hands of le sieur Thomé, provost of the merchants of Lyons; after which, all the body guard, silent and with tears in their eyes, took leave of them.

"Weep no more," said Cinq-Mars to them; "tears are useless; but rather pray to God for us, and be assured that I do not fear death."

He pressed their hands, and De Thou embraced them; after which, with eyes suffused with tears, and covering their faces with their cloaks they left.

"Hard-hearted men!" said Abbé Quillet, "to take up arms against them, it were necessary to ransack the arsenal of the tyrants. For what did they let me enter at this moment? . . ."

"As confessor, sir," said a commissioner, in a low voice; "for two months, no stranger has had permission to enter herein . . . ."

When the great doors were closed, and the curtains lowered:

"To the terrace, in the name of heaven!" again exclaimed Grandchamp; and he dragged away his master and De Thou. Their old tutor followed them limpingly.

"What wouldst thou with us at this moment?" said Cinq-Mars, with indulgent gravity.

"Look at the hills beyond the town," said the faithful domestic.

The rising sun had scarcely coloured the heavens. It appeared in the horizon as a sparkling yellow line, upon which the mountains were roughly delineated in a rich blue; the waters of the Saone, and the hills near the town, stretching from one side to the other, were still veiled by a light vapour which also hung over Lyons, and prevented a sight of the roofs of the houses. The first jets of morning light as yet cast their hue upon the most elevated points only of the magnificent country. Within the city the steeples of the town-hall and of Saint-Nizier, upon the neighbouring hills the monasteries of the Carmelites and of Saint-Maria, and the entire fortress of Pierre-Encise, were gilded with all the fire of Aurora. The joyous peals

from the church towers, the peaceful matin of the bells of the convents and villages broke upon the ear. The walls of the prison alone were silent.

"Well," said Cinq-Mars, "what must we see? is it the beauty of the fields or the richness of the towns? is it the peacefulness of these villages? Ah! my friends! they also are filled with passions and troubles such as have brought us here."

The old abbé and Grandchamp leaned over the parapet of the terrace to look at the side of the river.

"The fog is too thick; nothing can be seen yet," said the abbé.

"How slow is our last sun to appear!" said de Thou.

"Do you not perceive below, at the foot of the rocks, upon the other branch of the river, a little white house between the gate of Halincourt, and the Boulevard St. Jean?" said the abbé.

"I see nothing," answered Cinq-Mars, "but a pile of grizzly walls."

"This cursed fog is so thick," returned Grandchamp, still leaning in front, like a mariner who supports himself upon the furthest plank in order to descry a sail in the horizon.

"Hush!" said the abbé; "I hear voices."

In fact, a confused, hollow, and indescribable murmur was heard to proceed from a little turret placed with its back to the platform of the terrace. As it was not much larger than a pigeon-house, the prisoners had scarcely noticed it.

"Are they already come to seek us?" said Cinq-Mars.

"Bah! bah!" answered Grandchamp; "do not think of that; it is the tower of the Oubliettes. For two months I have rambled round the fort, I have seen people fall from there into the water, at least once a week. Let us think of our own business: I see a light at the window below."

An invincible curiosity, nevertheless, urged the two prisoners to cast a look upon the turret, in spite of the horror of their situation. They leaned forward over the point of a rock, and beneath there was an abyss filled with boiling green water, issuing from a useless source, but an arm of the Saone, flowing between rocks to a frightful depth. It turned rapidly the wheel of a mill long since abandoned. Hence they heard a creaking noise resembling a drawbridge being let down and drawn up suddenly as if by a spring striking against the stone-walls; and thrice they saw something black fall into the water, and throw up the foam to a great height.

"Mercy! can they be men?" cried the abbé, crossing himself.

"I thought I saw brown robes whirl round in the air," said Grandchamp; "they must be friends of the Cardinal."

A horrible cry issued from the tower, coupled with an impious oath.

The heavy trap-door groaned a fourth time. With a loud noise the green water received a load which made the enormous wheel of the mill creak: one of the large spokes broke, and a man, entangled in

the rotten beam, appeared above the foam, which was coloured with black blood, turned twice, screamed, and was then swallowed up. It was Laubardemont.

Struck with profound horror, Cinq-Mars drew back.

"There is a providence," said Grandchamp; "Urban Grandier had given him three years. Let us go—let us go; time is precious; gentlemen, do not remain there motionless; whether it be him or not, I should not be astonished, for these knaves consume one another like the rats. But let us try to carry off their best bit. Great God! I see the signal!—we are saved! All is ready; let us hasten to that side, abbé. See the white handkerchief at the window; our friends are prepared."

The abbé immediately seized the hand of each of his two friends, and pushed them to the side of the terrace where they had first directed their attention.

"Listen to me, both of you, said he to them. Know that none of the conspirators wish for the retreat that you have guaranteed them; they have all hastened to Lyons, disguised, and in great numbers; they have scattered in the town sufficient gold to prevent betrayal; they wish to strike a last blow for your delivery. The moment chosen is that at which they will conduct you to the scaffold; the signal to begin will be your putting your hat upon your head. The good abbé, half crying, half smiling through hope, related that at the time of the arrest of his pupil, he had hastened to Paris; but that so much secrecy pervaded all the actions of the cardinal, that no one knew the place of detention of the Master of the Horse. Many said he was exiled; and when they knew of the reconciliation of Monsieur and the Duke of Bouillon with the king, they no longer doubted that the lives of the others would be spared, and they had ceased to talk of the affair, which had implicated but few persons, on account of its not having been put into execution. In Paris, too, there was some rejoicing at the town of Sedan and its territory being annexed to the kingdom in return for letters of *abolition* granted to its prince, acknowledged innocent, like Monsieur; the result of all these arrangements had caused the abilities of the cardinal to be admired, as well as his clemency towards the conspirators, whom, they said, wished his death. They even spread the report that he had helped Cinq-Mars and De Thou to escape, busying himself very generously with their place of concealment in a foreign country, after having courageously arrested them in the midst of the camp of Perpignan."

At this part of the narration, Cinq-Mars could not help forgetting his resignation to destiny, and, pressing the hand of his friend:

"*Arrested!*" cried he; "must we even renounce the honour of being delivered voluntarily? must we sacrifice all, even the opinion of posterity?"

"Thou art still vain," replied De Thou, placing his finger on his mouth; "but tut! let us hear the abbé to the end."

The tutor, not doubting that the tranquillity of these two young per-

sons originated in the joy which they felt at beholding their flight assured, and seeing that the sun had hardly dissipated the morning vapour, gave himself up without restraint to the involuntary pleasure which old men experience in telling news which even bring affliction. He told them all the fruitless efforts to discover the retreat of his pupil, ignorant of the court and of the city, where they dare not even pronounce his name in the most secret asylums. He had only been apprized of their imprisonment in Pierre-Encise from the queen herself, who had condescended to send for him, and charged him to warn the Marchioness of Effiat, and all the conspirators, in order that they might make a desperate effort to deliver their young chief. Ann of Austria had even dared to send several gentlemen of Auvergne and Touraine to Lyon to assist in this last blow.

"The good queen," said he, "wept much at the time I saw her, and said she would give all that she possessed to save you. She reproached herself much about a letter—I do not know what letter. She spoke of the safety of France, but did not explain herself. She told me that she admired you, and prayed for your safety; might it not be out of pity for her whom you would thus leave in eternal remorse?"

"Did she say nothing more?" interrupted de Thou, supporting Cinq-Mars, who turned pale.

"Nothing more," said the old man. . . . .

"And no one spoke to you of me?" replied the Master of the Horse.

"No one," said the abbé.

"Yet, if she had written to me!" said Henry in an under tone.

"Do you remember, father, that you are sent here as confessor," replied de Thou.

Meanwhile old Grandchamp, at the knees of Cinq-Mars, and pulling him by his clothes to the other side of the terrace, cried to him in a broken voice:

"My lord! . . . my master! . . . my good master! . . . do you see them?—there they are! . . . They are there!—they are there . . . all of them."

"Ah! who, my old friend?" said his master.

"Who? Great God! look at that window; do you not recognise them?—your mother, your sisters, your brother."

In fact, daylight showed him in the distance, women waving white handkerchiefs; one of them, dressed in black, extended her arms towards the prison, then withdrew from the window, as though to recover strength; then, supported by the others, appeared again, and opened her arms, one hand resting on her heart.

Cinq-Mars recognised his mother and family, and his strength failed him a moment. He bowed his head upon the breast of his friend, and wept.

"How many times must I die?" said he.

Then, answering from the top of the tower, by a gesture of his hand, to those of his family:

"Let us quickly descend, father," replied he to the old abbé; "you were going to tell me of the tribunal of penitence; and, before God, if the rest of my life is still worth my shedding man's blood to preserve it——"

It was then that Cinq-Mars said, before God, that he alone and Marie of Mantua had known of their secret and unhappy love. "He gave into the hands of his confessor," says Father Daniel, "a portrait of a great lady surrounded with diamonds, the same to be sold for money to be employed in pious works."

Respecting M. de Thou, after having also confessed, he wrote a letter. After which (according to the recital of his confessor), he said to me: *This is the last thought that I wish to hold in the world; let us depart for Paradise;* and pacing the room with a rapid step, he recited aloud the psalm, *Miserere mei Deus, &c.;* with an incredible energy of mind, and a convulsive movement of his whole body, so violent, indeed, that it might be said that he did not touch the earth, and that his soul was going to leave him. The guards were silent at a scene which made all shudder with respect and horror."

Meanwhile, all was quiet in the town of Lyons, when, to the great astonishment of the inhabitants, there arrived by every gate troops of infantry and cavalry, which were known to have been encamped and in cantonments far from there. The French and Swiss guards, the regiments of Pompadour, the gens d'armes of Maurevert, and the carabineers of La Roque, all defiled in silence; the cavalry carrying their muskets resting on the pommels of the saddles, silently ranged themselves around the castle of Pierre-Encise; the infantry formed in line upon the banks of the Saône, from the gate of the fort up to the Place des Terreaux. This was the ordinary place of execution.

"Four companies of the citizens of Lyons, which they call *pennonage,* making about eleven or twelve hundred men, were ranged," says the journal of Montrésor, "in the middle of the Place des Terreaux, in such manner that they enclosed a space of nearly eighty paces on either side, in which no person was allowed to enter, except those who were indispensable.

"In the centre of this place was erected a scaffold about seven feet high and nearly nine feet square, in the middle of which, a little towards the front, a post was erected three feet high or thereabouts, before which was set a block of the height of half a foot, so that the principal face or the front of the scaffold looked towards the shambles of the Terreaux, by the side of the Saône; against this scaffold was erected a small ladder of eight steps by the side of les Dames de Saint-Pierre."

Nothing had transpired in the town about the names of the prisoners; the inaccessible walls of the fortress allowed nothing to escape nor anything to penetrate except by night, and the horrid

dungeons had sometimes shut up father and son for whole years, within four feet of one another, without their being aware of it. The surprise was extreme at this splendid preparation, and the crowd ran about, not knowing whether they were to expect a festival or an execution.

The secret which had been kept by the agents of the minister had also been carefully concealed by the conspirators, as their own heads were not safe.

Montrésor, Fontrailles, the Baron of Beauvau, Oliver d'Entraigues, Gondi, Count Lude, and the advocate Fournier, disguised as soldiers, as workmen, and as merry-andrews, armed with poniards under their dresses, had dispersed and formed part of the crowd of more than five hundred gentlemen and domestics, disguised like them; horses were prepared on the road to Italy, and the boats on the Rhone were paid for in advance.

The young Marquis of Effiat, half brother to Cinq-Mars, dressed as a Carthusian friar, threaded the crowd, and incessantly passed to and fro from the Place des Terreaux to the little abode where his mother and his sister were concealed with the presidente de Pontac, sister of the unfortunate de Thou; he reassured them, gave them some hope, and came back again to find the other conspirators and to assure them that each and every of them was ready for action.

Each soldier in the line had at his side a man ready to poniard him.

The innumerable crowd, huddled up behind the line of guards, pushed them in front, broke their line, and made them lose ground. Ambrosio, the Spanish servant taken care of by Cinq-Mars, was charged with the captain of the pikemen, and disguised as a Catalonian musician, had purposely raised a dispute with him, feigning a desire to continue playing his hurdy-gurdy.

All were at their posts.

The Abbé de Gondi, Oliver d'Entraigues, and the Marquis d'Effiat were in the midst of a group of fish-women and oyster-women, who were disputing among themselves, and uttering loud exclamations: they spoke of the injuries of one of them, who was younger than their male companions. The brother of Cinq-Mars approached for the purpose of listening to the quarrel.

"Eh! why," said she to the others, "would you wish that Jean le Roux, who is an honest man, should cut the heads off two Christians because he is a butcher? As long as I am his wife I will not suffer it; I would rather . . . .

"Well! thou art to blame," answered her companions: "what is it to thee whether the meat he cuts be eaten or not? Thou wilt get a hundred crowns to dress thy three children anew. Thou'rt happy in being the *wife* of a butcher. Profit, then, my girl, by what God sends thee through the goodness of his eminence."

"Let me alone," resumed the first; "I do not wish to accept anything. I have seen these handsome young men at the window, they are as quiet as lambs."

"Well! can't you kill lambs and calves?" returned mother Le Bon. "What matters happiness to such a little woman as that? What a pity! when it is from the reverend Capuchin!"

"Oh, the gaiety of the people is horrible!" cried Oliver d'Entraigues, rashly.

All the women heard it, and began to grumble at him.

"*Of the people!*" said they; "and from what place is this little bricklayer with the plaster upon his clothes?"

"Ah!" interrupted another, "thou dost not see that it is some gentleman disguised; look at his white hands; those have never known work."

"Yes, yes, it is some little foppish conspirator: I have a great mind to go and find the captain of the watch and get him arrested."

The Abbé de Gondi perceived all the danger of this step, and looking angrily at Olivier, with all the manners of a joiner, whose costume and apron he had taken, exclaimed, seizing him by the collar:

"You are right; he is a little knave who never works; for two years my father placed him out apprentice; he has done nothing but comb his blond hair to please the girls. Get into the house with you." And, giving him a blow with the lath, he forced his way through the crowd, and placed himself at another part of the line; after having scolded the stupid page, he asked him for the letter which he said he had to give to M. de Cinq-Mars when he should escape. Oliver had had it for two months in his pocket, before he gave it to him. "It is from one prisoner to another," said he, "for the chevalier de Jars, on leaving the Bastille, sent it to me from one of his companions in captivity."

"My faith," said Gondi, "he might have some important secret in it for our friend; I will unseal it; you might have thought of that sooner."

"Ah, ah! it is from old Bassompierre. Let us read.

"'My dear child,—I learn from the cellars of the Bastille, where I am still, that you would conspire against this tyrant of a Richelieu, who has never ceased to humiliate our good old nobility and parliaments, and to sap the foundations of the edifice upon which the state reposes. I learn that the nobles are taxed like commoners, and condemned by the inferior judges in spite of the privileges of their condition, and forced in the background against the ancient usages . . .'

"Ah, the old dotard!" interrupted the page, bursting into laughter.

"Not so doltish as you think; only he is a little too slow for our affair . . .

"'I cannot but approve of this generous project, and I pray you to inform me of everything . . .'"

"Ah! the old language of the last reign," said Oliver; "he does not know how to write. '*Make me expert in everything*,' they say now."

"Let me read, for God's sake," said the abbé; "in a hundred years they will laugh at our phrases."

He resumed:

"'I can very well advise you, notwithstanding my great age, by relating what occurred to me in 1560.'"

"Ah, my faith! I have no time to tire myself by reading all. Let us see the end . . .

"'When I call to mind my dinner at your mother's, the Marchioness of Effiat, and ask myself what are become of all the guests, I am truly afflicted: my poor Puy-Laurens died at Vincennes, of grief at having been forgotten in this prison by Monsieur; De Launay killed in a duel, and I am very sorry for it; for, in spite of my being extremely dissatisfied at my arrest, he showed his courtesy, and I have always considered him as a gallant man. For me, here I am, under lock and key, until the end of the cardinal's life; now, my child, we were thirteen at table; we must not ridicule old beliefs. Thank God that you are the only one whom he has not visited with misfortune . . .'"

"Behindhand again!" said Oliver, laughing with all his might, and this time Abbé de Gondi could not be serious in spite of his efforts.

They tore up the useless letter, so as not to prolong the detention of the poor marshal, in case it were discovered, and they drew towards the Place des Terreaux and the line of guards whom they were to attack, when the signal of the hat should be made by the young prisoner. They saw with satisfaction all their friends at their posts, and ready to play at knives, as they called it.

The people, pressing around them, favoured them without their knowing it. There came near the abbé a troop of young girls, dressed in white and veiled; they were going to church to receive the sacrament, and the nuns who conducted them, believing, like the people, that this cortege was destined to do honour to some great personage, suffered them to ascend upon the large stones accumulated behind the soldiers. There they were grouped, with all the grace of their age, like twenty beautiful statues upon a single pedestal. They looked like those vestals which in ancient times were summoned to the bloody spectacles of the gladiators. They whispered and looked around them, laughing and blushing like so many children.

The Abbé de Gondi was annoyed at seeing that Oliver was near forgetting his part of conspirator and his costume of a mason, by darting glances at them, assuming too elegant a bearing and too civilized a gesture for the position in which he was supposed to be; he already began to approach them, curling his hair with his fingers, when Fontrailles and Montresor unexpectedly, though luckily, came up, disguised as Swiss soldiers; a group of gentlemen, disguised as mariners, followed them, with ferruled sticks in their hands; they bore upon their faces a paleness which announced nothing encouraging. The trumpets sounded a march.

"Let us remain here," said one of them to his company; "it is coming."

The sombre air and the silence of the spectators singularly

contrasted with the cheerful and curious looks of the young girls, and their innocent remarks.

"Oh, what a beautiful procession!" exclaimed they; "there are at least five hundred men cuirassed and in red coats, upon their beautiful horses; they have yellow feathers in their helmets."

"They are foreigners, Catalonians," said a French guard. "Who leads them? Ah, here is a fine gilded carriage! but there is nobody inside it."

"Ah! I see three men on foot; where are they going?"

"To die!" said Fontrailles, in a hollow voice, which silenced them. Nothing was heard but the slow tramp of horses, which suddenly stopped from one of those delays which occur in the march of all processions. Then there was seen a melancholy but singular sight. An old man with shaven head walked with difficulty and sobbing, supported by two interesting and charming persons, each of whom placed his hand behind his arched shoulders, whilst each at the same time held one of his arms. The one who walked on his left was dressed in black; he was grave, and cast down his eyes. The other, very much younger, was habited in a brilliant attire.* A doublet of Holland cloth, covered with large gold lace, and wearing woofed and braided sleeves, which extended from the neck to the waist, an apparel very similar to women's corsets; the rest of his dress was of black velvet, braided with silver palms, grey half-boots, with red heels, to which were fastened spurs of gold, a scarlet cloak ornamented with gold buttons—all enhanced by the grace of his elegant and supple figure. He bowed right and left of the line with a melancholy smile. An old domestic, with moustaches and a white beard, followed, with a stooping gait, holding by the hand two war-horses caparisoned.

The young women were silent, but they could not restrain their sobs on seeing them.

"It is, then, this poor old man whom they lead to death?" cried they; "his children support him."

"On your knees, ladies," said a nun, "and pray for him."

"On your knees," cried Gondi, "and let us pray that God will save them!"

All the conspirators repeated, "Kneel! kneel!" and set the example to the people, who imitated them in silence.

"We can see his movements better now," said Gondi to Montrésor, in a low voice; "rise; what is he doing?"

"He has stopped, and speaks to our side, saluting us; I think he recognizes us."

All the houses, windows, walls, roofs, and scaffolds, every place that commanded a view of the square, was filled with persons of every age and condition.

The most profound silence reigned amidst this immense crowd.

* The full-length portrait of Cinq-Mars is preserved in the gallery of Versailles.

One could have heard the wings of a gnat, the whispering of the least wind, even the particles of floating dust; the air was calm, the sun brilliant, the sky blue. All the people listened. It was near to the Place des Terreaux; the blows of the hammer were heard against the beams of wood, then the voice of Cinq-Mars. A young friar protruded his emaciated head between two guards; all the conspirators rose from among the people who were kneeling, each of them carrying his hand either in his waist or breast, and pressing near to the soldier whom he should poniard.

"What does he do?" said the friar; "has he his hat on his head?"

"He throws his hat on the earth, far from him," said the unconscious arquebusier who was interrogated.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE FESTIVAL.

On the day of the appearance of the melancholy train in the streets of Lyons, and during the scenes which we have just witnessed, a magnificent festival was given at Paris, with all the luxury and bad taste of the times. The powerful cardinal wished to impress simultaneously on the two first towns of France, the evidences of his splendour.

To celebrate the re-opening of the cardinal's palace, it was announced that this festival was given to the king and to the whole court.

Master of the empire by force, he still wished to seduce men's minds, and being wearied of dominating, he endeavoured to please.

The tragedy of *Mirame* was to be represented in a hall constructed for this grand day: the cost of erection for this soirée, says Pélisson, was three hundred thousand crowns.

The entire guard of the prime minister* was under arms; four companies of musketeers and of gens-d'armes were marshalled in line upon the vast staircase, and at the entrance of the long galleries of the cardinal's palace.† This brilliant *Pandemonium*, where the mortal sins have a temple at each story, belonged on this day to pride alone, which occupied it from top to bottom. Upon each step was placed one of the arquebusiers of the cardinal's guard, holding in one hand a torch, and in the other a long carbine; the crowd of his gentlemen circulated through these living candelabras, whilst in the

* The king gave the cardinal, in 1626, a guard of two hundred arquebusiers; in 1632, four hundred foot musketeers; in 1638, two companies of men-at-arms and light horsemen were formed by him.

† He had given to the king, reserving the usufruct during his life, this palace with its dependencies, as also his magnificent chapel of diamonds, his grand sideboard of chased silver, weighing three thousand marks, and his great diamond in the form of a heart, weighing more than twenty carets. M. de Chavigny accepted this donation for the king.—*Hist. du P. Joseph.*

great garden, surrounded with thick chesnut trees, now replaced by arcades, were two companies of light horse, musket in hand, ready at the first order and the first fear of their master.

The cardinal, carried and followed by his thirty-eight pages, placed himself in his purple-lined box in front of that in which the king was half reclining behind the green curtains which shielded him from the glare of the torches. The whole court was congregated in these boxes, and quitted their seats when he appeared; the music commenced with a brilliant overture, and the pit was thrown open to any of the citizens or soldiers that chose to present themselves. Three impetuous waves of spectators rushed in and filled it in an instant; so close were they obliged to stand, that even the movement of an arm was sufficient to cause the whole mass to waver like a field of corn; the heads of some were swayed about in a circle of some diameter, while their feet were firmly fixed in one position; some young people were carried out fainting. The minister, contrary to his custom, pushed out his shrivelled head beyond his box, and saluted the assembly with an air which he wished to be thought gracious. This grimace procured but the acknowledgments of the boxes; the pit was silent. Richelieu wished to show that he did not fear the judgment of the public on his labours, and had given permission that they should introduce without distinction all those who presented themselves. He began to repent of it, when too late. In fact, this impartial assembly was as cold as the *pastoral tragedy* itself; in vain the *shepherds* of the theatre, covered with precious stones, exalted upon red buskins, carrying on the tips of their fingers baskets ornamented with ribbons, and suspending wreaths of flowers upon the short robes which covered their farthingales, died of love in long tirades of a hundred sickly verses; in vain the *perfect lovers* (for that was *the* ideal perfection of the times,) were left to perish of hunger in a solitary grotto, and emphatically deplore their death, attaching to their hair the favourite ribbons of their sweethearts; in vain the women of the court gave signs even of rapture, leaning over their boxes, and attempting the most flattering swoons; the gloomy pit gave no other sign of life than the perpetual oscillation of black heads and long hair. The cardinal bit his lips, and tried to seem abstracted during the first and second acts; the silence with which the third and fourth act rolled on, so wounded his paternal heart, that he raised himself half out of his balcony, and, in this inconvenient and ridiculous attitude, signed to his court friends to remark the finest parts, and to give the signal of applause. He was answered from some boxes; but the immoveable pit was more silent than ever; letting the scene pass between the actors and the upper regions, it obstinately remained neutral. The Master of Europe, and of France, then cast a fiery look upon this little collection of men, who dared not to admire his worth; he felt in his heart the wish of Nero, and thought for a moment how happy he should be if there had been to it but one head.

Suddenly this black and immoveable mass showed signs of life in interminable salvos of boisterous applause, to the great astonishment of the boxes, and above all, of the minister. He leaned over, bowing with gratitude; but he stopped on remarking that the clapping of hands interrupted the actors every time they wished to recommence. The king caused the curtains of his box to be opened, till then closed, to see what it was that excited so much enthusiasm; all the court at the same time leaned forward: they there perceived, amidst the crowds of spectators, seated on the stage, a young man, humbly attired, and who could hardly get a seat; all eyes were turned upon him. He appeared extremely embarrassed, and sought to cover himself with his black cloak, which was too short. "The Cid!—the Cid!" cried out the pit, not ceasing to applaud. Corneille, who was frightened, hid himself in the wings, and all was again silent.

The cardinal, who was beside himself with rage, closed the curtains of his box, and had himself taken up to the galleries.

There another scene was being performed, prepared long before through the care of Joseph, who had instructed the persons in his suite before leaving Paris. Cardinal Mazarin, remarking that he was very eager to have his eminence pass through a long glazed window, which rose only two feet from the ground, and led from his box to the apartments, opened it, and the pages passed the arm-chair through. Immediately a hundred voices burst forth to proclaim the accomplishment of the grand prophecy of Nostradamus. They said to themselves in an under tone, "*Le bonnet rouge* is our lord; *quarante onces* is Cinq-Mars; *tout finera* was de Thou.* What a lucky stroke of heaven! His Eminence rules the future, as he does the present!"

He advanced thus to a moveable throne up the long and resplendent galleries, listening to the murmur of sweet flattery; but insensible to the noise of voices which deified his genius, he would have given all their conversation for a single word, a single gesture of this immoveable and inflexible public, even if that word had been a cry of hatred; for he could have stopped their outcries, but how was he to be revenged of their silence? One can obstruct people clapping, but who is to prevent them listening? Followed by the importunate phantom of public opinion, the gloomy minister believed that safety had at length arrived in the heart of his palace, in the midst of his

* The miserableness of the worthy capuchin's pun, and the shallowness of his attempt to palm a miracle upon the people, would entirely escape the English reader, were not some explanation given of the contents of the scroll mentioned on p. 180, *ante*.

The reader will observe that in the first line the name is altered from Cinq-Mars, (*Cinq* means *five*), to Cinq-Marcs, meaning five marks. The third line has, when the *red bonnet*, (meaning the cardinal, from those dignitaries wearing a red shovel kind of hat,) shall pass through the window, they will cut off the head of *forty ounces*, (that being equal to five marks,) thereby meaning Cinq-Mars, and *tout* will be finished. *Tout* is the French for *all*, and is pronounced as the name *Thou*, and therefore stood for the name of the unfortunate man.—TRANSLATOR.

trembling and flattering court, whose adoration made him soon forget that some men had dared not to admire him. He was placed like a king in the midst of his vast apartments, and, looking around him, counted attentively the powerful and obedient men who surrounded him; he reckoned and admired them. The heads of all the great families, the princes of the church, the presidents of all the parliaments, the governors of provinces, the marshals and generals-in-chief of the armies, the pope's nuncio, the ambassadors of all kingdoms, the deputies and senators of republics, were submissively ranged around him, as though waiting his orders. Not a look dared to face his, not a word dared to be raised without his will, not a project that dared be formed in the most secret recesses of the heart, not a thought which did not proceed from his. Europe, silent, listened through representatives. Now and then he raised an imperious voice, and flung a satisfying word into the midst of this pompous circle, like money thrown to a crowd of beggars. Then could be recognized by the pride which animated his looks, and the joy of his countenance, that of the prince on whom he cast such a favour; the latter even seemed suddenly transformed into another man, and seemed to have advanced a step in the hierarchy of power, so much was the fortunate courtier surrounded with unhoped-for adoration and sudden caresses, and whose obscure pleasure the cardinal did not even perceive.

The brother of the king and the Duke of Bouillon were standing among the crowd, from which place the minister did not deign to draw them away, only affecting to say that it would be desirous to dismantle several strong places, spoke lengthily of the necessity of pavements and of quays along the streets of Paris, and, in two words, said to Turenne, that he might send him to the army in Italy, with prince Thomas, there to win his baton of Marshal.

Whilst Richelieu thus balanced in his powerful hands the greatest and the least matters of Europe, in the midst of a noisy festival, in his magnificent palace, they informed the queen at the Louvre that the hour was arrived to present herself at the cardinal's, where the king would expect her after the tragedy. The serious Ann of Austria assisted at no spectacle; but she could not refuse the festival of the prime minister. She was in her oratory, ready to depart, and covered with pearls, her favourite ornament; standing near a great glass, with Marie of Mantua, she amused herself by finishing the toilet of the young duchess, who, clothed in a long rose-coloured robe, contemplated with attention, but with some weariness, and a little sulkiness, the general appearance of her toilet.

The queen looked upon Marie as her own child, and more troubled than she was, thought with fear of the moment when this ephemeral tranquillity should cease, despite the perfect knowledge she had of the sensible but light character of Marie. Since the conversation at St. Germain, since the fatal letter, she had not quitted the young princess for a single moment, and lavished all her care in leading the

young princess into the way she had previously traced out for her; for Ann of Austria's most decided characteristic was an invincible obstinacy in her calculations, to which she wished to subject every event and every passion, with mathematical exactness; and it is doubtless to this positive and unyielding disposition, that are to be attributed all the misfortunes of her regency. The perverse reply of Cinq-Mars, his arrest, his condemnation, had all been concealed from the Princess Marie, whose first fault, it is true, had been a movement of self-love and a momentary forgetfulness. Yet the queen was good, and had bitterly repented of having written such decisive words, the consequences of which had been so grave; and all her efforts were directed to soften the result. Looking at what she had done in regard to the happiness of France, she took credit to herself for having thus stifled at a blow, the germ of a civil war which would have shook the state to its foundations; but when she turned to her young friend, and considered this charming being whom she had nipped in the bud, and that an enthroned old man would not compensate the unhappy girl's everlasting loss; when she thought of the entire devotion, of that total denial of self, which she saw in a young man of twenty-two, of so high a character, almost master of a kingdom, she pitied Marie, and from the very depths of her soul admired the man whom she had so wrongly judged.

She would, at least, have desired to make known all his virtues to her whom he had loved so much, and who knew it not; but she still hoped that all the conspirators assembled at Lyons would be able to save him, and once knowing him to be in a foreign country, she could tell all to her dear Marie.

As to the latter, she had at first dreaded war; but surrounded by the queen's people, she had received only news dictated by that princess; she knew or thought that the conspiracy had not been executed; that the king and the cardinal had first returned to Paris almost together; that Monsieur, banished for some time, had repaired to court; that the Duke of Bouillon, minus the cession of Sedan, had also re-entered into favour; and that if the Master of the Horse did not yet appear, the motive was the more decided hatred of the cardinal for him, and the great part he took in the conspiracy. But simple good sense, and the natural sentiment of justice, said that, having acted only under the orders of the king's brother, his pardon must follow that of the prince. All had, therefore, calmed the first uneasiness of her heart, whilst nothing had softened a sort of proud resentment which she had against Cinq-Mars, indifferent enough not to let her know the place of his retreat, unknown to the queen and the whole court, whilst she had thought but of him. For two months, besides, balls and festivities had so rapidly succeeded one another, and so many imperious *duties* had distracted her, that she had but the time when she was at her toilet to be sad and complaining, and even then she was seldom alone. She began every evening this general reflection upon the ingratitude and inconstancy

of men; a profound and new thought, which never fails to occupy the head of a young person, at the age when love is first awakened in the bosom; but sleep never permitted her to finish it, and the fatigue of dancing shut her large black eyes, before her ideas had found time to classify themselves in her memory, and to present her well-formed images of the past. On awaking she found herself surrounded by the young princesses of the court, and, half dressed, she was obliged to go to the queen, to receive the eternal, but less disagreeable homage of the Prince Palatine. The Polonesian had had time to learn at the court of France that mysterious reserve, and that silent eloquence, which are so pleasing to women, because they increase the importance of the secrets always hidden, and heighten the beings whom they respect so much as not to dare even to suffer in their presence. Marie was looked upon as given to King Uladislas; and she herself was so wedded to this idea, that the throne of Poland occupied by another queen would have appeared monstrous to her; she saw not with happiness the moment of mounting it, but had, nevertheless, taken possession of the homage which was rendered her beforehand. Thus, without avowing it to herself, she exaggerated much the pretended wrongs of Cinq-Mars which the queen had unfolded to her at St. Germain.

"You are as fresh as the roses in this nosegay," said the queen; "come, my dear child, are you ready? Why this pouting air? Come here; let me fasten that earring .... Do you not like these topazes? Would you like another head-dress?"

"Oh, no, madam! I think I ought not to bedeck myself. How unhappy I am! Men are very cruel towards us! I have been reflecting on all that you have said, and all has proved true. Yes, it is very true that he loves me not; for if he had loved me, from the first he would have renounced an enterprise which gave me so much pain, as I told him; I remember even what is stranger still," added she, with an important and solemn air, "that I told him he would be a rebel; yes, madam, a *rebel!* I told him in St. Eustace. But I see that your majesty was right: I am very unhappy! He had more ambition than love." Here a tear of spite escaped from her eyes, and rolled swiftly down her cheek, like a pearl upon a rose.

"Yes, it is very certain," continued she, fastening her bracelets; and the greatest proof is that as it is two months since he has renounced his enterprise (as you told me you had saved him), he would have been able to let me know whither he has retired. And I during that time wept, and implored all your power in his favour. I begged a word which should tell me one of his actions. I thought but of him; and yet now I daily refuse the throne of Poland, because I wish to prove to the end that I am constant; that you yourself cannot make me fail in my attachment, much more serious than his, and which we value more than men; but at least I think that I can go this evening to this festival, since it is not a ball."

"Yes, yes, my dear child, get ready quickly," said the queen,

wishing to stop this childish language, which afflicted her, and the ingenuous errors of which she had caused; "come, you shall see the unity between the princes and the cardinal, and we shall perhaps learn some good news."

They went out.

When the two princesses entered the long galleries of the cardinal's palace, they were received and saluted coldly by the king and his minister, who, surrounded and pressed by a crowd of silent courtiers, were playing at chess upon a narrow and low table. All the women who entered with or after the queen, scattered themselves over the apartments, and soon soft music arose in one of the saloons, as an accompaniment to a thousand individual conversations carried on around the card-tables.

After the queen, passed a young and newly married couple, the happy Chabot and the beautiful Duchess of Rohan; they seemed anxious to avoid the crowd, and eager for a moment to speak by themselves. Every one smiled, and envied them: their happiness might have been read in the faces of others, as much as in their own.

Marie had followed them with her eyes. "They are happy," said she to the queen, remembering the blame which she had wished to cast upon them.

But without answering her, Ann of Austria, fearing that in the crowd an inconsiderate word might tell some fatal event to her young friend, went behind the king with her. Soon Monsieur, the Prince Palatine, and the Duke of Bouillon, came to speak to him with a free and open air. But the second, throwing upon Marie a severe and scrutinizing glance, said to her, "Your beauty and gaiety are this evening surprising."

She was struck by these words, and at seeing him turn away with a melancholy air; she spoke to the Duke of Orleans, who answered not, and seemed not to hear. Marie looked at the queen, and thought she remarked paleness and uneasiness on her features. Yet no one dared approach the minister, who was thinking slowly of his moves; Mazarin alone leaning upon the arm of his chair, and following his moves with servile attention, made gestures of admiration whenever the cardinal played. The application seemed to dissipate the cloud which covered the minister's brow; he advanced a *castle* which put the king of Louis XIII. in that false position which is called *stalemate*, a situation in which the ebony king, without being personally attacked, is unable to move without being destroyed. The cardinal, raising his eyes, looked at his adversary and smiled on one side of his mouth, unable to stifle a secret analogy. Then seeing the dull eyes and dying countenance of the prince, he leaned to the ear of Mazarin, and said to him:

"By my faith, I believe he will go before me, he is very changed."

At the same time he began a long and violent cough; he often felt within that sharp and persevering pain; at this sinister warning he put his pocket-handkerchief to his mouth to spit blood, but to hide

it he threw it under the table, and smiled as he looked severely around him, as if to forbid uneasiness.

Louis XIII., perfectly insensible, made not the slightest movement, and ranged his pieces for another game, with a sickly trembling hand. The two dying men seemed to be casting lots in their last hour.

At this moment a clock struck midnight.

"Ah," said he, "this morning at the same hour our dear friend, the Master of the Horse, was in a disagreeable position."

A piercing cry burst forth near him; he trembled and sprang to the other side, upsetting the table. Marie of Mantua, unconscious, was in the arms of the queen; the latter, weeping bitterly, said in the king's ear:

"Ah, sire, your axe is two-edged."

She then lavished all her cares and maternal kisses on the young princess, who, surrounded by all the ladies of the court, came to herself only to shed torrents of tears.

"Alas! my child," said Ann of Austria, "you are Queen of Poland."

It often happens that the same event which causes tears within the palace spreads joy without; for the habitual merriment of the people is always increased at festivals. There were five days of rejoicing for the return of the minister, and each night beneath the windows of the cardinal's palace, and beneath those of the Louvre, pressed the inhabitants of Paris; the late commotions had, as it were, given them a taste for public agitation; they ran from one street to another with curiosity, sometimes insulting and hostile, sometimes marching in silent procession, sometimes breaking forth into peals of laughter, or prolonged hootings in which there was no sense. Bands of young men were fighting in the cross-ways, and dancing in circles in the public squares, in manifestation of some unknown hope of pleasure, and some senseless delight which bound their hearts. It was remarkable that a sad silence reigned just in those places which the orders of the minister had prepared for re joicing, and that the illuminated façades of his palace were passed in disdain. If any voice was raised, it was to read and re-read incessantly and ironically the legends and inscriptions with which the idiotic flattery of some obscure writers had surrounded the portraits of the minister. One of these images was guarded by arquebusiers, who could not keep it from the stones thrown at it from unknown hands. They represented the cardinal generalissimo wearing a helmet, encircled with laurels. Underneath was written:

"Great duke! how justly doth France honour thee;
As the god Mars, the Parisians adore thee."*

These fine things did not persuade the people that they were happy;

* **An engraving of this still exists.**

and in fact they liked the cardinal no more than Mars, but they accepted his feasts as a pretext for disorder. All Paris was in an uproar, and men with long beards carrying torches, pots filled with wine, and pewter pots, which they struck together with great noise, holding each other by the arm, chanted, in unison with rude gruff voices an ancient rondelay of the League:

"Resume the dance;
Come 'tis enough:
The spring begins,
The kings are passed.

"Let us have a truce,
We are aweary;
The twelfth-night kings
Have harassed us.

"Come, John of Mayne,
The kings are passed . . . ."*

The frightful bands which hurled forth these words traversed the quays, and the Pont Neuf, dashing against the high houses which were covered by some peaceful citizens attracted by curiosity. Two young men wrapt in cloaks were thrown against one another, and recognised each other by the light of a torch placed at the foot of the newly-erected statue of Henry IV., under which they met.

"What! again in Paris, sir?" said Corneille to Milton; "I thought you were in London."

"Do you hear the people, sir? listen. What is that terrible burden:"

"The kings are passed!"

"That is nothing, sir; pay attention to what they say."

"The parliament is dead," said one of the men; "the lords are dead; let us dance, we are the masters; the old cardinal will go, then there will be none but the king and us."

"Hear you that wretch, sir?" replied Corneille; "all is in that; our whole epoch is in those words."

"What! is this the work of the minister who is called great among you, and even among other people? I do not understand that man."

"I will explain everything to you," replied Corneille; "but listen to the end of this letter which I received to-day. Let us go towards the lantern under the statue of the iron king. We are alone, the crowd has passed, listen."

". . . . It was from one of those unforeseen circumstances which obstruct the accomplishment of generous enterprises that we were unable to save Cinq-Mars and de Thou. There is some consolation in thinking that, prepared for death by long meditation, they refused our help; but this idea did not strike any of us in the precipitation of our measures; we were scattered too much among the crowd, so that we had not the means of taking a sudden resolution. It was my misfortune to be placed near the scaffold, and I saw our unhappy

* Song of the civil wars, (See Mem. de la Ligue.)

friends advance to its foot, supporting the poor Abbé Quillet, destined to see the death of his pupil, whose birth he had witnessed. He groaned, and had not strength to kiss the hand of his two friends. We all advanced, ready to throw ourselves upon the guards at the preconcerted signal; but it was with grief that I saw M. de Cinq-Mars throw his hat from him with an air of disdain. Our movement had been remarked, and the Catalonian guard was doubled around the scaffold. I saw no more. I thought I should have wept. After the usual three blasts of the trumpets, the officer read the decree of death, to which neither of them listened. Monsieur de Thou said to M. de Cinq-Mars: 'Well, my dear friend, who shall die first? do you remember St. Gervais and St. Protais?'"

"'Which you think proper,' replied Cinq-Mars.

"The second confessor, taking up the word, said to M. de Thou; 'You are the elder.'

"'True,' said M. de Thou, who, addressing the Master, said: 'You are the most generous, will you show me the way to the glory of heaven?'

"'Alas!' said Cinq-Mars; 'I have led you to the brink of this precipice; but let us precipitate ourselves generously into death, and we shall land in the glory and happiness of heaven.'

"After which he embraced him, and mounted the scaffold with wonderful address and lightness. He took a turn upon the scaffold, and considered the high and low of that assembly, with a look of assurance that knew no fear, and a grave and gracious deportment; then he took another turn, saluted the people on all sides, without appearing to recognise any of us, but with a majestic and charming face, threw himself on his knees, raised his eyes to heaven, worshipped God, and to him he recommended his end: as he raised the crucifix, the father cried to the people to pray to God for him, and the Master raised his arms, joined his hands, all the time holding his crucifix, and made the same demand of the people. Afterwards, he threw himself, with good grace, upon his knees before the block, embraced the stake, put down his neck, raised his eyes to heaven, and asked of the confessor:—'Father, shall I be well thus?' Afterwards, while they were cutting off his hair, he raised his eyes to heaven, and said, with a sigh:—'My God, what is this world? my God, I offer you my punishment in satisfaction of my sins.'

"'What are you waiting for? what are you doing there?' he said to the executioner, who was there, and had not yet taken his axe from the small bag in which he had carried it. His confessor having approached and given him a medal, he, with incredible tranquillity of mind, prayed the father to hold the crucifix before his eyes, which he would not have bound. I saw the two trembling hands of the old Abbé Quillet, who raised the crucifix. At this moment, a voice clear and pure as that of an angel, sang '*Ave Maris stella.*' In the universal silence, I recognised the voice of de Thou, who waited at the foot of the scaffold; the people repeated the sacred

chant. Cinq-Mars embraced the stake tighter, and I saw uplifted an axe, made after the manner of the English axes. A frightful cry from the people shooting from the Place, the windows, and the towers informed me that it had fallen, and that the head had rolled upon the ground; happily, I had yet the power to think of his soul and to commence a prayer for him; I mingled it with the one I had intended to pronounce aloud for our unhappy and pious friend De Thou. I arose again, and I saw him rush upon the scaffold, with as much promptness as he had said that he had will. The father and he recited the psalms; he said them with the ardour of a seraph, as if his soul were about to carry his body towards heaven; then kneeling, he kissed the blood of Cinq-Mars, as of that of a martyr, and became more a martyr himself. I do not know whether God will grant him that grace; but I saw with horror the hangman, frightened, no doubt, at the first blow that he had given, hit him on the top of the head, where the unhappy young man put up his hand; the people uttered a loud groan, and rushed towards the headsman: this wretch, full of trouble, made a second blow, which hacked him and knocked him down on the stage, when the executioner rolled upon him to finish him. A strange event frightened the people as much as this frightful spectacle. Cinq-Mars' old servant held his horse, as at a funeral; he had stopped at the foot of the scaffold, and, like one paralysed, watched his master to the end; then, suddenly, and as if struck with the same axe, he fell dead under the blow that had cut off his master's head.

"I hastily write you these sad details on board a Genoese galley, where Fontrailles, Gondi, D'Entraigues, Beauveau, du Lude, I, and all the conspirators, are retired. We are going to England to wait till time shall deliver France of a tyrant whom we have not been able to destroy. I for ever abandon the service of the cowardly prince by whom we have been betrayed.

"MONTRESOR."

"Such," said Corneille, "is the end of these two young men, whom you lately saw so powerful. Their last sigh was that of the old monarchy; henceforth the court alone can reign: the grandees and the senate are annihilated." *

"And this, then, is the pretended great man!" replied Milton; "what does he wish to do? would he create republics in the future, since he destroys the basis of your monarchy?"

"Seek not so far," said Corneille: "he only wishes to reign to the end of his life. He has laboured for the moment, and not for the future; he has continued the work of Louis XI., and neither of them knew what he was doing."

The Englishman laughed.

"I thought," said he, "that true genius had another march. This

* The parliament was called *senate*. Letters exist addressed to *Monseigneur de Harlay*, prince of the senate of Paris, and first judge of the kingdom.

man has shaken that which he ought to have sustained, and they admire him! I pity your nation."

"Pity it not," said Corneille, with animation; "a man passes away, but a people is renewed. The latter, sir, is endowed with an immortal energy, which nothing can extinguish: its imagination will often take flight, but a superior reason will always end in ruling its disorders."

These two young and already great men walked and conversed thus upon that piece of ground which separates the statue of Henry IV. from the Place Dauphine, in the middle of which they stopped for a moment.

"Yes, sir," continued Corneille, "every evening I find a generous thought retained in French hearts, and every evening I retire happy at having seen it. Gratitude prostrates the poor before that statue of a good king; who knows what other monument another passion may raise on its site? who knows whither the love of glory will conduct our people? who knows whether, on the spot where we now stand, they may not erect a pyramid torn from the East?"

"These are the secrets of the future," said Milton; "I admire as much as you do your impassioned people; but I fear their eagerness; I do not well understand and I admire not the spirit which prompts them to lavish its admiration on men such as he by whom you are now governed. Love of power is very puerile, and this man is devoured by it without having the strength to seize it entirely. Laughable thing! he is a tyrant under a master. This colossus, ever out of his equilibrium, is nearly overthrown by the push of a child. Is that genius? No, no! When it deigns to quit its high regions for a human passion, at least it ought not to overrun it. Since this Richelieu wishes only for power, why does he not take the whole? I am going to a man who has not yet emerged from his obscurity, and whom I see ruled by this miserable ambition; but I think that he will go further. His name is CROMWELL."

THE END.

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