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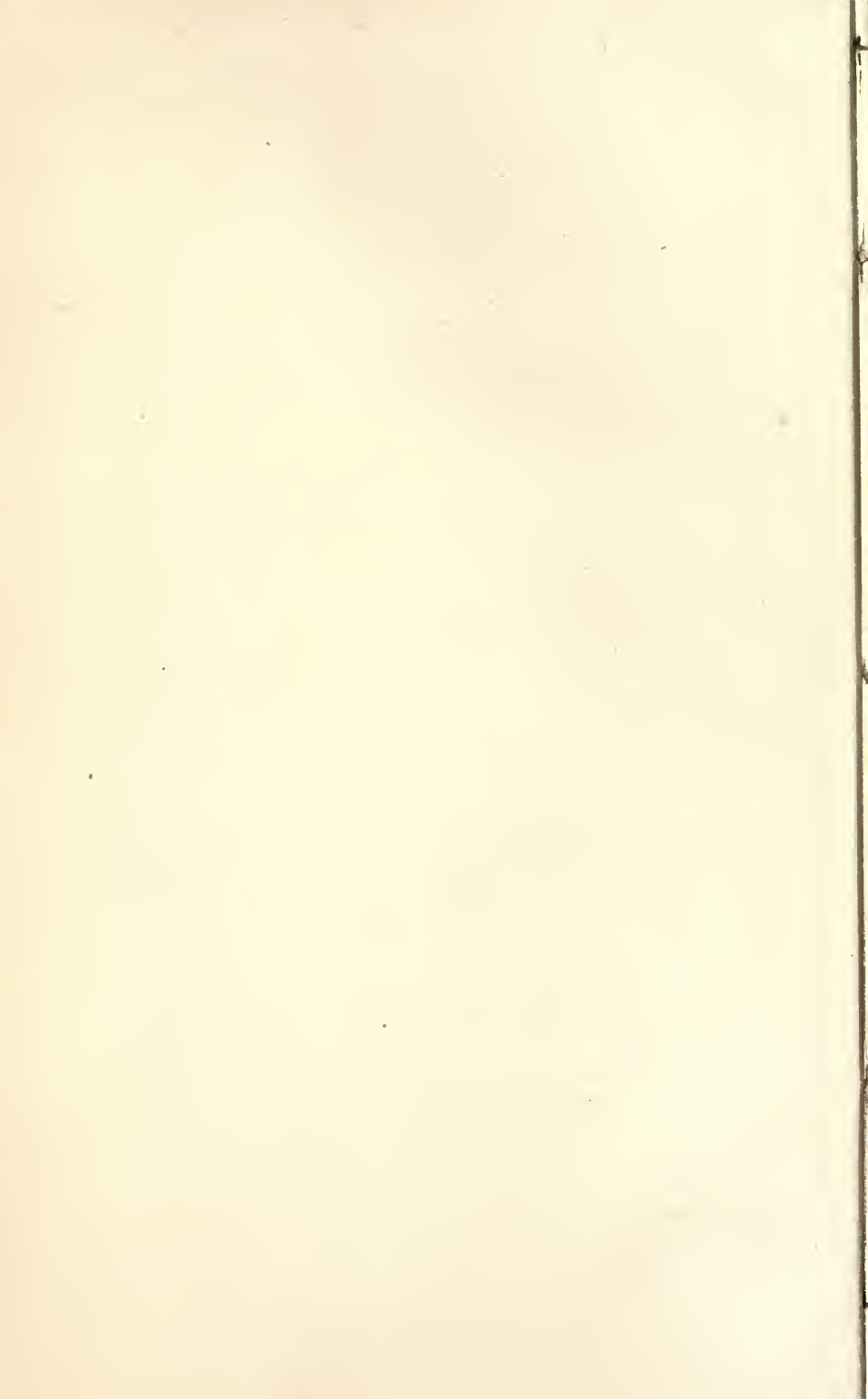
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CINQ-MARS:

OR,

A CONSPIRACY UNDER LOUIS XIII.





ALFRED DE VIGNY

CINQ-MARS:

OR,

A CONSPIRACY UNDER LOUIS XIII.

BY

ALFRED DE VIGNY.
||

TRANSLATED

By WILLIAM HAZLITT.

WITH DRAWINGS BY A. DAWANT, ETCHED BY GAUJEAN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS TO VOL. I.

	PAGE
M. ALFRED DE VIGNY	v
THOUGHTS ON TRUTH IN ART	xix
CHAPTER	
I. THE ADIEU	1
II. THE STREET	29
III. THE GOOD PRIEST	44
IV. THE TRIAL	60
V. THE MARTYRDOM	74
VI. THE DREAM	87
VII. THE CABINET	99
VIII. THE INTERVIEW	128
IX. THE SIEGE	145
X. THE REWARD	162
XI. THE MISTAKES	178
XII. THE NIGHT-WATCH	192
XIII. THE SPANIARD	213
<hr/>	
NOTES AND HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS	227

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOL. I.

ALFRED DE VIGNY	<i>Frontispiece</i>
CINQ-MARS	<i>Page 1</i>
THE ADIEU	20
RICHELIEU AND JOSEPH	114
THE SIEGE	148
THE NIGHT-WATCH	212



M. ALFRED DE VIGNY.

Je crois fermement en une vocation ineffable qui m'est donnée, et j'y crois à cause de la pitié sans bornes que m'inspirent les hommes, mes compagnons en misère, et aussi à cause du désir que je me sens de leur tendre la main et de les élever sans cesse par des paroles de commisération et d'amour. — A. DE VIGNY, *Stello*, p. 38.

BEYOND the Champs-Elysées, in one of the quietest streets of Paris, stands a house of modest appearance, towards which, once a week, a joyous phalanx of literary men and artists, young and old, illustrious and obscure, set forth on a pilgrimage. This house is inhabited by the most graceful, the most chaste, the most temperate of our poets. That musing man with the large forehead, the gentle voice, the noble and melancholy look, who lives here buried in reflection, meditation, and the solitude "which is holy," as the Docteur Noir says in "*Stello*," is the Comte Alfred de Vigny.

Of all who have received the gift of poesy, none has ever consecrated to his muse a more fervid and a purer worship.

He has not dragged that muse into the street to "harness her, yelling, to the car of faction;" he has not mutilated her to adapt her as food for all the appetites of the day. He has not urged her on to premature production, to cold transports or unfruitful caresses; nor has he turned her aside from the things of the present to impress on her a puerile and egoistical contemplation. He has shown her life, but he has done so from on high, and without allowing her white robe to be sullied by it. He has told her to give ear to the thousand sounds of the world, and to reproduce them in melodious song; and then, as the voice of the muse awakened, soft and sad, in the heart of the poet, the song of the poet was sad also, but of a softened, repressed, modified sadness, like a distant sound, prolonging and refining itself, passing through a double echo.

He will lose his way who should seek to construct the biography of M. de Vigny by the aid of his books, or question his life for the secret of that tinge of melancholy which is the groundwork and charm of his inspirations. The faculty of suffering in others is the privilege of lofty souls, and an inexhaustible source of poetry. Sorrow imagined is sometimes more favorable to powerful description than sorrow felt. The latter irritates, exaggerates itself, and cries out; the former listens intent, analyzes itself, and weeps. In the works of M. de Vigny, the religion of *self*, common enough in more than one poet who sings himself, or always loves to personify himself in his hero, is by no means conspicuous. We may see, upon looking closely, that he who has so well appreciated the rude trials of the poet and the secret agonies of the soldier, has appropriated with passion sufferings not his own; that whether in the uniform or out of it, he has gone through life more as a spectator than as an actor, but as an attentive, interested,

and silent spectator, glowing with charity, loving sorrow as others love joy, giving himself heart and soul to its examination, dissecting it deliberately, and, still young, turning, as he himself has said, all things to future profit.

M. le Comte Alfred de Vigny descends from an old military race, originally of Beauce. His father, a cavalry officer under Louis XV. and Louis XVI., married, in Touraine, the daughter of Admiral Baraudin; and it was in the pretty little town of Loches that on the 27th of March, 1799, our poet was born. His childhood was passed in the château of Tronchet in Beauce. While quite a boy he was grave and studious.

“I always loved to listen,” he said at a later period of his life; “and when I was quite a child, I early acquired this taste on the wounded knees of my old father. He first fed me with the history of his campaigns, and on his lap, I found war seated by my side; he showed me war in his wounds, war in the parchments and blazonry of his fathers, war in their great portraits in armor, hung on the walls of the old château. I saw in the nobility a great family of hereditary soldiers; and I thought only of rising to the height of a soldier.”

Towards the end of the empire the young Alfred de Vigny was sent to Paris and placed in the establishment of M. Hix. Here again we shall let him speak for himself: —

“I was,” says he, “a very absent student. War in my eyes stood erect in the lyceum; the drum in my ears drowned the words of the masters; and the mysterious voice of books spoke to me but a cold and pedantic language. Logarithms and tropes were in my eyes merely steps to ascend to the star of the Legion of Honor, — the finest star in the heavens for boys.”

The young scholar did not remain long in his school; his family, alarmed at his ardent passion for war, at an epoch when France began to be weary of it, confided him to

the cares of a private tutor, and endeavored, but in vain, to divert the bent of his inclinations; it was absolutely necessary to make him a soldier. Meanwhile came the Restoration; and scarcely sixteen years of age, the young De Vigny received a commission in the red household musketeers. Every one knows that in the Hundred Days, the red companies attended Louis XVIII. to the frontier; M. de Vigny went with them, and during fourteen years service, destiny willed that this should be his first and only campaign. In 1816 the red companies were disbanded, and he passed into the infantry of the guard. Then began the disenchantment of the warlike gentleman; he had dreamed of the field of battle; he found the Champ de Mars. For a camp, he had the barracks, and the parade instead of a battle-field. As a boy, he had seen himself entering vanquished towns as a conqueror; as a soldier, he had to carry an inoffensive sabre from garrison to garrison.

Not finding in the trade of arms what he sought there, — war, — M. de Vigny turned towards poetry, or rather, he felt then what he expressed at a later period, that he had taken a youthful flame for an irresistible vocation; that his first career had been a mistake; that into an entirely active life he carried a wholly contemplative nature; that he was born a poet, and that he was wrong in having become a soldier. And yet he waited a long time, not venturing for honor's sake to quit the sword, fearing lest the day of his resignation should be the eve of a campaign. In 1823, he passed into the line, hoping that it would at last be permitted him to burn powder in Spain. Fate denied him this favor; he was fain to accompany an expedition with sheathed swords, cantoned in the Pyrenees; and the only trophies he brought back were two of his poems, — “Dolorida” and “Le Deluge.” At last, two years after his

marriage, which took place in 1826, he determined upon ridding himself of the prosaic gorget, and forever to lay aside his epaulettes of captain of infantry, so tediously and painfully acquired.

During the interval, the wings of his muse had grown; poetry gained ground, and his verse ran more freely from the more developed source. In the year 1822, there was certainly not in the whole French army an officer of three-and-twenty like him. While all that vain, smoking, gambling, fighting youth crowded to the taverns round the billiard-tables, or such places, the poet, altogether out of his place, grave and thoughtful, would walk apart for a portion of the day with a few old officers of the empire, — men of stooping backs and gray mustaches, soldiers of fortune, sons of the sword, silent and cold as Trappists before presumptuous sub-lieutenants, stuffed with pseudo-science, but kindly open and conversive with this young companion-in-arms, who venerated their manly character, gave a serious and eager attention to their rough stories, beautified by truth, and loved them as Desdemona loved Othello, for the dangers they had faced. At night, M. de Vigny would return to his solitary room, open his Bible or Homer, murmur a few fragments of André Chénier, published by M. de Chateaubriand in the “*Génie du Christianisme* ;” and in proportion as the beloved night mounted the heavens, the poetic inspiration descended into his soul, diffused itself in harmonious waves, and he wrote his poems, — strange poems for the period, and which one would imagine far rather to have grown under the gown of some young, fervent, simple, thoughtful Benedictine than under the shako of a sub-lieutenant.¹ Not that his poems

¹ I have had communicated to me a letter of M. de Vigny written about this period, or rather, two years later, at the end of 1824, from

do not partake of the general movement which then began to draw men's minds into the paths of idealism ; that they may not, up to a certain point, be named in connection with the early inspirations of Lamartine and Victor Hugo ; but there is in them a certain character of strangeness in the form, something elaborately negligent, a certain vagueness which leaves the soul unsatisfied, though gently moved, softly lulled. With the exception of a few poems, such as "Eloa," "Moïse," and "Héléna," which are complete and finished creations, most of the pieces that form the collection of M. de Vigny have reference to fugitive thoughts, suddenly caught, and immediately framed into a brief drama. We feel that the inspiration was abundant, but that the poet was unwilling to give it all its development, in fear of its losing its freshness ; they are so many epopees in the rudimental state, — admirable sketches, but still only sketches.

Let us rapidly glance over them in the order of their production. "Symétha," which is dated 1815 (the poet was then sixteen), is a Greek elegy in the manner of André Chénier. It is a reminiscence of the *blanche neere*.

" Neere, ne va pas te confier aux flots
De peur d'être déçue," etc,

said Chénier.

Pau, where he was garrisoned. At this time he had already published some of his poetry. The letter I speak of is chiefly upon political matters. Upon them the young officer expresses very decided Royalist ideas, but it closes with a few lines far more valuable to me, inasmuch as they plainly show the disposition of mind which I have mentioned above. "My Bible," he here says, "and some English prints, follow me about like my *penates*, and here, as everywhere else, I pass regularly from my sword to my pen. I know nothing of Paris, where, I am told, they have excommunicated me, as I predicted to you, and yet I work just the same as though I were to be read ; every one has his illusions and his wants."

“Je vais mourir, hélas ! Symétha s’est fiée
Aux flots profonds ; l’Attique est par elle oubliée,”

says M. de Vigny. There is the same antique perfume in the thought and form, but it is imitation. M. de Vigny is not yet himself. The same may be said of “*La Dryade*,” of “*Le Bain*,” of “*La Somnambule*,” and some other pieces which belong to this first period of the life of the poet. “*Moïse*” flows from another source of inspirations. Despite its biblical title, “*Moses*” is an entirely modern psychological study, full of daring and depth. The nothingness of power, the painful isolation of genius, walking sad and solitary in his glory, which can neither love nor be loved, and which would “sleep the sleep of the earth,” — such is the idea that M. de Vigny has developed in beautiful verses. In this pious and precocious instinct of the secret sorrows of genius struggling with itself, awaiting the time when it shall appear to the poet struggling with the external world, we may already see the dawn of “*Stello*.” “*La Fille de Jephté*,” the grand and magnificent scene of “*Le Deluge*,” “*La Femme Adultère*,” glitter with that profusion of images peculiar to the biblical genius. The opening of the last piece reminds me of the beautiful verses of the “*Moïse*” of M. de Chateaubriand. The similarity of ideas and form is so much the more striking from its being purely fortuitous, for the “*Moïse*,” composed, I believe, at this time (1819), did not appear until much later. “*Dolorida*” is the most beautiful of all the little dramas of two hundred verses, so much loved by M. de Vigny, and which he has reproduced in “*M. de Soubise la Neige*,” “*Le Cor*,” and some other pieces. *Dolorida*, meditated at the foot of the Pyrenees, is a jealous Spaniard. Her husband deceives her ; he is at the feet of another. She waits for him ; he returns to implore her pardon before dying, for he feels

himself consumed by an unknown flame that circulates through his veins. She listens to him patiently, and he —

“ Oh, parle ! mon cœur fuit, quitte ce dur langage.
 Qu'un regard — Mais quel est ce blanchâtre breuvage,
 Que tu bois à longs traits et d'un air insensé ?
 — Le reste du poison qu'hier je t'ai versé.”

With this matter others would have composed a thick book. M. de Vigny has painted a delicious miniature, somewhat incomplete perhaps, for the transitions are abrupt, but still full of life and action, pure, harmonious, irreproachable as to form, with the exception of two phrases which appear to me somewhat far-fetched, — one implying *chemise* and the other *pendule*.

I now come to “Eloa,” — M. de Vigny's poetical *chef-d'œuvre*, which dates from the same year, 1823, and which was composed in the Vosges. “Eloa” has often been compared with the “Messiah” of Klopstock. I could never myself understand what connection there could be between an immense poem, brilliant in parts, but unequal, devoid of unity and *ensemble*, — sometimes spun out in incomprehensible pathos and lost in endless prolixities, — like that of Klopstock, and a poem of which it is not the least merit that it forms a whole, admirably finished in its minuteness, modelled with exquisite art from the first verse to the last, uniformly clear and harmonious in form, uniformly logical in the deduction of its ideas, and so happily compounded of grace, splendor, warmth, and passion. Füssly said, and not without reason, of the “Messiah” that the first ten cantos are the song of a swan, and the last ten the croaking of a raven. From beginning to end “Eloa” is the song of a swan. The grand rock upon which poetry that is principally founded upon intuitive speculation strikes is obscurity, — a rock which the great Milton himself has not

steered clear of, and which appears more especially in the descriptive portion of such poems. It is, in fact, difficult to paint with perspicuity what is only seen with the eyes of the mind. All ecstatic visions, beginning with the Apocalypse, — the sublime of that class of composition, — present an eternal confusion, resulting from the mixture of terrestrial reality and seraphic ideality. Man is a fallen angel whose “thoughts are turned back to heaven,” says a poet. True, but they are turned only vaguely, as men turn towards their early childhood; and when he speaks of it, and more especially when he describes it in writing, his language is often confused, illogical, incoherent, *velut ægri somnia*. M. de Vigny, having to speak of heaven, has availed himself greatly of earth, and he has done well. I know no one who has a right to determine in what consists the local coloring in the description of paradise. M. de Vigny has very lightly passed over the description of the abode of God and the angels, and here again he has done well. On the other hand, he has dwelt on the dramatic portion of his work. In being ideal, he has not entirely ceased to be human. His Eloa is a woman, though a deified woman. By this means M. de Vigny has succeeded in composing a religious poem which embraces, with beauties of the highest order, all the interest of a simple and touching romance. I would fain quote some passages of it for those who by chance may not have read it, but it would be useless to quote less than all. I shall content myself with analyzing the leading idea of the poem, which in the most eminent degree presents that character of delicacy and spiritual fervor peculiar to M. de Vigny.

Lazarus is just dead. Jesus is affected at the sight of the corpse. He is about to restore to life, and drops a tear. This divine tear is caught up by the seraphim. They en-

close it in a diamond urn and carry it to the foot of the Eternal, who fecundates it with a glance.

“ On vit alors, du sein de l'urne éblouissante,
S'élever une forme et blanche et grandissante.”

This is Eloa. The virgin is so beautiful that all the inhabitants of heaven press round to admire her. Born from a tear of pity, Eloa will live only to console and bless. She will be the guardian angel of angels. On a certain day her companions relate to her the history of Lucifer, — the rebel banished from heaven and hurled to the lowest gulf of the abyss, where he is alone, where he groans, and where no one loves him.

“ Et l'on crut qu'Eloa le maudirait ; mais non,
L'Effroi n'altéra point son paisible visage.”

A tear only glittered on her eyelid. This was a tear of pity, and already almost a tear of love. Pensive and sad at the thought that there existed a sorrow which she could not control, the virgin-archangel opened her golden wings, flew apart towards unknown spheres, and there hovering thoughtfully over the abyss, saw at a distance a pale and beautiful youth lying voluptuously on a bed of vapor. A sweet, sad voice reached her, —

“ D'où viens-tu, belle archange ? où vas-tu ? ” etc.

Nothing can equal the grace with which the poet has described this scene of seduction. The insinuating deceit of Lucifer ; the chaste alarm of the virgin, who at first flees away, like a surprised bather, mounts recoiling in her starry path, and closes her golden eyelids to avoid the impure glance that fascinates her ; the voice of the tempter pursues her, more and more affecting, suppliant, broken by sobs ; pity struggling in the heart of Eloa with modesty

and fear; the feigned remorse and ardent prayer of the one, the hesitation and anguish of the other, moved by that feigned sorrow, and who would fain console its despair, yet trembles in face of the danger her timid innocence foresees, descends, reascends, hovers at a distance, blushes, hesitates, and weeps, — all these delicate shades are admirably touched. Similitudes and images abound; the whole poem seems a shower of diamonds. At last, Modesty is conquered by Pity.

“ — Descends jusqu'à moi, car je ne puis monter,”

cries the perfidious voice.

“ Je l'aime et je descends; mais que diront les cieux ?

murmurs Eloa, falling into the arms of the seducer; and then the voice rises triumphant, cruel, infernal, —

“ J'enlève mon esclave et je tiens ma victime.

— Tu paraissais si bon ! oh ! qu'ai-je fait ? — Un crime,”

answers the pitiless voice.

“ Seras-tu plus heureux du moins; es-tu content ?

— Plus triste que jamais. — Qui donc es-tu ? — Satan.”

The last verse but one is sublime. Those simple words of Eloa, almost consoling herself in her own destruction with the hope that she may mitigate the suffering of another, is a perfect personification of woman in that which in her is most ethereal, most divine, — self-denial and devotion. I have never read this verse without subsiding into reverie. It seems to me that he who created it must have been something more than poet, however great a poet. It is one of those lines which at once fix themselves on the memory, but which nothing but the memory can supply us with.

A critic, as elegant in his language as he is sound in his judgment, whom it is dangerous to read when one desires as a writer to remain at all one's self, and whom I have perhaps read too attentively for the present notice to be altogether my own in its ground-work, — M. Sainte-Beuve, — in speaking of the curious process of crystallization to which M. de Vigny subjects his thought, points out the terrestrial features of the admirable poem of "Eloa." I have myself observed that this faculty of idealizing the real without destroying the reality is the finest characteristic of M. de Vigny's poetry. In his verses, as in his romances, he is at times extremely minute, perhaps in a degree affected, but always elevated and always intelligible. In description, more especially, he is admirable for fertility, perspicuity, and truth. Read "Eloa," "Stello," or "Laurette." In well-nigh every page you will meet with a little picture, full of grace in the disposition of the figures and of charm in the contours. If I were a painter like Scheffer, I would learn the writings of M. de Vigny by heart, and so provide myself with an ample store of charming subjects for years and years to come.

As a poet, we conceive that the author of "Eloa" stands in the very first rank among us. How is it, then, that under this head, the common run of people place him rather in the second rank? For there is no denying that his poems are far from enjoying equal popularity with those of Victor Hugo or Lamartine. Perhaps, indeed, it was this comparative want of success in the outset that chiefly served to direct to prose an intellectual organization eminently rhythmical, if I may so express myself. The public indifference with respect to the poems of M. de Vigny arises from several causes, which it is needless here to develop, and of which I will refer only to the principal.

In 1824, the period when most of M. de Vigny's poems were published, the spiritualist and morbidly pensive tendency had very decidedly manifested itself. Byron in England, and then Lamartine, had created and encouraged the movement; but this tendency was altogether full of individuality. Poetry was converted into a personal history, — men describing themselves either directly, as did the author of the "Meditations," or indirectly, like the author of "Childe Harold." And it was just at the moment, when the public had taken a great fancy to this analytical lyrics, this poetical psychology, that M. de Vigny offered to it verses whose strange and novel form partook of no other poet's style, except perhaps — and that only here and there — of Chénier's; and the groundwork of which, though it was allied to the epoch in its idealism, was visibly removed from it by a very decided impress of generalization, by a turn of thought, *human, not individual*. The *poemes antiques, bibliques, and modernes* of the young officer were accordingly little appreciated out of a few select circles in Paris, which he frequented very assiduously while in the household troops, and which he visited from time to time only when he had passed into the line. Even now, whether it be that the prose-writer has made the world forget the poet, or whether it arises from the general indifference to poetry altogether, the first coolness of the public with reference to M. de Vigny's verses still subsists; and that is precisely the reason why I have dwelt the more upon them. For I repeat that of all our age has produced fine in poetry, I know nothing finer than "Eloa."

"Cinq-Mars," commenced at the foot of the Pyrenees, continued from garrison to garrison, completed by means of frequent journeys to Paris and long studies at the Bibliothèque Royale, was published in 1826. Its success

was as great as it was legitimate. Before 1829, the work had already gone through four editions. There is no occasion to analyze a book which all have judged for themselves. There is no person of any reading who has not present in his memory the charming creation of Marie de Gonzaga, the touching episode of Urbain Grandier, the tall and noble figure of De Thou, the slight but genuine sketch of Anne of Austria, the portrait, somewhat exaggerated, but really fine, of Cinq-Mars, the mournful and feeble visage of Louis XIII. The delineation of Richelieu, I must confess, I don't so much like, because I think it scarcely just. M. de Vigny seems to have regarded the cardinal-generalissimo too much with the eyes of Bassompierre.

In 1828, M. de Vigny translated Shakspeare's "Othello," which was performed at the Théâtre Français, on the 25th of October, 1829, with no great success. The "Maréchal d'Ancre," played in 1830, also met with limited honors. In 1832, M. de Vigny published "Stello," an episode of which — "Chatterton" — was prepared for the stage, and produced at the Théâtre Français on the 11th of February, 1835. M. de Vigny has since published "Servitude et Grandeur Militaires," — three charming tales, — and "Le Sauvage," "La Mort du Loup," and "La Flute."

M. de Vigny was elected a member of the academy in 1846.¹

¹ He died at Paris, Sept. 17, 1863.



THOUGHTS ON TRUTH IN ART.

THE study of social progress is to-day not less needed in literature than is the analysis of the human heart. We live in an age of universal investigation, and of exploration of the sources of all movements. France, above all, loves at the same time history and the drama, because the one explores the vast destinies of humanity, the other the individual lot of man. These embrace the whole of life. But it is the province of religion, of philosophy, of pure poetry only, to go beyond life, beyond time, into eternity.

Of late years (and it is perhaps a result of our political changes), art has borrowed from history more than ever. All of us have our eyes fixed on our chronicles, as though, having reached manhood while going on towards greater things, we had stopped a moment to cast up the account of our youth and its errors. We have had to double interest by adding to it recollection.

As France has carried farther than other nations this love of facts, and as I had chosen a recent and well-remembered epoch, I thought that I ought not to imitate the foreigners who in their pictures barely show in the horizon

the men who dominate their history. I placed ours in the foreground of the scene; I made them the leading actors in this tragedy, in which I endeavored to represent the three kinds of ambition by which we are influenced, and with them the beauty of self-sacrifice to a noble ideal. A treatise on the fall of the feudal system, on the position, at home and abroad, of France in the seventeenth century, on foreign alliances, on the justice of parliaments or of secret commissions, and on accusations of sorcery, would not perhaps have been read. The romance was read.

I do not mean to defend this last form of historical composition, being convinced that the real greatness of a work lies in the substance of the author's ideas and sentiments, and not in the literary form in which they are dressed. The choice of a certain epoch will necessitate a certain treatment, — to another epoch it would be unsuitable; these are mere secrets of the workshop of thought which there is no need of disclosing. What is the use of theorizing as to wherein lies the charm that moves us? We hear the tones of the harp, but its graceful form conceals from us its springs of iron. Nevertheless, since I have been convinced that this book has in it some vitality, I cannot help throwing out these reflections on the liberty which the imagination should employ in weaving into its woof all the leading figures of an age, and in order to give more consistency to their acts, in making the reality of fact give way to the idea which each of them should represent in the eyes of posterity; in short, on the difference which I find between the Truth of art and the True in fact.

Just as we descend into our consciences to judge of actions which our minds cannot weigh, can we not also search in ourselves for the feeling which gives birth to forms of thought, always vague and cloudy? We shall

find in our troubled heart, where discord reigns, two needs which seem to be at variance, but which mingle, as I think, in a common source; the one is love of the true, the other love of the fabulous.

On the day when man told the story of his life to man, history was born. But of what use is the memory of facts, if not to serve as an example of good or of evil? But the examples which the slow train of events presents to us are scattered and incomplete. They lack always a tangible and visible coherence leading straight on to a moral conclusion. The acts of the human race on the world's stage have doubtless a coherent unity, but the meaning of this vast tragedy which it enacts there will be visible only to the eye of God, until the end, which will reveal it perhaps to the last man. All systems of philosophy have sought in vain to explain it, ceaselessly rolling their rock, which, never reaching the top, falls back upon them, — each raising its frail structure on the ruins of the others, only to see it fall in its turn.

I believe, then, that man, after having satisfied his first longing for facts, wanted something fuller, some grouping, some adaptation to his capacity and his experience, of the links of this vast chain of events which his sight could not take in; for thus he hoped to find in the historic recital examples which might support the moral truths of which he was conscious. Few single careers could satisfy this longing, being only incomplete parts of the elusive whole of the history of the world; one was a quarter, as it were, the other a half of the proof; imagination did the rest and completed them. From this, without doubt, sprang the fable. Man created it true, because it was not given him to see more than himself and nature, which surrounds him: but he created it true with a truth all its own.

This Truth, so beautiful, so intellectual, which I feel, which I see, and long to define, the name of which I here venture to distinguish from that of the True, that I may the better make myself understood, is the soul of all the arts. It is the selection of the characteristic token in all the beauties and the grandeurs of the visible True; but it is not the thing itself, it is something better: it is an ideal combination of its principal forms, a luminous tint made up of its brightest colors, an intoxicating balm of its purest perfumes, a delicious elixir of its best juices, a perfect harmony of its sweetest sounds, — in short, it is a concentration of all its good qualities. For this Truth, and nothing else, should strive those works of art which are a moral representation of life, — dramatic works. To attain it, the first step is undoubtedly to learn all that is true in fact of every period, to become deeply imbued with its general character and with its details; this involves only a cheap tribute of attention, of patience, and of memory. But then one must fix upon some chosen centre, and group everything around it; this is the work of imagination, and of that sublime common-sense which is genius itself.

Of what use were the arts if they were only the reproduction and the imitation of life? Good heavens! we see only too clearly about us the sad and disenchanting reality, — the insupportable lukewarmness of feeble characters, of shallow virtues and vices, of irresolute loves, of tempered hates, of wavering friendships, of unsettled beliefs, of constancy which has its height and its depth, of opinions which evaporate. Let us dream that once upon a time have lived men stronger and greater, who were more determined for good or for evil; that does us good. If the paleness of your True is to follow us into art, we shall close at once the theatre and the book, to avoid meeting it a second time.

What is wanted of works which revive the ghosts of human beings is, I repeat, the philosophical spectacle of man deeply wrought upon by the passions of his character and of his epoch ; it is, in short, the artistic Truth of that man and that epoch, but both raised to a higher and ideal power which concentrates all their forces. You recognize this Truth in works of the imagination just as you cry out at the resemblance of a portrait of which you have never seen the original ; for true talent paints life rather than the living.

To banish finally the scruples on this point of the consciences of some persons, timorous in literary matters, whom I have seen affected with a personal sorrow on viewing the rashness with which the imagination sports with the most weighty characters of history, I will hazard the assertion that, not throughout this work, I dare not say that, but in many of these pages, and those perhaps not of the least merit, history is a romance of which the people is the author. The human mind, I believe, cares for the True only in the general character of an epoch. What it values most of all is the sum-total of events and the advance of civilization, which carries individuals along with it ; but, indifferent to details, it cares less to have them real than noble, or rather, grand and complete.

Examine closely the origin of certain deeds, of certain heroic expressions, which are born one knows not how ; you will see them leap out ready-made from hearsay and the murmurs of the crowd, without having in themselves more than a shadow of truth, and, nevertheless, they will remain historical forever. As if by way of pleasantry, and to put a joke upon posterity, the public voice invents sublime utterances to lend, during their lives and under their very eyes, to men who, confused, disclaim them as best

they may, as not deserving so much glory¹ and as not being able to support so high renown. In vain; their disclaimers are not received. Let them cry out, let them write, let them print, let them sign, — they are not listened to. Their utterances are inscribed in bronze; the poor fellows remain historical and sublime in spite of themselves. And I do not find that all this is done in the ages of barbarism alone; it is still going on, and it moulds the history of yesterday to the taste of public opinion, — a Muse tyrannical and capricious, which preserves the general purport and scorns detail. Which of you has not been present at its transformation? Do you not see with your own eyes the chrysalis fact assume by degrees the wings of fiction? Half formed by the necessities of the time, a fact is hidden in the ground, obscure and incomplete, rough, sometimes badly constructed, like a block of marble not yet rough-hewn. The first who unearth it, and take it in hand, would wish it differently shaped, and pass it, already a little rounded, into other hands; others polish it as they pass it along; in a short time it is exhibited transformed into an immortal statue. We disclaim it; witnesses who have seen and heard pile refutations upon explanations; the

¹ In our time has not a Russian general denied the fire of Moscow, which we have made heroic, and which will remain so? Has not a French general denied the utterance on the field of Waterloo which will immortalize it? And if I were not withheld by my respect for a sacred event, I might recall that a priest has felt it to be his duty to disavow in public a sublime speech which will remain the noblest that has ever been pronounced on a scaffold: "Son of Saint Louis, rise to heaven!" When I learned not long ago its real author, I was overcome by the destruction of my illusion, but before long I was consoled by a thought that does honor to humanity in my eyes. I feel that France has consecrated this speech, because she felt the need of re-establishing herself in her own eyes, of blinding herself to her awful error, and of believing that then and there an honest man was found who dared to speak aloud.

learned investigate, pore over books, and write. No one listens to them any more than to the humble heroes who disown it; the torrent rolls on and bears with it the whole thing under the form which it has pleased it to give to these individual actions. What was needed for all this work? A nothing, a word; sometimes the caprice of a journalist out of work. And are we the losers by it? No. The adopted fact is always better composed than the real one, and it is even adopted only because it is better. The human race feels a need that its destinies should afford it a series of lessons; more careless than we think of the reality of facts, it strives to perfect the event in order to give it a great moral significance, feeling sure that the succession of scenes which it plays upon earth is not a comedy, and that since it advances, it marches towards an end, of which the explanation must be sought beyond what is visible.

For my part, I acknowledge my gratitude to the voice of the people for this achievement; for often in the finest life are found strange blemishes and inconsistencies which pain me when I see them. If a man seems to me a perfect model of a grand and noble character, and if some one comes and tells me of a mean trait which disfigures him, I am saddened by it, even though I do not know him, as by a misfortune which affects me in person; and I could almost wish that he had died before the change in his character.

Thus, when the Muse (and I give that name to art as a whole, to everything which belongs to the domain of imagination, almost in the same way as the ancients gave the name of Music to all education), when the Muse has related, in her impassioned manner, the adventures of a character whom I know to have lived; and when she reshapes his experiences into conformity with the strongest

idea of vice or virtue which can be conceived of him, — filling the gaps, veiling the incongruities of his life, and giving him that perfect unity of conduct which we like to see represented even in evil, — if in addition to this, she preserves the only thing essential to the instruction of the world, the spirit of the epoch, I know no reason why we should be more exacting with her than with this voice of the people which every day makes every fact undergo so great changes.

The ancients carried this liberty even into history; they wanted to see in it only the general march, and broad movements of peoples and nations; and on these great movements, brought to view in courses very distinct and very clear, they placed a few colossal figures, — symbols of noble character and of lofty purpose.

One might almost reckon mathematically that, having undergone the double composition of public opinion and of the author, their history reaches us at third hand and separated by two stages from the truth of fact.

It is because in their eyes history too was a work of art; and in consequence of not having realized that such is its real nature, the whole Christian world still lacks an historical monument like those which dominate antiquity and consecrate the memory of its destinies, — as its pyramids, its obelisks, its pylones, and its porticos still dominate the earth which was known to them, and thereby commemorate the grandeur of antiquity.

If, then, we find everywhere evidence of this inclination to desert the positive, to bring the ideal even into historic annals, I believe that with greater reason we should be completely indifferent to historical reality in judging the dramatic works, whether poems, romances, or tragedies, which borrow from history celebrated characters. Art

ought never to be considered except in its relations with its ideal beauty. Let it be said that what is *true in fact* is secondary merely; it is only an illusion the more with which it adorns itself, — one of our prejudices which it respects. It can do without it, for the Truth by which it must live is the truth of observation of human nature, and not authenticity of fact. The names of the characters have nothing to do with the matter. The idea is everything; the proper name is only the example and the proof of the idea.

So much the better for the memory of those who are chosen to represent philosophical or moral ideas; but, once again, that is not the question. The imagination can produce just as fine things without them; it is a power wholly creative; the imaginary beings which it animates are endowed with life as truly as the real beings which it brings to life again. We believe in Othello as we do in Richard III., whose tomb is in Westminster; in Lovelace and in Clarissa as in Paul and in Virginia, whose tombs are in the Isle of France. It is with the same eye that we must watch the performance of its characters, and demand of the Muse only her artistic Truth, more lofty than the True, — whether collecting the traits of a character dispersed among a thousand entire individuals, she composes from them a type whose name alone is imaginary; or whether she goes to their tomb to seek and to touch with her galvanic current the dead whose great deeds are known, forces them to arise again, and drags them dazzled to the light of day, where in the circle which this fairy has traced, they retake unwillingly their passions of other days, and begin again in the sight of their descendants the sad drama of life.





Cinq-Mars



C I N Q - M A R S .

CHAPTER I.

THE ADIEU.

Fare thee well ! and if forever,
Still, forever, fare thee well !

LORD BYRON.

IF in the months of summer you have traversed fair Touraine, you have no doubt followed with enchantment the tranquil Loire ; you have regretted the impossibility of determining upon which of its banks you would choose to dwell in the society of a beloved being. Upon the right bank, valleys peopled with charming white houses surrounded with woods, hills yellow with vines or white with the blossoms of the cherry-tree, old walls covered with budding honeysuckles, gardens of roses from which

a pointed roof suddenly rises, — everything reminds you either of the fertility of the land or of the antiquity of its monuments; and everything interests you in the labors of its industrious inhabitants. Nothing has proved useless to them; it seems as if in their love for so beautiful a country, — the only province of France never occupied by the foreigner, — they have desired not to lose the least portion of its soil, the smallest grain of its sand. You fancy that this old ruined tower is inhabited only by the hideous birds of night? No; at the sound of your horse's hoofs, the smiling face of a young girl issues from the ivy, whitened with the dust from the high-road. If you climb a hillside bristling with vines, a light column of smoke makes you aware that there is a chimney at your feet; for the very rock is inhabited, and families of vine-dressers breathe in its profound caverns, sheltered at night by the nutritious earth which they laboriously cultivate during the day. The good people of Touraine are as simple as their life, gentle as the air which they respire, and strong as the powerful earth which they dig. Their countenances, like their characters, have something of the openness of the true people of Saint Louis; their chestnut locks are still long and rounded about their ears, as in the stone statues of our old kings; their language is the purest French, without slowness, rapidity, or accent, — the cradle of the language is there, hard by the cradle of the monarchy.

But the left bank of the Loire is of a more serious aspect; here in the distance you see Chambord, which, with its blue domes and little cupolas, seems like some

great Eastern city; there is Chanteloup, lifting its graceful pagoda in the air. After these, however, a more simple building attracts the eyes of the traveller by its magnificent position and imposing size; it is the château of Chaumont. Constructed upon the highest hill of the shore, it frames its broad summit with its lofty walls and its enormous towers; high steeples of slate increase their loftiness, and confer upon the entire building that air of a convent, that religious form of all our old châteaux, which casts a character of gravity over the landscape of most of our provinces. Black and tufted trees surround this ancient mansion, and resemble from afar the plumes which encircled the hat of King Henri. At the foot of the hill, and connected with the château by a narrow path winding through the rock, lies a pretty village, whose white houses seem to have sprung from the golden sand; a chapel stands halfway up the hill; the lords descended and the villagers ascended to its altar, — the realm of equality, situated like a neutral city between misery and grandeur, which have been too often opposed to one another in battle array.

It was here that one morning in the month of June, 1639, the bell of the château having, as usual, rung at midday, the dinner hour of the family, there were passing, in this ancient dwelling, occurrences of an unusual kind. The numerous domestics observed that in repeating the morning prayer to the assembled house, the *Maréchale d'Effiat* had spoken with a broken voice and with tears in her eyes, and that she had appeared in a deeper mourning than was customary. The people of the household and the Italians of the *Duchesse de Man-*

tua, who had at that time retired for a while to Chaumont, saw with surprise that preparations were suddenly making for departure. The old domestic of the Maréchal d'Effiat, himself dead six months, had taken again to his travelling-boots, which he had sworn before to abandon forever. This brave fellow, named Grandchamp, had followed the chief of the family everywhere in the wars, and in his financial labors; he had been his equerry in the first, and his secretary in the last. He had recently returned from Germany, to acquaint the mother and the children with the death of the maréchal, whose last sighs he had heard at Lutzenstein. He was one of those faithful servants, the like of whom are become too rare in France; who suffer with the misfortunes of the family, and rejoice with their joys; who advocate the formation of marriages, that they may have to educate young masters; who scold the children and often the fathers; who expose themselves to death for them; who serve them without wages in revolutions; who labor for their sustenance; and who in prosperous times follow them everywhere, and exclaim at their return, "Behold our vines!" He had a severe and remarkable face, a copper complexion, silvery-gray hair, of which, however, some few threads, black as his thick eyebrows, made him appear harsh at first, but a gentle countenance softened this first impression. At present, the sound of his voice was loud. He busied himself much that day in hastening the dinner, and ordered about all the people of the house, who were in mourning like himself.

"Come," said he, "make haste to serve the dinner, while Germain, Louis, and Étienne go and saddle their

horses; M. Henri and I must be far away hence by eight o'clock this evening. And you, gentlemen, Italians, have you admonished your young princess? I wager that she is gone to read with her ladies at the other end of the park, or upon the banks of the lake. She always comes in after the first course, and makes every one get up from the table."

"Ah, my good Grandchamp," said in a low voice a young chambermaid who was passing, and paused, "do not speak of the duchesse; she is very sorrowful, and I believe that she will remain in her apartment. Santa Maria! what a shame to travel to-day! depart on a Friday, the 13th of the month, and the day of Saint Gervais and Saint Protais,—the day of two martyrs! I have been telling my beads all the morning for M. de Cinq-Mars; verily, I could not help thinking of these things. And my mistress thinks of them too, great lady as she is; so that you need not laugh!"

With these words the young Italian girl glided like a bird across the large dining-room, and vanished into a corridor, startled at seeing the double folds of the great doors of the saloon opened.

Grandchamp had scarcely attended to what she had said, and seemed to have been only occupied with the preparations for dinner; he fulfilled the important duties of major-domo, and cast severe looks at the domestics, to see if they were all at their posts, placing himself behind the chair of the eldest son of the house, when all the inhabitants of the mansion successively entered the saloon. Eleven persons, men and women, seated themselves at table. The maréchale came in last, giving

her arm to a fine old man, magnificently attired, whom she placed upon her left hand. She seated herself in a great gilt armchair at the centre of the table, which was oblong in form. Another seat, rather more ornamented, was at her right, but it remained empty. The young Marquis d'Effiat, seated in front of his mother, was to assist her in doing the honors of the table. He was not more than twenty years old, and his countenance was insignificant; much gravity and distinguished manners proclaimed, however, a sociable nature, but nothing more. His young sister of fourteen, two gentlemen of the province, three young Italian noblemen of the suite of Marie de Gonzaga (Duchesse de Mantua), a lady-in-waiting, the governess of the young daughter of the maréchale, and an abbé of the neighborhood, old and very deaf, composed the assembly. A seat at the right of the eldest son still remained vacant.

The maréchale, before seating herself, made the sign of the cross, and repeated the *Bénédicté* aloud; every one responded by making the complete sign, or upon the breast alone. This custom was preserved in many families in France up to the revolution of 1789; some still retain it, but more in the provinces than in Paris, and not without some embarrassment and some preliminary words upon the fine weather, accompanied by a smile of excuse when a stranger is present,—for it is too true that goodness has also its blush.

The maréchale was a woman of imposing figure, and her large blue eyes were of a remarkable beauty. She did not appear to have yet attained her forty-fifth year; but oppressed with sorrow, she walked slowly and spoke

with difficulty, closing her eyes, and suffering her head to fall for a moment upon her breast, after she had been obliged to raise her voice. At such times her hand pressed to her bosom showed that she experienced acute pain. She therefore saw with satisfaction that the personage who was seated at her left, having at the beginning engrossed the conversation, without having been requested to converse by any one, persisted with an imperturbable coolness in engrossing it to the end of the repast. This was the old *Maréchal de Bassompierre*; he had preserved beneath his white hairs an air of youth and vivacity curious to see. His noble and polished manners had somewhat of a gallantry antiquated like his costume,—for he wore a ruff in the fashion of *Henri IV.*, and slashed sleeves in that of the former reign, an absurdity which was unpardonable in the eyes of the beaux of the court. This would not have appeared more singular than anything else at present; but it is admitted that in every age we laugh at the costume of our fathers, and, save the Eastern people, I know of none who are not affected with this evil.

One of the Italian gentlemen had scarcely finished asking the *maréchal* what he thought of the way in which the cardinal treated the daughter of the *Duc de Mantua*, than he exclaimed in his familiar language, —

“Zounds, sir! what are you talking about? what can I comprehend of this new system under which France is living? We old companions in arms of the late king can ill understand the language which is spoken by the new court, and that in its turn does not comprehend ours. But what do I say? We speak no language in this

mournful country, for all the world is silent before the cardinal ; this haughty little vassal looks upon us as old family portraits, which every now and then he abridges by the head, but happily the motto always remains. Is it not so, my dear Puy-Laurens ?”

This guest was about the same age as the *maréchal*, but being more grave and cautious than he, answered in vague and few words, and made a sign to his contemporary in order to induce him to observe the unpleasant emotions which he had caused to the mistress of the house by reminding her of the recent death of her husband and speaking thus of the minister, his friend. But it was in vain, for Bassompierre, contented with the sign of semi-approbation, emptied at one draught a great goblet of wine, — a remedy which he lauds in his memoirs as infallible against the plague and against reserve ; and leaning back to receive another from his esquire, he established himself more firmly than ever upon his chair, and in his favorite ideas.

“ Yes, we are in the way here ; I said so the other day to my dear Duc de Guise, whom they have ruined. They number the minutes that we have to live, and shake the sand to hasten its descent. When M. le Cardinal-Duc beholds in a corner three or four of our tall figures, who never quitted the side of the late king, he feels that he is unable to stir those statues of iron, and that to do it would require the hand of a great man ; he passes quickly by, and dares not meddle with us, who fear him not. He believes that we are always conspiring ; and at this very moment they say that there is talk of putting me in the Bastille.”

“Eh! M. le Maréchal, why do you delay your departure?” said the Italian. “I know nowhere, save Flanders, where you can find shelter.”

“Ah, sir! you do not know me. So far from flying, I sought out the king before his departure, and I told him that I did so in order to save people the trouble of looking for me; and that if I knew when he wished to send me, I would go myself without being taken. He was as good as I expected that he would be, and said to me, ‘How, my old friend, could you have thought that I desired to send you there? You know well that I love you.’”

“Ah, my dear maréchal, let me compliment you,” said Madame d’Effiat, in a soft voice. “I recognize the benevolence of the king in these words; he remembers the affection which the king, his father, had towards you. It appears to me that he ever accorded to you all that you desired for your friends,” added she, with animation, in order to put him into the track of praise, and to draw him from the discontent which he had so loudly declared.

“Assuredly, Madame,” answered he; “no one is more willing to recognize his virtues than François de Bassompierre. I will be faithful to him to 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 ever fail in their duties towards the King of France. Although the Besteins are foreigners and Lorrains, a shake of the hand from Henri IV. gained us forever. My greatest grief has been to see my brother die in the service of Spain; and I have just written to my

nephew to say that I will disinherit him if he passes over to the emperor, as report speaks of his doing."

One of the gentlemen who had as yet said nothing, and who was remarkable for the profusion of knots, ribbons, and tags which covered his dress, and for the black *cord* of the order of Saint Michael which adorned his neck, bowed, observing that it was thus that all faithful subjects ought to speak.

"I' faith, M. de Launay, you deceive yourself very much," said the maréchal, to whom the recollection of his ancestors now occurred; "persons of our blood are subjects in heart, for God has caused us to be born as much lords of our lands as the king is of his. When I came into France, it was that I might take my ease, accompanied by my gentlemen and pages. I perceive, however, that the farther we go, the more we lose sight of this idea, especially at the court. But here comes a young man who arrives very opportunely to hear me."

The door indeed opened, and there entered a young man of fine form. He was pale; his hair was brown, his eyes black, his expression sorrowful and careless. It was Henri d'Effiat, Marquis de Cinq-Mars (a name taken from an estate of his family). His dress and his short cloak were black; a collar of lace fell from his neck half-way down his breast; his stout, small, and very wide boots and his spurs made so much noise upon the flags of the saloon that his approach was heard at a distance. He walked right up to the maréchale, bowing low, and kissing her hand.

"Well, Henri," said she, "are your horses ready? At what hour do you depart?"

“Immediately after dinner, Madame, if you will allow me” said he to his mother, with the ceremonious respect of the times; and passing behind her, he saluted M. de Bassompierre before seating himself upon the left hand of his eldest brother.

“Well, then,” said the *maréchal*, continuing to eat with an excellent appetite, “you are about to depart, my son; you are going to the court,—a slippery place nowadays. I am sorry for your sake that it is not now what it used to be. In former times, the court was simply the drawing-room of the king, in which he received his natural friends; nobles of great family, his peers, who visited him to show their devotion and their friendship, lost their money with him, and accompanied him in his pleasure parties, but never received anything of him, except permission to bring their vassals with themselves to break their heads in his service. The honors which a man of quality received did not enrich him, for he paid for them out of his purse. I sold an estate for every grade I ascended; the title of colonel-general of the Swiss cost me four hundred thousand crowns, and at the baptism of the present king I had to buy a costume which cost me a hundred thousand francs.”

“Ah!” said the mistress of the house, smiling, “you must acknowledge for once that you were not obliged to do that. We have all heard of your splendid dress of pearls; but I should be much vexed if it were still the custom to wear such.”

“Oh, Madame la Marquise, do not fear, those times of magnificence will never return. We committed follies, no doubt, but they proved our independence; it is clear

that it would then have been hard to seduce from their allegiance to the king servants who were attached to him by love alone, and whose coronets contained as many diamonds as his own locked-up crown. It is also manifest that ambition could not then attack all classes, since such expenses could only come from rich hands, and since gold comes only from mines. Those great houses which are being so furiously assailed were not ambitious, and frequently desiring no employment from the Government, maintained their places at court by their own weight, existed upon their own foundation, and might say, as one of them did say, 'The prince condescends not; I am Rohan.' It was the same with every noble family, to which its own nobility sufficed; the king himself expressed it in writing to one of my friends, 'Money is not common goods between gentlemen like you and me.'"

"But, M. le Maréchal," coldly and with extreme politeness interrupted M. de Launay, who perhaps intended to anger him, "this independence has produced many civil wars and revolts, as those of M. de Montmorency."

"Zounds, sir! I cannot consent to hear these things spoken," said the fiery maréchal, leaping up in his arm-chair. "Those revolts and wars, sir, had nothing to do with the fundamental laws of the State, and could no more have overturned the throne than a duel could have done so. Of all the great party-chiefs, there was not one who would not have laid his victory at the feet of the king, had he succeeded, knowing well that all the other lords who were as great as himself would have

abandoned the enemy of the legitimate sovereign. Arms were taken against a faction, and not against the sovereign authority ; and, this destroyed, all things went on again in their old course. But what have you done in crushing us ? You have crushed the arm of the throne, and have not put anything in its place. Yes, I no longer doubt but that the cardinal-duc will wholly accomplish his design ; the great nobility will leave and lose their lands, and ceasing to be great proprietors, they will cease to be a great power. The court is already no more than a palace where people beg ; by-and-by it will become an antechamber, when it will be only composed of those who constitute the suite of the king. Great names will begin by ennobling vile offices ; but by a terrible reaction, those offices will end by rendering great names vile. Estranged from their homes, the nobility will be dependent upon the employments which they shall have received ; and if the people, over whom they will no longer have any influence, choose to revolt —”

“ How dismal you are to-day, *Maréchal!*” interrupted the marquise ; “ I hope that neither I nor my children will ever see that time. I no longer perceive your cheerful character, now that you assume the politician ; I expected to hear you give advice to my son. *Henri*, what is the matter with you ? You seem very absent.”

Cinq-Mars, with eyes fixed upon the great bay-window of the dining-room, looked sorrowfully upon the magnificent landscape which stretched beyond. The sun was in all its splendor, and colored the sands of the *Loire*, the trees, and the lawns with gold and emerald.

The sky was azure, the waves of a transparent yellow, the isles of a brilliant green; behind their rounded forms rose the great sails of the merchant vessels like a fleet in ambuscade.

“O Nature, Nature!” mused he; “beautiful Nature, adieu! Soon will my heart have ceased to be of simplicity enough to feel you; soon you will no longer charm my eyes. This heart is already burned by a deep passion; and the mention of the interests of men casts into it hitherto unknown agitation. I must, however, enter this labyrinth; I may, haply, lose myself there, but for Marie —”

At this moment, aroused by the words of his mother, and fearing to exhibit a childish regret at leaving his beautiful country and his family, he said, —

“I am thinking, Madame, of the road which I shall take to Perpignan, and also of that which shall lead me back to you.”

“Do not forget to take that of Poitiers, and to go to Loudun to see your old tutor, our good Abbé Quillet; he will give you serviceable advice touching the court. He is on very good terms with the Duc de Bouillon; and besides, though he may not be very necessary to you, it is a mark of deference which you owe him.”

“Is it, then, to the siege of Perpignan that you are going?” asked the old *maréchal*, who began to think that he had been silent a long time. “Ah! it is well for you. Plague upon it! a siege! ’t is an excellent opening. I would have given much to have assisted the late king at a siege, upon my arrival in his court; it would have been better to have been disembowelled than

than at a tourney, as I was. But we were at peace; and I was compelled to go and pistol the Turks with the Rosworm of the Hungarians, in order that I might not afflict my family by my idleness. For the rest, may his Majesty receive you as amiably as his father received me! It is true that the king is brave and good; but they have unfortunately taught him that old Spanish etiquette which arrests all the impulses of the heart. He restrains himself and others by an immovable presence and look of ice; as for me, I confess that I am always waiting for the moment of thaw, but in vain. We were accustomed to other manners from the witty and simple-hearted Henri; and we had at least the liberty to tell him that we loved him."

Cinq-Mars, with eyes fixed upon those of Bassompierre as if to force himself to attend to his discourse, asked him what was the manner of the late king in talking.

"Lively and frank," said he. "Some time after my arrival in France, I played with him and with the Duchesse de Beaufort at Fontainebleau; for he wished, he said, to win my gold-pieces, my fine Portugal bits. He asked me why I came into this country. 'I' faith, Sire,' said I, frankly, 'I came with no intention of enlisting myself in your service, but only with a mind to pass some time at your court, and afterwards at that of Spain; but you have charmed me so much that instead of going farther, if you desire my service, I will devote myself to it till death.' Then he embraced me, and assured me that I could not find a better master, or one who would love me more. Alas! I have found it so.

And for my part, I sacrificed all to him, even my love; and I would have done more, had it been possible to do more than renounce Mademoiselle de Montmorency."

The good maréchal had tears in his eyes; but the young Marquis d'Effiat and the Italians, looking at each other, could not help smiling at thinking that at present the Princesse de Condé was very far from young and pretty. Cinq-Mars remarked this interchange of looks, and also smiled, but bitterly.

"Is it then true," said he to himself, "that the affections have the same destiny with the fashions, and that a few years can cast the same ridicule upon a costume and upon love? Happy is he who does not survive his youth and his illusions, and who carries his treasure with him to the grave!"

But again with effort breaking the melancholy course of his thoughts, and wishing that the good maréchal should read nothing unpleasant upon the countenance of his hosts, he said,—

"People spoke, then, with much freedom to King Henri? Perhaps, though, he had need to assume that tone at the beginning of his reign; but when he was master did he alter it?"

"Never; no, never, to his last day, did our great king cease to be the same. He did not blush at being a man, and spoke to men with vigor and sensibility. Ah! I fancy I see him now, embracing the Duc de Guise in his carriage, the very day of his death; he had hit off one of his lively pleantries to me, and the duc said to him, 'You are, to my taste, one of the most agreeable men in the world, and our destiny ordained us for

each other. For if you had been but an ordinary man, I should have taken you into my service at whatever price ; but since Heaven ordained that you should be born a great king, it has necessarily happened that I belong to you.' Oh, great man!" cried Bassompierre, with tears in his eyes, and perhaps a little excited by the frequent bumpers he had drunk, "you said well, 'When you have lost me you will learn my value.'"

During this sally, the different persons at the table had assumed various attitudes, according to their position in public affairs. One of the Italians pretended to chat and laugh in a subdued manner with the young daughter of the *maréchale* ; the other took care of the deaf old *abbé*, who, putting his hand behind his ear that he might hear, was the only one who seemed attentive. *Cinq-Mars* had sunk back into his melancholy abstraction, after having cast a glance at the *maréchal*, as one looks aside after having thrown a tennis-ball until its return ; his eldest brother did the honors of the table with the same calm. *Puy-Laurens* watched the mistress of the house with attention ; he was devoted to the *Duc d'Orléans*, and dreaded the cardinal. As for the *maréchale*, she had an anxious and afflicted air. Inconsiderate words had often recalled the death of her husband or the departure of her son ; and oftener still, she feared lest Bassompierre should compromise himself. And she had many times touched him, looking at the same time towards *M. de Launay*, whom she knew little of, and whom she had reason to believe devoted to the prime minister ; but to a man of his character, such warnings were useless. He appeared not to perceive

them ; and on the contrary, crushing that gentleman with his bold looks and the sound of his voice, he affected to turn himself towards and to direct all his conversation to him. As for the latter, he assumed an air of indifference and of assenting politeness, which he never abandoned until the moment when the folding-doors opened, and "Mademoiselle la Duchesse de Mantua" was announced.

The conversation which we have transcribed so lengthily passed, however, rapidly ; and the dinner was but half over when the arrival of Marie de Gonzaga caused everybody to rise. She was small, but very well made, and although her eyes and her hair were black, her complexion was as dazzling as the beauty of her skin. The maréchale arose to acknowledge her rank, and kissed her on the forehead, in recognition of her goodness and lovely age.

"We have waited long for you to-day, dear Marie," said she, placing her beside her ; "fortunately you remain with me to replace one of my children, who is about to depart."

The young duchesse blushed, dropped her head and her eyes, in order that no one might see their redness, and said in a timid voice, —

"Madame, that may well be, since you are to me in the place of a mother."

And a glance made Cinq-Mars, at the other end of the table, turn pale.

This arrival changed the conversation ; it ceased to be general, and each conversed in a low voice with the person next him. The maréchal alone continued to

utter a few sentences concerning the magnificence of the old court, his wars in Turkey, the tournaments, and the avarice of the new court; but to his great regret, no one took up his words, and the company were leaving the table, when the clock having struck two, five horses appeared in the courtyard. Four only were mounted by domestics, cloaked and armed; the other horse, black and very spirited, was held by old Grandchamp, — it was the steed of his master.

“Ah, ah!” exclaimed Bassompierre; “see, there, our battle-horses saddled and bridled. Come, young man, we must say, with our old Marot, —

“Adieu la cour, adieu les dames !
 Adieu les filles et les femmes !
 Adieu vous dy pour quelque temps ;
 Adieu vos plaisants passe-temps !
 Adieu le bal, adieu la dance ;
 Adieu mesure, adieu cadance,
 Tabourins, hautbois, violons,
 Puisqu’à la guerre nous allons !”

These old verses and the air of the *maréchal* made all the table laugh, save three persons.

“Heavens !” continued he, “it seems to me as if, like him, I were but seventeen years old; he will return to us all embroidered. Madame, we must leave a chair vacant for him.”

Here the *maréchale* grew suddenly pale, left the table suffused with tears, and every one rose with her; she could only take two steps, and sank into another chair. Her sons and her daughter and the young *duchesse* came anxiously around her, and made out the follow-

ing words, amid the sighs and tears which she strove to restrain : —

“ Pardon, my friends ! it is foolish of me — childish ; but I am weak at present, and am not mistress of myself. We were thirteen at table ; and you, my dear duchesse, were the cause of it. But it is very wrong of me to show so much weakness before him. Farewell, my child ; give me your forehead to kiss, and may God conduct you ! Be worthy of your name and of your father.”

Then, as Homer says, *smiling under tears*, she raised herself, pushed him from her, and said : —

“ Come, let us see you on horseback, fair sir.”

The silent traveller kissed the hand of his mother, and afterwards made a low bow to her ; he also bowed to the duchesse, without raising his eyes. Then, embracing his elder brother, pressing the hand of the maréchal, and kissing the forehead of his young sister almost simultaneously, he went forth, and was on horseback in an instant. Every one went to the windows which overlooked the court, except Madame d’Effiat, who was still seated and suffering.

“ He departs at full gallop. That is a good sign,” said the maréchal, laughing.

“ Oh, God !” cried the young princess, retiring from the bay-window.

“ What is the matter ?” said the mother.

“ Nothing, nothing !” said M. de Launay. “ Your son’s horse stumbled under the gateway ; but he soon pulled him up. See, he salutes us from the road.”

“ Another ominous presage !” said the marquise, upon retiring to her apartments.



A. Dawant inv.

Gaujean sc.

THE ADIEU



Every one imitated her by being silent or speaking low.

The day was mournful and the supper in the evening silent at the château of Chaumont.

At ten o'clock in the evening, the old *maréchal*, conducted by his valet, retired to the northern tower near the gateway, and opposite to the river. The heat was extreme; he opened the window, and enveloping himself in his great silk robe, placed a heavy candlestick upon the table, and desired to be left alone. His window looked out upon the plain, which the moon, in her first quarter, indistinctly lighted; the sky was charged with heavy clouds, and all things disposed the mind to melancholy. Although Bassompierre had nothing of the dreamer in his character, the turn which the conversation had taken at dinner came to his memory, and he began to reconsider the course of his life, the mournful changes which the new reign had wrought in it, a reign which seemed to have breathed upon him a wind of misfortune, — the death of a cherished sister; the irregularities of the heir of his name; the loss of his lands and of his favor at court; the recent end of his friend, the *Maréchal d'Effiat*, whose chambers he now occupied. All these thoughts drew from him an involuntary sigh, and he placed himself at the window to breathe.

At this moment he thought he heard the tramp of a troop of horse at the side of the wood; but the wind, which was rising, made him conclude that he had been mistaken, and the noise suddenly ceasing, he forgot it. He still watched for some time all the lights of the château, which became successively extinguished, after

having wound among the windows of the staircases and rambled about the courtyards and the stables; afterwards, falling back in his great tapestried armchair, his elbow resting on the table, he abandoned himself to his reflections. And after a while, drawing from his breast a medallion which hung concealed, suspended by a black ribbon, he said, —

“Come, my good old master, talk with me as you have so often done; come, great king, forget your court for the smile of a true friend; come, great man, consult me concerning ambitious Austria; come, inconstant chevalier, speak to me of the lightness of thy love, and of the fidelity of thine inconstancy; come, heroic soldier, complain to me again that I balk you in the combat. Ah, have I not done it in Paris? Why did I not receive thy wound? With thy blood the world has lost the benefits of thine interrupted reign —”

The tears of the *maréchal* obscured the glass which covered the large medallion, and he was effacing them with respectful kisses, when, his door being roughly opened, he seized upon his sword.

“Who goes there?” cried he, in his surprise, which was much increased when he saw M. de Launay, who, hat in hand, advanced towards him, and said to him with embarrassment, —

“Sir, it is with a heart pierced with grief that I am forced to tell you that the king has commanded me to arrest you. A carriage awaits you at the gate, attended by thirty of the cardinal-duc’s musketeers.”

Bassompierre had not risen; and he still held the medallion in his right hand, and the sword in the other.

He tendered it disdainfully to this man, and said to him, —

“ Sir, I know that I have lived too long, and it is that of which I was thinking ; it is in the name of the great Henri that I restore this sword peacefully to his son. Follow me.”

He accompanied these words with a look so firm that De Launay was depressed, and followed him with drooping head, as if he had himself been arrested by the noble old man, who, seizing a *flambeau*, issued from the court and found all the doors opened by horse-guards, who had terrified the people of the château in the name of the king, and commanded silence. The carriage was ready, and departed rapidly, followed by many horses. The *maréchal*, seated beside M. de Launay, began to sleep, rocked by the movement of the vehicle, when a voice cried to the driver, “ Stop ! ” and as he continued, a pistol-shot followed. The horses stopped.

“ I declare, sir, that this is done without my participation,” said Bassompierre. Then putting his head out at the door, he saw that they were in a little wood, and a road too narrow to allow of the horses passing to the right or to the left of the carriage, — a great advantage for the aggressors, since the musketeers could not advance ; he tried to see what was going on when a cavalier, having in his hand a long sword, with which he parried the strokes of the guard, approached the door, crying,

“ Come, come, M. le *Maréchal* ! ”

“ What ! is that you, you madcap, Henri, who are playing these pranks ? Sirs, sirs, let him alone ; he is a mere boy.”

And De Launay, having called to the musketeers to cease, had time to look about him.

“And how the devil came you here?” cried Bassompierre. “I thought you were at Tours, or even farther, if you had done your duty; but here you are returned to make a fool of yourself.”

“Truly, it was not for you I returned, but for a secret affair,” said Cinq-Mars, in a lower tone; “but as I take it, they are going to introduce you to the Bastille, I’m sure you will not betray me, for that delightful edifice is the very Temple of Discretion. Yet had you thought fit,” he continued, aloud, “I would have released you from these gentlemen in the wood here, which is so thick that their horses would not have been able to stir. A peasant informed me of the insult passed upon us, more than upon you, by this violation of my father’s house.”

“It is the king’s order, my son, and we must respect his will; reserve this ardor for his service, though I thank you with all my heart. Now adieu, and let me proceed on my agreeable journey.”

De Launay interposed, “I may inform you, M. de Cinq-Mars, that I have been desired by the king himself to assure M. le Maréchal that he is deeply afflicted at the step he has found it necessary thus to take, and that it is solely from an apprehension that M. le Maréchal may be led into evil that his Majesty requests him to reside for a few days in the Bastille.”¹

Bassompierre turned his head with a hearty laugh to Cinq-Mars. “You see, my friends, how we young folks are placed under guardianship; so take care of yourself.”

¹ He remained there twelve years.

“I will go, then,” said Henri; “this is the last time I shall play the knight-errant for people against their will;” and re-entering the wood as the carriage dashed off at full speed, he proceeded along by by-paths towards the castle, followed at a short distance by Grandchamp and his small escort.

On reaching the foot of the western tower, he pulled in his horse. He did not alight, but approaching so near the wall that he could rest his foot upon an abutment, he stood up, and raised the blind of a window on the ground-floor.

It was now past midnight, and the moon was hidden behind the clouds. No one but a member of the family could have found his way through so profound an obscurity. The towers and the roof formed one dark mass, which stood out in but indistinct relief upon the sky, scarcely less dark; no light shone throughout the chateau, all whose inmates seemed buried in slumber. Cinq-Mars, enveloped in a large cloak, and his face hidden under the broad brim of his hat, awaited in suspense a reply to his signal.

It came; a soft voice was heard from within, —

“Is that you, M. de Cinq-Mars?”

“Alas, who else should it be? Who else would return like a malefactor to his paternal house, without entering it, without bidding one more adieu to his mother? Who else would return to complain of the present, without a hope from the future, but I?”

The gentle voice replied, but its tones were agitated, and perceptibly accompanied with tears, “Alas, Henri, of what do you complain? Have I not already done

more, far more than I ought to have done? It is not my fault, but my misfortune, that my father was a sovereign prince. One cannot choose one's birthplace or one's rank. Yet how miserable is the lot of princesses! From the cradle, the sentiments of the heart are prohibited to them; and when they have advanced beyond childhood, they are ceded like a town, and must not even weep. Since I have known you, what have I not done to bring my future life within the reach of happiness, in removing it far from a throne? For two years I have struggled in vain, at once against my evil fortune, that separates me from you, and against you, who estrange me from the duty I owe to my family. I have sought to diffuse a belief that I was dead; I have almost sighed for revolutions. I should have blessed a change which deprived me of my rank, as I thanked Heaven when my father was dethroned; but the court wonders at my absence; the queen requires me to attend her. Our dreams are at an end, Henri; we have already slumbered too long. Let us awake, and courageously think no more of those dear two years, — forget all in the one recollection of our great resolve. Have but one thought; be ambitious for — be ambitious — for my sake."

"Must we, then, indeed, forget all, Marie?" murmured Cinq-Mars.

She hesitated.

"Yes, forget all — that I myself have forgotten." Then after a moment's pause she resumed with earnestness, "Yes, forget our happy days together, our long evenings, even our walks by the lake and through the wood; but keep in mind the future. Go, Henri; your

father was maréchal. Be you more; be you constable, prince. Go; you are young, noble, rich, brave, beloved —”

“Beloved forever?” said Henri.

“Forever, here and hereafter.”

Cinq-Mars, tremulously extending his hand to the window, exclaimed, —

“Well, then, I swear, Marie, by the Virgin, whose name you bear, that you shall be mine, or my head shall fall on the scaffold!”

“Oh, Heaven! what is't you say?” she cried, taking his hand in her own. “Swear to me that you will share in no guilty efforts; that you will never forget that the King of France is your master. Ever love him next to her who will sacrifice all for you, who will await you amid suffering and sorrow. Take this little gold cross and wear it upon your heart; it has often been wet with my tears, and those tears will flow still more bitterly if ever you are culpable towards the king. Give me the ring I see on your finger. Oh, heavens, my hand and yours are red with blood!”

“Oh, a scratch. Did you hear nothing, some hour ago?”

“No; but listen. Hear you nothing now?”

“No, Marie, nothing but some bird of night on the tower.”

“I heard whispering near us, I am sure. But whence this blood? Tell me and then depart.”

“Yes, I will go, while the clouds are still dark above us. Farewell, celestial creature; in my hour of danger I will invoke thee as a guardian angel. Love has in-

fused the poison of ambition into my soul, and for the first time I feel that ambition may be ennobled by its aim. Farewell! I go to accomplish my destiny."

"And forget not mine."

"Can they ever be separated?"

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

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

"Farewell! I tremble; farewell!" repeated the beloved voice, and the window was slowly drawn down, the joined hands not parting till the latest instant.

The black courser had all the while been pawing the earth, and tossing back his noble head with impatience. Cinq-Mars, as agitated and restless as his horse, gave it the rein; and the whole party was speedily under the walls of Tours. To the infinite discomfiture of old Grandchamp, Cinq-Mars would not enter the town, but proceeded on his way, and five days after entered with his escort the old city of Loudun in Poitou, after a journey without incident.





CHAPTER II.

THE STREET.

Je m'avançais d'un pas pénible et mal assuré vers le but de ce convoi tragique. — NODIER, *Smarra*.

THE reign a few years of which we are about to paint — a reign of feebleness, which was, as it were, an eclipse of the crown between Henri IV. and Louis le Grand — afflicts the eyes which contemplate it with more than one dark stain of blood, and these not all the work of one man, but participated in by great and grave bodies. It is melancholy to observe in this age, still full of disorder, that the clergy, like a nation, had its populace, as it had its nobility, its ignorant and its criminal prelates, as well as its learned and virtuous prelates. Since that period, its remnant of barbarism has been refined away by the long reign of Louis XIV., and its corruptions washed out in the blood of the martyrs whom it offered up to the revolution of 1793.

We felt it necessary to pause for a moment to ex-

press this reflection ere we entered upon the recital of the facts presented by the history of the period, and to intimate that notwithstanding this consolatory reflection, we have found it incumbent upon us to pass over many details too odious to occupy a place in our pages, groaning but too heavily in spirit at those guilty acts which it was necessary to give, as in relating the life of a virtuous old man, we should lament over the impetuositics of his passion-led youth, or over the corrupt tendencies of his riper age.

When the cavalcade entered the narrow streets of Loudun, they heard unusual noises all around them. The streets themselves were filled with agitated masses; the bells of the church and of the convent were ringing furiously, as though they were warning one-half the town that the other half was in flames; and the whole population, without paying the least attention to the travellers, was pressing tumultuously towards a large edifice that adjoined the church. Here and there large crowds were collected together, listening in silence to some voice that seemed raised in exhortation, or engaged in emphatic reading; anon, furious cries, mingled with pious exclamations, would arise from the crowd, which, then dispersing, showed the travellers that the orator was some Capuchin or Franciscan friar, who, a wooden crucifix in one hand, with the other pointed to the large building which was attracting such universal interest.

“Jesu Maria!” exclaimed an old woman, “who could ever have thought that the Evil Spirit would choose our old town for his abode?”

“Ay, or that the pious Ursulines should be possessed?” said another.

“They say that the demon who torments the superior is called Legion,” cried a third.

“One, say you?” interrupted a nun; “there were seven in her poor body, whereunto, doubtless, she had attached too much importance, by reason of its great beauty, though now ’t is but the receptacle of evil spirits. The prior of the Carmelites yesterday expelled the demon Eazas through her mouth; and the reverend Father Lactantius has driven out in like manner the demon Beherit. But the other five have refused to stir, and when the holy exorcists, (whom Heaven support!) summoned them in Latin to withdraw, they replied insolently that they would not go till they had thoroughly given proof of their power, to the conviction even of the Huguenots and heretics, who, misbelieving wretches, seem to doubt it. The demon Elimi, the worst of them all, as you know, has threatened to take off M. de Laubardemont’s *calotte* to-day, and dangle it in the air at *Miserere*.”

“Holy Virgin!” rejoined the first speaker, “I’m all of a tremble as it is! And to think that I’ve over and over again got this magician Urbain to say masses for me!”

“Ay,” exclaimed a girl, crossing herself; “and I who confessed to him ten months ago! No doubt in the world I should have been possessed myself, but for the relic of Saint Geneviève I luckily had about me, and —”

“Luckily, indeed, Martine,” interposed a fat gossip;

“for, no offence, you, as I remember, were long enough with the handsome sorcerer.”

“Pshaw!” laughingly said a young soldier, who had joined the group, smoking his pipe, “there was no luck in the matter; only, you see, pretty Martine was dispossessed a month ago.”

The girl blushed, and drew the hood of her black cloak over her face. The elder gossips cast a glance of indignation at the reckless trooper, and finding themselves now close to the door of the building, and thus sure of making their way in among the first when it should be thrown open, sat down upon the stone bench at the side, and by an interchange of the latest wonders, raised the expectations of all as to the delight they were about to have in being spectators of something marvellous,—an apparition, perhaps, but at the very least, an administration of the torture.

“Is it true, Aunt,” asked Martine of the eldest gossip, “that you have heard the demons speak?”

“Ay, child, true as I see you; there are many and many can say the same; and ’twas to convince you of it I brought you with me here, that you may see the power of the Evil One, and be edified.”

“What voice has he?” continued the girl, glad to encourage a conversation which diverted from herself the invidious attention procured her by the soldier’s raillery.

“Oh, he speaks with the voice of the superior herself, to whom our Lady be gracious! Poor young woman! I was with her yesterday a long time; ’t was wretched to see her writhing about and tearing herself and turn-

ing her arms and her legs first one way and then another, and then, all of a sudden, twisting them together behind her back. When the holy Father Lactantius pronounced the name of Urbain Grandier, the foam came out of her mouth, and she talked Latin for all the world as though she were reading the Bible. Of course, I did not understand what she said, and all I can remember of it now is, ‘Urbanus Magicus rosas diabolica,’ which they tell me means that the magician Urbain had bewitched her with some roses the Devil had given him; and so it must have been, for while Father Lactantius spoke, there came out of her ears and neck a quantity of flame-colored roses, all smelling of sulphur so strongly that the judge-advocate called out for every one present to stop their noses and eyes, for that the demons were about to come out.”

“Ah, look ye there now!” exclaimed with shrill voices and a triumphant air the whole bevy of assembled women, turning towards the crowd, and more particularly towards a group of men attired in black, among whom was standing the young soldier who had just before so unceremoniously jested with Martine.

“Hear the noisy old idiots!” exclaimed the soldier. “They think they’re at the Sabbat; but I don’t see their broomsticks.”

“Young man, young man!” said a citizen, with a mournful air, “jest not upon such subjects in the open air, or in such a time as this, the wind of Heaven may become gushing flames and devour you.”

“Bah! a fig for your exorcists!” returned the soldier; “my name’s Grand-Ferré, and I’ve got here a

better spirit-sprinkler than the whole set of you can produce."

And significantly grasping the handle of his rapier in one hand, with the other he turned up his light-brown mustache, as he looked fiercely around; but meeting no glance which returned the defiance of his own, he slowly withdrew, left foot foremost, and sauntered along the dark narrow streets with all the reckless nonchalance of a young soldier who has just donned his uniform, and true military contempt for all who wear not the cloth.

Meantime some eight or ten of the more considerable and more rational inhabitants of the town traversed in a body, slowly and silently, the agitated throng; they seemed overwhelmed with painful amazement at the agitation and excitement they witnessed in every direction, and as each new instance of the popular frenzy presented itself, they interchanged glances of wonder and apprehension. Their mute depression communicated its uneasiness to the working people, and to the peasants who had flocked in crowds from the adjacent country, and who all sought a direction for their opinions in the countenances of the principal townsmen, also for the most part proprietors of the surrounding districts; they saw there that something calamitous was on foot, and resorted accordingly to the only remedy open to the ignorant and the beguiled, apathetic resignation.

Yet there is in the character of the French peasant a certain scoffing finesse of which he makes effective use, sometimes with his equals, and almost invariably with his superiors. He puts questions to power as embar-

rassing as are those which infancy puts to mature age. He affects the very excess of humility, in order to confuse him whom he addresses with the very height of his isolated elevation. He aggravates the awkwardness of his manner and the rudeness of his expressions, as a means of covering his real thoughts under the appearance of mere uncouthness; yet, despite all his self-command, there is something in his air, certain fierce contortions of countenance, which betray him to the close observer, who discerns in his sardonic smile, and the marked emphasis with which he leans on his long staff, the hopes that secretly nourish his soul, and the aid upon which he ultimately relies.

One of the most venerable of the peasants whom we have indicated came vigorously on, followed by ten or twelve young men, his sons and nephews, all wearing the broad-brimmed hat and the blue frock or blouse of the ancient Gauls, which the peasants of France still wear over their other garments, as peculiarly adapted to their humid climate and their laborious habits.

When the old man had made his way to the group of personages of whom we have just spoken, he took off his hat, — an example immediately followed by his whole family, — and showed a face darkened with exposure to the weather, a forehead bald and wrinkled with age, and long white hair hanging behind. His shoulders were bent with years and labor, but he was still a hale and sturdy man. He was received with an air of welcome and even of respect by one of the gravest of the grave group he had approached, who, without, however, uncovering, extended to him his hand.

“What! good Father Guillaume Leroux!” said he, “and have you too left our farm of La Chenaïe to visit the town, when it’s not market day? Why, ’t is as though your oxen were to unharness themselves and go a hunting, quitting their work to see a poor hare run down!”

“Faith, M. le Comte du Lude,” replied the farmer, “for that matter, sometimes the hare runs into our way of itself; but, in truth, I’ve got a notion that some of the people here want to make fools of us, and so I’ve come to see the rights of it.”

“Enough of that, my friend,” returned the comte; “here is M. Fournier, the advocate, who assuredly will not deceive you, for he resigned his office of attorney-general last night that he might henceforth devote his eloquence to the service of his own noble thoughts. You will hear him, perhaps, to-day, though truly, I dread his appearing for his own sake as much as I desire it for that of the accused.”

“I care not for myself,” said Fournier; “truth is with me a passion, and I would have it inculcated in all times and all places.”

He that spoke was a young man, whose face, pallid in the extreme, was full of the noblest expression. His blond hair, his light-blue eyes, his thinness, the delicacy of his frame made him at first sight seem younger than he was; but his thoughtful and earnest countenance indicated that mental superiority and that precocious maturity of the soul which are developed by deep study in youth, combined with natural energy of character. He was attired wholly in black, with a short

cloak in the fashion of the times, and carried under his left arm a roll of papers, which, when speaking, he would take in the right hand and grasp convulsively, as a warrior in his anger grasps the pommel of his sword. At one moment it seemed as though he were about to unfurl the scroll, and from it hurl lightning upon those whom he pursued with looks of fiery indignation, — three Capuchins and a Franciscan, who had passed by.

“Père Guillaume,” pursued M. du Lude, “how is it you have brought with you only your sons, and they armed with their staves?”

“Faith, sir, I have no desire that our girls should learn to dance of the nuns; and, moreover, just now the lads with their staves may bestir themselves to better purpose than their sisters would.”

“Take my advice, my old friend,” said the comte, “and don’t bestir yourselves at all; rather stand quietly aside to view the procession which you see approaching, and remember that you are seventy.”

“Ah, ah!” murmured the old man, drawing up his twelve sons in double rank, soldier-fashion, “I fought under good King Henriot, and can play at sword and pistol as well as the worthy *ligueurs* ;” and shaking his head he leaned against a post, his knotty staff between his crossed legs, his hands clasped on its thick butt-end, and his white bearded chin resting on his hands. Then, half closing his eyes, he seemed absorbed in recollections of his early life.

The bystanders observed with interest his dress, striped in the fashion of Henri IV., and his resemblance to the Béarnese monarch in the latter years of his life,

though the king's hair had been prevented by the assassin's stroke from acquiring the whiteness which that of the old peasant had placidly attained. A furious pealing of the bells, however, attracted the general attention to the end of the great street, down which was seen filing a long procession, whose banners and glittering pikes rose above the heads of the crowd, which successively and in silence opened a way for the at once absurd and awful train.

First, two and two, came a body of archers, with pointed beards and large plumed hats, armed with long halberds, who, ranging in a single file on each side of the centre of the street, formed an avenue along which marched in solemn order a procession of Gray Penitents, — men attired in a long gray robe, the hood of which entirely covered the head, a mask of the same stuff terminating below the chin in a point, like a beard, having merely three holes in it for the eyes and nose. Even at the present day we see these costumes at funerals, more especially in the Pyrenees. The Penitents of Loudun carried enormous wax candles, and their slow, uniform movement, and their eyes, which seemed to glitter under their masks, gave them the appearance of phantoms.

The people expressed their various feelings in an undertone: —

“There 's many a knave hid under those masks,” said a citizen.

“Ay, and with a face uglier than the mask itself,” added a young man.

“They make me afraid,” tremulously exclaimed a girl.

"I'm only afraid for my purse," said the first speaker.

"Ah, Jesu! there are our holy brethren, the Penitents," cried an old woman, throwing back her hood, the better to look at them. "See you the banner they bear? Ah, neighbors, 't is a joyful thing to have it among us! Beyond a doubt it will save us; see, it shows the Devil in flames, and a monk fastening a chain round his neck to keep him there. Ah, here come the judges, — worthy gentlemen! dear gentlemen! Look at their red robes; how beautiful! Blessed be the Virgin, they've been well chosen!"

"Every man of them a personal enemy of the curé," whispered the Comte du Lude to the advocate Fournier, who took a note of the information.

"Don't you know them, neighbors?" pursued the shrill, sharp voice of the old woman, as she cuffed one and pinched another of those about her to attract their attention to the objects of her admiration; "see, there's excellent M. Mignon, whispering to Messieurs the Counsellors of the court of Poitiers; Heaven's blessings on them all, say I!"

"Ay, there are Roatin, Richard, and Chevalier, — the very men who tried to have him dismissed a year ago," continued M. du Lude, in undertones, to the young advocate, who, surrounded and hidden from public observation by the group of dark-clad citizens, was writing down his observations in a note-book under his cloak.

"Here; look, look!" screamed the old woman. "Make way! here's M. Barré, the Curé of St. Jacques at Chinon."

“ A saint ! ” murmured one bystander.

“ A hypocrite ! ” exclaimed a manly voice.

“ See how thin he is with fasting ! ”

“ See how pale he is with remorse ! ”

“ He ’s the man to drive away devils ! ”

“ Ay, but not till he ’s quite done with them for his own purposes. ”

The dialogue was interrupted by the general exclamation, “ 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 witness the features of the possessed ones, it had been ordered that it should be thus with her and six of the sisterhood. Her attire had no distinguishing feature, except an immense rosary extending from her neck nearly to her feet, and from which hung a gold cross ; but the dazzling pallor of her face, rendered still more conspicuous by the dark hue of her *capuchon*, at once fixed the general regard upon her. Her brilliant dark eyes, which bore the impress of some deep and burning passion, were crowned with brows so perfectly arched that Nature herself seemed to have taken as much pains to form them as the Circassian women to mark out theirs with artistic pencilling ; but between them a slight fold revealed the powerful agitation within. In her movements, however, and throughout her whole bearing, she affected an entire calm ; her steps were slow and cadenced, and her beautiful hands were crossed on her bosom, as white and motionless as those of the marble statues joined in eternal prayer in monumental sculptures.

“See, Aunt,” ejaculated Martine; “see how Sister Agnes and Sister Claire are weeping, next to the superior!”

“Ay, Niece, they weep because they are the prey of the demon.”

“Or rather,” interposed the same manly voice we have already heard, “because they repent them of having mocked Heaven.”

A profound silence now pervaded the assembled multitude; not a word was heard, not a movement, scarcely a breath. Every one seemed paralyzed by some sudden enchantment, when, following the nuns, between four Penitents who held him in chains, appeared the curé of the church of Ste. Croix, attired in his pastor's robe. His was a noble, fine face, with grandeur of mind in its whole expression, and gentleness in every feature; affecting no scornful indifference to his position, he looked calmly and kindly around, as though he sought on his dark way the affectionate glances of those who loved him. Nor did he seek in vain; ever and anon he encountered those glances, and joyfully returned them. Nay, more, he heard sobs, and he saw hands extended towards him, — hands, many of which grasped weapons. But no gesture of his encouraged these mute offers of physical aid; he would lower his eyes to the ground, and wend on, careful not to compromise those who so trusted in him, or to involve them in the contagion of his own misfortunes. This was Urbain Grandier.

Suddenly the procession stopped, at a signal from the man who brought up its van, and who seemed to command its movements. He was tall, meagre, pale; his

dress was a long black robe, with a cap of the same material and color; he had the face of a Don Basilio, with the eye of Nero. He motioned the guards to surround him more closely, when he saw with affright the dark group we have mentioned, and the strong-limbed and resolute peasants who seemed in attendance upon them. Then placing himself somewhat in advance of the canons and Capuchins who were with him, he pronounced in a shrill voice this singular decree:

“ We, Sieur de Laubardemont, referendary, being delegated and invested with discretionary power in the matter of the trial of the magician Urbain Grandier upon the various articles of accusation brought against him, assisted herein by the reverend Fathers Mignon, canon, Barré, curé of St. Jacques at Chinon, Father Lactantius, and all the other judges appointed to try the said magician, have preliminarily decreed as follows: *Primo*, the factitious assembly of proprietors, noble-citizens of this town and its environs, is dissolved, as tending to a popular sedition; its proceedings are declared null, and its letter to the king, against us the judges, which has been intercepted, shall be publicly burned in the market-place as calumniating the good Ursulines and the reverend fathers and judges. *Secundo*, it is forbidden to say, publicly or in private, that the said nuns are not possessed by the Evil Spirit, or to doubt of the power of the exorcists, under pain of a fine of twenty thousand livres, and corporal punishment.

“ Let the bailiffs and sheriffs obey this. Given the 18th of June, in the year of grace 1639.”

Ere he had well finished reading the decree, the discordant clang of trumpets, bursting forth at a pre-concerted signal, drowned, to a certain extent, the

murmurs that followed its proclamation, and amid which Laubardemont urged forward the procession, which precipitately entered the great building already referred to, — an ancient convent, whose interior having crumbled away, its walls now formed one vast hall, well adapted for the purpose to which it was about to be applied. Laubardemont did not deem himself safe until he was within the building and had heard the heavy double doors creak on their hinges as, closing, they excluded the furious crowd without.





CHAPTER III.

THE GOOD PRIEST.

L'homme de paix me parla ainsi. — VICAIRE SAVOYARD.

Now that the diabolical procession is in the arena destined for its spectacle, and is arranging its gloomy and sanguinary representation, let us inquire what Cinq-Mars had been doing amid the agitated crowd. He was endowed by nature with great tact, and felt that it would be no easy matter for him to attain the object he had in view, of seeing the Abbé Quillet, at a time when the excitement of men's minds was at its height. He therefore remained on horseback with his four domestics in a small and very dark street that led into the main street, from which he could easily see all that passed. No one at first paid any attention to him; but when public curiosity had no other aliment, he became an object of general observation. Weary of so many scenes of excitement, the inhabitants looked upon him with some exasperation, and half aloud inquired

of one another whether this was another exorcist come among them. Feeling that it was time to take a decided course, he advanced with his attendants, hat in hand, towards the group in black of whom we have spoken, and addressing him who appeared its most distinguished member, said, "Sir, where can I find M. l'Abbé Quillet?"

At this name, all around regarded him with an air of terror, as though he had pronounced that of Lucifer. Yet no anger was exhibited; on the contrary, it seemed that the question had operated a favorable change for him in the minds of all who heard him. Moreover, chance had served him well in his choice; the Comte du Lude came up to his horse, and saluting him, said, "Dismount, sir, and I will give you some useful information regarding him."

After having spoken a while in whispers, the two gentlemen separated with all the ceremonious politeness of the period. Cinq-Mars remounted his black horse, and passing through numerous narrow streets, was soon out of the crowd with his retinue.

"How happy I am!" he soliloquized, as he proceeded on his way; "I shall, at all events, for a moment see the good and kind minister who brought me up; even now I seem to have before me his features, his calm air, his voice so full of benevolence."

As these thoughts ran through his mind, he found himself in the small and very dark street which had been indicated to him; it was so narrow that the knee-pieces of his boots touched the wall on either side. At the end of the street he came to a wooden house of one story, and in his eagerness knocked with repeated strokes.

“Who is there?” cried a furious voice within; and at the same moment, the door opening exhibited a little man, very short, very stout, and with a very red face, attired in a black suit, with an immense white ruff and riding-boots which engulfed his short legs in their vast depths. In his hands were a pair of horse pistols.

“I will sell my life dearly!” he cried; “and —”

“Softly, Abbé, softly,” said his pupil, taking his arm; “we are friends.”

“Ah, my son, is it you?” said the worthy man, letting fall his pistols, which were picked up by a domestic, also armed to the teeth. “What do you here? The abomination has entered the town, and I only await the night to depart hence. Make haste in, my dear boy, with your people; I took you for the archers of Laubardemont, and, i’ faith, I was going to take a part somewhat out of my line. You see the horses in the courtyard there; they will convey me to Italy, where I shall rejoin our friend, the Duc de Bouillon. Jean! Jean! hasten and close the great gate after these brave domestics, and recommend them not to make too much noise, although for that matter we have no habitation near us.”

Grandchamp obeyed the intrepid little abbé, who then embraced Cinq-Mars four consecutive times, raising himself on the points of his boots, so as to attain the middle of his pupil’s breast. He then hurried him into a small room, which looked like a deserted granary; and seating him beside himself upon a black leather trunk, he said with earnestness, —

“Well, my son, whither go you? How came Madame

la Maréchale to let you come here? See you not what they are doing against an unhappy man, whose death alone will content them? Alas, merciful Heaven! was this the first spectacle my dear pupil was to have before him? And you at that delightful period of life when friendship, love, confidence, should alone encompass you; when all around you should be of a nature to give you a favorable opinion of your species, at your very entry into the great world! How unfortunate! alas, why are you come?"

When the good abbé had followed up this lamentation by affectionately pressing both hands of the young traveller in his own, so red and wrinkled, the latter at length answered,—

“Can you not guess, my dear abbé, that I came to Loudun because you were here? As to the spectacle you speak of, it appears to me simply ridiculous; and I vow to you that I do not a whit the less on its account love that human race of which your virtues and your good lessons have given me an excellent idea. As to the five or six mad women who—”

“Let us not lose time; I will tell you all about that matter; but answer me, whither go you, and for what?”

“I am going to Perpignan, where the cardinal-duc is to present me to the king.”

At this the worthy but hasty abbé rose from his box, and walked, or rather ran, up and down the room, stamping. “The cardinal! the cardinal!” he repeated, almost choking, his face becoming scarlet, and the tears rising to his eyes; “poor child! they will destroy him! Ah, *mon Dieu!* what part would they have him

play there. What would they with him ? Ah, who will protect thee, my son, in that dangerous place ?” continued he, rescating himself, and again taking his pupil’s hands in his own with a paternal solicitude, as he endeavored to read his thoughts in his countenance.

“ Why, I do not exactly know,” said Cinq-Mars, looking up at the ceiling ; “ but I suppose it will be the Cardinal de Richelieu, who was the friend of my father.”

“ Ah, my dear Henri, you make me tremble ; he will ruin you unless you become his docile instrument. Alas, why cannot I go with you ? Why must I act the young man of twenty in this unfortunate affair ? Alas, I should be perilous to you ; I must, on the contrary, conceal myself. But you will have M. de Thou near you, my son, will you not ?” said he, trying to reassure himself ; “ he was your friend in childhood, though somewhat older than yourself. Heed his counsels, my child, he is a wise young man ; he is a man of mature reflection, and of solid ideas.”

“ Oh, yes, my dear abbé, you may depend upon my tender attachment for him ; I have never ceased to love him.”

“ But you have ceased to write to him, have you not ?” asked the good abbé, half smilingly.

“ I beg your pardon, my dear abbé, I wrote to him once, and again yesterday, to inform him that the cardinal has invited me to court.”

“ How ! has he himself desired your presence ?”

Cinq-Mars hereupon showed the letter of the cardinal-duc to his mother, and his old tutor grew gradually more tranquil.

“Come, come!” said he to himself, “this is not so bad, perhaps, after all. It looks promising; a captain of the guards at twenty,—that sounds well!” and the worthy abbé’s face actually became all smiles.

The young man, delighted to see these smiles, which so harmonized with his own thoughts, fell upon the neck of the abbé and embraced him; as though he had thus assured to him a futurity of pleasure, glory, and love.

But the good abbé, with difficulty disengaging himself from this warm embrace, resumed his walk and his reflections and his gravity. He often hemmed and shook his head; and Cinq-Mars, not venturing to pursue the conversation, followed him with his eyes, and became sad as he saw him become serious.

The old man at last sat down, and in a mournful tone addressed his pupil thus:—

“My friend, my son, I have for a moment yielded like a father to your hopes; but I must tell you, and it is not to afflict you, that they appear to me excessive and unnatural. If the cardinal’s sole aim were to show attachment and gratitude towards your family, he would not have carried his favors so far; no, the extreme probability is that he has designs upon you. From what has been told him he thinks you adapted to play some part, as yet impossible for us to divine, but which he himself has traced out in the deepest recesses of his mind. He would educate you up for this; he would drill you into it. Allow me the expression in consideration of its accuracy, and think seriously of it when the time shall come. But still I am inclined to believe that as matters are you had better follow up this vein in the

great mine of State ; it is thus that high fortunes have begun. You must only take heed not to be blinded and led at will. Let not favors make you giddy, my poor child, and let not elevation turn your head. Be not so indignant at the suggestion ; the thing has happened to older men than yourself. Write to me often, as well as to your mother ; see M. de Thou, and we will together try to keep you in good counsel. Now, my son, be good enough to close that window through which the wind comes upon my head, and I will tell you what has been going on here."

Henri, trusting that the moral part of the discourse was over, and anticipating nothing in the second part but a narrative more or less interesting, closed the old casement, festooned with cobwebs, and resumed his seat without speaking.

"Now that I reflect further," continued the abbé, "I think it will not perhaps be unprofitable for you to have passed through this place, although it be a sad experience you shall have acquired ; but it will supply what I may not have formerly told you of the wickedness of men. I hope, moreover, that the result will not be fatal, and that the letter we have written to the king will arrive in time."

"I heard that it had been intercepted," interposed Cinq-Mars.

"Then all is over," said the Abbé Quillet ; "the curé is lost. But listen. God forbid, my son, that I, your old tutor, should seek to assail my own work, and attempt to weaken your faith ! Preserve ever and everywhere that simple creed of which your noble family has

given you the example, which our fathers possessed in a still higher degree than we, and of which the greatest captains of our time are not ashamed. Always while you wear a sword, remember that you hold it for the service of God. But at the same time, when you are among men, avoid being deceived by the hypocrite. He will encompass you, my son; he will assail you on the vulnerable side of your ingenuous heart, in addressing your religion; and seeing the extravagancy of his affected zeal, you will fancy yourself lukewarm as compared with him. You will think that your conscience cries out against you; but it will not be the voice of conscience that you hear. And what cries would not that conscience send forth, how fiercely would it not rise upon you, did you contribute to the destruction of innocence by invoking Heaven itself as a false witness against it?"

"Oh, my father! can such things be possible?" exclaimed Henri d'Effiat, clasping his hands.

"It is but too true," continued the abbé; "you saw the execution of it in part this morning. God grant you may not witness still greater horrors! But listen; whatever you may see here, whatever crime they dare to commit, I conjure you, in the name of your mother and of all that you hold dear, utter not a word; make not a gesture that may indicate any opinion whatever upon the affair. I know the impetuous character that you derive from the *maréchal* your father; curb it, or you are lost. These little ebullitions of passion procure but slight satisfaction, and bring about great misfortunes. I have observed you give way to them too

much. Oh, did you but know the advantage that a calm temper gives one over men! The ancients stamped it on the forehead of the divinity as his finest attribute, since it shows that he is superior to our fears and to our hopes, to our pleasures and to our pains. Therefore, my dear child, remain passive in the scenes you are about to witness; but see them you must. Be present at this sad trial; for me, I must suffer the consequences of my school-boy folly. I will relate it to you; it will prove to you that with a bald head one may be as much a child as with your fine chestnut curls."

• And the excellent old abbé, taking his pupil's head affectionately between his hands, continued as follows:

"Like other people, my dear son, I was curious to see the devils of the Ursulines; and knowing that they professed to speak all languages, I had the imprudence to leave the Latin tongue and question them in Greek. The superior is very pretty, but she does not know Greek. Duncan, the physician, observed aloud that it was surprising that the demon, who knew everything, should commit barbarisms and solecisms in Latin, and not be able to answer in Greek. The young superior, who was then upon her show-bed, turned towards the wall to weep and said in an undertone to Father Barré, 'I cannot go on with this, sir.' I repeated these words aloud, and infuriated all the exorcists; they cried out that I ought to know that there are demons more ignorant than peasants, and said that as to their power and physical strength, it could not be doubted, since the spirits named Grésil des Trones, Aman des Puissance, and Asmodeus, had promised to carry off the *calotte* of M.

de Laubardemont. They were preparing for this, when the physician Duncan, a learned and upright man, but somewhat of a scoffer, took it into his head to pull a cord he discovered fastened to a column like a bell-rope, and which hung down just close to the referendary's head; hereupon they called him Huguenot, and I am satisfied that if Maréchal de Brézé were not his protector, it would have gone ill with him. The Comte du Lude then came forward with his customary *sang-froid*, and begged the exorcists to perform before him. Father Lactantius, the Capuchin with the dark visage and hard look, proceeded with Sister Agnes and Sister Claire; he raised both his hands, looking at them as a serpent would look at two doves, and cried in a terrible voice, 'Quis te misit, Diabole?' and the two sisters answered, as with one voice, 'Urbanus.' He was about to continue, when M. du Lude, taking out of his pocket with an air of veneration a small gold box, said that he had in it a relic left by his ancestors, and that though not doubting the fact of the possession, he wished to test it. Father Lactantius seized the box with delight, and scarcely had he touched the foreheads of the two sisters with it than they made immense leaps and twisted about their hands and feet. Lactantius shouted forth his exorcisms; Barré threw himself upon his knees with all the old women; and Mignon and the judges applauded. The impassible Laubardemont made the sign of the cross (without being struck dead for it!). When M. du Lude took back his box the nuns became still. 'I think,' said Lactantius, insolently, 'that you will not question your relics now.' 'No more than I do the possession,' answered M. du

Lude, opening his box and showing that it was empty. 'Sir, you mock us,' said Lactantius. I was indignant at these mummeries, and said to him, 'Yes, sir, as you mock God and men.' And this, my dear friend, is why you see me in my seven-league boots, so heavy and so big that they hurt my legs, and with long pistols; for our friend Laubardemont has ordered my person to be seized, and I don't choose it to be seized, old as it is."

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

"More so than is supposed, — more so than could be believed. I know that the possessed abbe is his niece, and that he is provided with an order in council directing him to judge, without being deterred by any appeals lodged in parliament, the cardinal having prohibited the latter from taking cognizance of the matter of Urbain Grandier."

"And what are his offences?" asked the young man, already deeply interested.

"Those of a strong mind and of a superior genius, an inflexible will which has irritated power against him, and a profound passion which has driven his heart and him to commit the only mortal sin with which I believe he can be reproached; and it was only by violating the sanctity of his private papers, which they tore from Jeanne d'Estièvre, his mother, an old woman of eighty, that they discovered his love for the beautiful Madeleine de Brou. This girl had refused to marry, and wished to take the veil. May that veil have concealed from her the spectacle of this day! The eloquence of Grandier and his angelic beauty drove the women half mad; they came miles and miles to hear him. I have seen

them faint during his sermons; they declared him an angel, and touched his garment and kissed his hands when he descended from the pulpit. It is certain that unless it be his beauty, nothing could equal the sublimity of his discourses, ever full of inspiration. The pure honey of the gospel combined on his lips with the flashing flame of the prophecies; and one recognized in the sound of his voice a heart overflowing with holy pity for the evils to which mankind are subject, and swollen with tears, ready to flow forth for us."

The good priest paused, for he himself had his voice and his eyes swollen with tears; his round and naturally joyous face was more touching than a graver one under the same circumstances, for it seemed as though it bade defiance to sadness. Cinq-Mars, even still more moved, pressed his hand without speaking, fearful of interrupting him. The abbé took out a red handkerchief, wiped his eyes, and continued, —

"This is the second attack upon Urbain by his combined foes. He had already been accused of bewitching the nuns; but examined by holy prelates, by enlightened magistrates, and learned physicians, he was immediately acquitted, and the judges indignantly imposed silence upon these demons of human construction. The good and pious Archbishop of Bordeaux, who had himself chosen the examiners of these pretended exorcists, drove the prophets away and shut up their hell. But humiliated by the publicity of the result, annoyed at seeing Grandier well received by our good king when he cast himself at his feet at Paris, they saw that if he triumphed they were lost, and would be universally

regarded as impostors ; already the convent of the Ursulines was looked upon only as a theatre for disgraceful comedies, and the nuns themselves as shameless actresses. More than a hundred persons, furious against the curé, had compromised themselves in the hope of destroying him. Their plot, instead of being abandoned, has gained strength by its first check ; and here are the means that have been set to work by his implacable enemies.

“Do you know a man called *L'Eminence Grise*, that formidable Capuchin whom the cardinal employs in all things, consults upon some, and despises invariably ? It was to him that the Capuchins of Loudun addressed themselves. A woman of this place, of low birth, named Hamon, having been so fortunate as to please the queen when she passed through Loudun, was taken into her service. You know the hatred that separates her court from that of the cardinal ; you know that Anne of Austria and M. de Richelieu have for some time disputed for the king's favor, and that, of her two sons, France never knew in the evening which would rise next morning. During a momentary eclipse of the cardinal, a satire appeared, issuing from the planetary system of the queen ; it was called, *La cordonnière de la reine-mère*. Its tone and language were vulgar ; but it contained things so insulting about the birth and person of the cardinal that the enemies of the minister took it up and gave it a publicity which irritated him. There were revealed in it, it is said, many intrigues and mysteries which he had deemed impenetrable. He read this anonymous work, and desired to know its author. It was just at this time that

the Capuchins of this town wrote to Father Joseph that a constant correspondence between Grandier and La Hamon left no doubt in their minds as to his being the author of this diatribe. It was in vain that he had previously published religious books, prayers, and meditations, the style of which alone ought to have absolved him from having put his hand to a libel written in the language of the market-place; the cardinal, long since prejudiced against Urbain, was determined to fix him as the culprit. He was reminded that when he was only prior of Coussay, Grandier disputed precedence with him and gained it; I fear this achievement of precedence in life will make poor Grandier precede the cardinal in death also."

A melancholy smile played upon the lips of the good abbé as he uttered this involuntary pun.

"What! do you think this matter will go so far as death?"

"Ay, my son, even to death; they have already taken away all the documents connected with his former absolution that might have served for his defence, despite the opposition of his poor mother, who preserved them as her son's license to live. Even now they affect to regard a work against the celibacy of priests, found among his papers, as destined to propagate schism. It is a culpable production, doubtless, and the love which dictated it, however pure it may be, is an enormous sin in a man consecrated to God alone; but this poor priest was far from wishing to encourage heresy, and it was simply, they say, to appease the remorse of Mademoiselle de Brou that he composed the work. It

was so evident that his real faults would not suffice to condemn him to death that they have revived the accusation of sorcery, long since disposed of ; but feigning to believe which, the cardinal has established a new tribunal in this town, and has placed Laubardemont at its head, — a sure sign of death. Heaven grant that you never become acquainted with what the corruption of governments call *coups-d'état!*”

At this moment a terrible shriek sounded from beyond the wall of the courtyard ; the abbé arose in terror, as did Cinq-Mars.

“It is the cry of a woman,” said the old man.

“’Tis heart-rending!” exclaimed Cinq-Mars. “What hear you?” he asked his people, who had all rushed out into the courtyard.

They answered that they heard nothing further.

“Well, well,” said the abbé, “make no noise.” He then shut the window, and put his hands before his eyes.

“Ah, what a cry was that, my son!” he said, with his face of an ashy paleness, — “what a cry ! It pierced my very soul ; some calamity has happened. Ah, holy Virgin ! it has so agitated me that I can talk with you no more. Why did I hear it, just as I was speaking to you of your future career ? My dear child, may God bless you ! Kneel.”

Cinq-Mars did as he was desired, and knew by a kiss upon his head he had been blessed by the old man, who then raised him up, saying, —

“Go, my son, the time is advancing ; they might find you with me. Go, leave your people and horses here ;

wrap yourself in a cloak, and go. I have much to write ere the hour when darkness shall allow me to depart for Italy.”

They embraced once more, promising to write to each other, and Henri quitted the house. The abbé, still following him with his eyes from the window, cried,—

“Be prudent, whatever may happen,” and sent him with his hands one more paternal blessing, saying, “Poor child! poor child!”





CHAPTER IV.

THE TRIAL.

I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape.

SHAKSPEARE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the usage of secret trials, then freely countenanced by Richelieu, the judges of the Curé of Loudun had resolved that the court should be open to the public; but they soon repented this measure. They were all interested in the destruction of Urbain Grandier; but they desired that the indignation of the country should in some degree sanction the sentence of death they had received orders to pass and to carry into effect.

Laubardemont was a kind of bird of prey, whom the cardinal always let loose when he required a prompt and sure agent for his vengeance; and on this occasion he fully justified the choice that had been made of him. He committed but one error, — that of allowing a public trial, contrary to the prevalent usage; his object had been to intimidate and to dismay. He dismayed, indeed, but he also created a feeling of indignant horror.

The crowd whom we left outside the gates had waited there for two hours, during which time the sound of hammers indicated that within the great hall they were hastily completing their mysterious preparations. At length the archers laboriously turned the heavy gates opening into the street upon their hinges, and the crowd eagerly rushed in. The young Cinq-Mars was carried in with the second enormous wave, and, placed behind a thick column, stood there, so as to be able to see without being seen. He observed with vexation that the dark group of citizens was near him; but the great gates, closing, left the part of the court where the people stood in such darkness that there was no likelihood of his being recognized. Although it was only midday, the hall was lighted with *flambeaux*; but they were nearly all placed at the farther end, where rose the judges' bench behind a long table. The chairs, tables, steps, were all covered with black cloth, and cast a livid hue over the faces of those near them. A seat reserved for the prisoner was placed upon the left, and on the crape robe which covered him flames were represented in gold embroidery to indicate the nature of the offence. Here sat the accused, surrounded by archers and his hands still bound in chains, held by two monks, who, with simulated terror, affected to start from him at his slightest motion, as though they held in bonds a tiger or enraged wolf, or as though the flames depicted on his robe could communicate themselves to their clothing. They also carefully kept his face from being seen by the people.

The impassible countenance of M. de Laubardemont

was there to dominate the judges of his choice ; almost a head taller than any of them, he was placed upon a seat more elevated than theirs, and each of his glassy and uneasy glances seemed to convey an order to them. He wore a long, full scarlet robe, and a black cap covered his head ; he seemed occupied in arranging papers, which he then passed to the judges. The accusers, all of them ecclesiastics, sat on the right hand of the judges ; they wore their albs and stoles. Father Laetantius was distinguishable among them by his simple Capuchin habit, his tonsure, and the extreme hardness of his features. In a side gallery sat the Bishop of Poitiers, hidden from view ; other galleries were filled with veiled women. Below the bench of judges, a number of men and women, the dregs of the populace, stood behind six young Ursuline nuns, who seemed full of disgust at their proximity ; these were the witnesses.

The rest of the hall was occupied with an immense crowd of people, gloomy and silent, clinging to the arches, the gates, and the beams, and full of a terror which communicated itself to the judges, for it arose from an interest in the accused. Numerous archers, armed with long pikes, formed, as it were, the frame — a worthy one — of this lugubrious picture.

At a sign from the president, the witnesses withdrew through a narrow door opened for them by an usher. As she passed M. de Laubardemont, the superior of the Ursulines was seen to advance, and heard to say to him, “ You have deceived me, sir.” He remained immovable, and she went on. A profound silence reigned throughout the whole assembly.

Rising with all the gravity he could assume, but still with visible agitation, one of the judges, named Houmain, judge-advocate of Orléans, read a sort of indictment in a voice so low and so hoarse that it was impossible to follow it. He only made himself heard when what he had to say was calculated to impose upon the minds of the people. He divided the evidence into two classes, — one, the depositions of seventy-two witnesses; the other, more convincing, that resulting from “the exorcisms of the reverend fathers here present,” said he, crossing himself.

Fathers Lactantius, Barré, and Mignon bowed low, repeating the sacred sign.

“Yes, my lords,” said Houmain, addressing the judges, “this bouquet of white roses and this manuscript, signed with the blood of the magician, a counterpart of the contract he has made with Lucifer, and which he was obliged to carry about him in order to preserve his power, have been recognized and brought before you. We read with horror these words written at the bottom of the parchment, ‘*The original is in hell, in Lucifer’s private cabinet.*’”

A burst of laughter, which seemed to emanate from stentorian lungs, was heard in the crowd. The president reddened, and made a sign to the archers, who in vain endeavored to discover the perturbator. The judge-advocate continued: —

“The demons have been forced to declare their names by the mouths of their victims. Their names and deeds are deposited upon this table: they are called Astaroth, of the order of Seraphim; Eazas, Celsus, Acaos, Cedron,

Asmodeus, of the order of Thrones; Alex, Zebulon, Cham, Uriel, and Achas, of the order of Principalities, and so on, for their number is infinite. For their actions, who among us has not been a witness of them?"

A lengthened murmur arose from the assembly, but upon some halberdiers advancing, all became silent.

"We have seen with grief the young and respectable superior of the Ursulines tear her bosom with her own hands and grovel in the dust; we have seen the sisters, Agnes, Claire, and others, deviate from the modesty of their sex by impassioned gestures and unseemly laughter. When impious men have inclined to doubt the presence of the demons, and we ourselves felt our convictions shaken, because they refused to answer to unknown questions in Greek or Arabic, the reverend fathers have, to establish our belief, deigned to explain to us that the malignity of evil spirits being extreme, it was not surprising that they should feign this ignorance in order that they might be less pressed with questions; and that in their answers they had committed various solecisms and other grammatical faults in order to bring contempt upon themselves, so that out of this disdain the holy doctors might leave them in quiet. Their hatred is so inveterate that just before performing one of their miraculous feats, they suspended a rope from a beam in order to involve the reverend personages in a suspicion of fraud, whereas it has been deposed on oath by credible people that there had never been a cord in that place.

"But, my Lords, while Heaven was thus miraculously

explaining itself by the mouths of its holy interpreters, another light has just been thrown upon us. At the very time the judges were absorbed in profound meditation, a loud cry was heard near the hall of council; and upon going to the spot, we found the body of a young lady of high birth. She had just sent forth her last breath in the public street, in the arms of the reverend Father Mignon, canon; and we have learned from the said father here present, and from several other grave personages, that suspecting the young lady to be possessed, by reason of the rumor for some time past current of the admiration Urbain Grandier had for her, an idea of testing it happily occurred to the canon, who suddenly said, approaching her, ‘Grandier has just been put to death,’ whereat she uttered one loud scream and fell dead, deprived by the demon of the time necessary for giving her the assistance of our holy Mother, the Catholic Church.”

A murmur of indignation arose from the crowd, among whom the word “assassin” was loudly re-echoed; the halberdiers commanded silence with a loud voice, but it was obtained rather by the judge resuming his address, the general curiosity triumphing.

“Oh, infamy!” he continued, seeking to fortify himself by exclamations; “upon her person was found this work, written by the hand of Urbain Grandier,” and he took from among his papers a book bound in parchment.

“Heavens!” cried Urbain, from his seat.

“Look to your prisoner,” cried the judge to the archers who surrounded him.

“The demon doubtless is about to manifest himself,” said Father Lactantius, in a sombre voice; “tighten his bonds.” He was obeyed.

The judge-advocate continued, “Her name was Madeleine de Brou, aged nineteen.”

“O God! this is too much!” cried the accused, as he fell senseless on the ground.

The assembly was deeply agitated; for a moment there was an absolute tumult.

“Poor fellow! he loved her,” said some.

“So good a lady!” cried the women.

Pity began to predominate. Cold water was thrown upon Grandier, without his being taken from the court, and he was tied to his seat. The judge-advocate went on, —

“We are directed to read the beginning of this book to the court,” and he read as follows: —

“It is for thee, dear and gentle Madeleine, it is to set at rest thy troubled conscience that I have described in this book one thought of my soul. All those thoughts tend to thee, celestial creature, because in thee they return to the aim and object of my whole existence; but the thought I send thee, as ’t were a flower, comes from thee, exists only in 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 is it that they do? The souls of the blessed, what is it that is promised them? Are we less pure than the angels? Are our souls less separated from the earth than they will be after death? Oh, Madeleine, what is there in us wherewith the Lord can be displeased? Can it be that we pray together, that with faces prostrate in the dust before his altars, we

ask for early death to take us while yet youth and love are ours? Or that, musing together beneath the funereal trees of the churchyard, we yearned for one grave, smiling at the idea of death, and weeping at life? Or that, when thou kneelest before me at the tribunal of penitence, and speaking in the presence of God, thou canst find nought of evil to reveal to me, so wholly have I kept thy soul in the pure regions of heaven? What then could offend our Creator? Perhaps — yes! perhaps some spirit of heaven may have envied me my happiness when on Easter day I saw thee kneeling before me, purified by long austerities from the slight stain which the original sin had left in thee! Beautiful, indeed, wert thou! Thy glance sought thy God in heaven, and my trembling hand held his image to thy pure lips, which human lip had never dared to breathe upon. Angelic being! I alone participated in the secret of the Lord, in the one secret of the entire purity of thy soul; I it was united thee to thy Creator, who at that moment descended also into my bosom. Ineffable espousals, of which the Eternal himself was the priest, you alone were permitted between the virgin and her pastor! the sole joy of each was to see eternal happiness commencing for the other, to inhale together the perfumes of heaven, to drink in already the harmony of the spheres, and to feel assured that our souls, unveiled to God and to ourselves alone, were worthy together to adore him.

“ ‘What scruple still weighs upon thy soul, O my sister? Dost thou think I have offered too high a worship to thy virtue? Fearest thou so pure an admiration should deter me from that of the Lord?’ ”

Houmain had reached this point when the door through which the witnesses had withdrawn suddenly opened. The judges anxiously whispered together. Laubardemont, uncertain as to the meaning of this,

signed to the fathers to let him know whether this was some scene executed by their orders; but seated at some distance from him, and themselves taken by surprise, they could not make him understand that they had not prepared this interruption. Besides, ere they could exchange looks, to the stupefaction of the assembly, three women, *en chemise*, with naked feet, each with a cord round her neck and a wax taper in her hand, came through the door and advanced to the middle of the platform. It was the superior of the Ursulines, followed by Sisters Agnes and Claire. Both the latter were weeping; the superior was very pale, but her bearing was firm, and her eyes fixed and tearless. She knelt; her companions followed her example. Everything was in such utter confusion that no one thought of checking them; and in a clear, firm voice she pronounced these words, which resounded in every corner of the hall:—

“In the name of the Holy Trinity, I, Jeanne de Belfiel, daughter of the Baron de Cose, I, the unworthy superior of the convent of the Ursulines of Loudun, ask pardon of God and man for the crime I have committed in accusing the innocent Urbain Grandier. My possession was feigned, my words dictated; remorse overwhelms me.”

“Bravo!” cried the spectators, clapping their hands. The judges arose; the archers, in doubt, looked at the president; he shook in every limb, but did not change countenance.

“Let all be silent,” he said in a sharp voice; “archers, do your duty.”

This man felt himself supported by so a strong hand that nothing could affright him,—for no thought of Heaven ever visited him.

“What think you, my fathers?” said he, making a sign to the monks.

“That the demon seeks to save his friend. — Obmutesce, Satanas!” cried Father Lactantius, in a terrible voice, affecting to exorcise the superior.

Never did fire applied to gunpowder produce an effect more instantaneous than did these two words. Jeanne de Belfiel started up in all the beauty of twenty, which her awful nudity served to augment; she seemed a soul escaped from hell appearing to her seducer. With her dark eyes she cast fierce glances upon the monks; Lactantius lowered his beneath that look. She took two steps towards him with her bare feet, beneath which the scaffolding rung, so energetic was her movement; her taper seemed, in her hand, the sword of the avenging angel.

“Silence, impostor!” she cried with warmth; “the demon who possessed me was yourself. You deceived me; you said he was not to be tried. To-day, for the first time, I know that he is to be tried; to-day, for the first time, I know that he is to be murdered. And I will speak!”

“Woman, the demon bewilders thee.”

“Say, rather, that repentance enlightens me. Daughters, miserable as myself, arise; is he not innocent?”

“We swear he is,” said the two young lay sisters, still kneeling and weeping, for they were not animated with so strong a resolution as that of the superior.

Agnes indeed had scarcely uttered these words than, turning towards the people, she cried, "Help me! they will punish me; they will kill me!" And hurrying away her companion, she threw herself into the crowd, who affectionately received them. A thousand voices swore to protect them. Imprecations arose; the men struck their staves against the floor; the officials dared not prevent the people from passing the sisters on from arm to arm into the street.

During this strange scene the amazed and panic-struck judges whispered, M. Laubardemont looked at the archers, indicating to them the points they were especially to watch, among which, more particularly, was that occupied by the group in black. The accusers looked towards the gallery of the Bishop of Poitiers, but discovered no expression in his apathetic countenance. He was one of those old men whom death appears to take possession of ten years before all motion entirely ceases in them. His eyes seemed veiled by a half sleep; his gaping mouth mumbled a few vague and habitual words of prayer without meaning or application; the entire amount of intelligence he retained was the distinguishing the man who had most power, and him he obeyed, regardless at what price. He had accordingly signed the sentence of the doctors of the Sorbonne which declared the nuns possessed, without even deducing thence the consequence of the death of Urbain; the rest seemed to him one of those more or less lengthy ceremonies, to which he paid not the slightest attention, — accustomed as he was to see and live among them, himself an indispensable part and parcel of them. He

therefore gave no sign of life on this occasion, merely preserving an air at once perfectly noble and null.

Meanwhile Father Lactantius, having had a moment to recover from the sudden attack made upon him, turned towards the president and said,—

“Here is a clear proof, sent us by Heaven of the possession, for the superior has never before forgotten the modesty and severity of her order.”

“Would that all the world were here to see me!” said Jeanne de Belfiel, firm as ever. “I cannot be sufficiently humiliated upon earth, and Heaven will reject me, for I have been your accomplice.”

The perspiration rolled down the forehead of Laubardemont, but he essayed to recover his composure. “What absurd tale is this, my sister; what has influenced you herein?”

The voice of the girl became sepulchral; she collected all her strength, pressed her hand upon her heart as though she desired to stay its throbbing, and looking at Urbain Grandier, answered, “Love.”

A shudder ran through the assembly. Urbain, who since he had fainted had remained with his head hanging down as if dead, slowly raised his eyes towards her, and returned entirely to life only to undergo a fresh sorrow. The young penitent continued,—

“Yes, the love which he rejected, which he never fully knew, which I have breathed in his discourses, which my eyes drew in from his celestial countenance, which his very counsels against it have increased. Yes, Urbain is pure as an angel, but good as a man who has loved. I knew not that he had loved! It is you,” she said,

more energetically, pointing to Lactantius, Barré, and Mignon, and changing her passionate accents for those of indignation,—“it is you who told me that he loved; you, who this morning have too cruelly avenged me by killing my rival with a word. Alas, I only sought to separate them! It was a crime; but by my mother I am an Italian. I burned with love, with jealousy; you allowed me to see Urbain, to have him as a friend, to see him daily.” She was silent for a moment, then exclaimed, “People, he is innocent! Martyr, pardon me, I embrace thy feet!”

She prostrated herself before Urbain and burst into a torrent of tears.

Urbain raised his closely-bound hands, and giving her his benediction, said gently,—

“Go, my sister; I pardon thee in the name of him whom I shall soon see. I have before said to you, and you now see, the passions work much evil, unless we seek to turn them towards heaven.”

The color a second time rose to Laubardemont’s forehead. “Miscreant!” he exclaimed, “darest thou pronounce the words of the Church?”

“I have not quitted her bosom,” said Urbain.

“Remove the girl,” said the president.

When the archers went to obey, they found that she had tightened the cord round her neck with such force that she was of a livid hue and almost lifeless. Fear had driven all the women from the assembly; many had been carried out fainting, but the hall was no less crowded. The ranks thickened, for the men out of the street poured in.

The judges arose in terror, and the president attempted to have the hall cleared; but the people, putting on their hats, stood in alarming immobility. The archers were not numerous enough to repel them. It became necessary to give way; and accordingly Laubardemont in an agitated voice announced that the council would retire for half an hour. He broke up the sitting; the people gloomily remained, each man firmly fixed to his place.





.CHAPTER V.

THE MARTYRDOM.

La torture interroge, et la douleur répond.

RAYNOUARD, *Les Templiers.*

THE continuous interest of this half-trial, the solemnity of its preparations, its interruptions, everything had held the minds of the people in such attention that no private conversation had taken place. When, however, the people were left to themselves, there was, as it were, an explosion of clamorous sentences.

There was at this epoch enough of primitive simplicity among the lower classes for them to be persuaded by the mysterious tales of the political agents who were playing upon them ; so that a large portion of the crowd present in the hall of trial, not venturing to revise their judgment, though upon the manifest evidence just afforded them, awaited in painful suspense the return of the judges, interchanging with an air of mystery and inane importance the usual remarks dictated on such occasions by imbecility.

“One does not know what to think, sir?”

“Truly, Madame, most extraordinary things.”

“We live in strange times!”

“I guessed as much; but, i' faith, it does not do to say what one thinks.”

“We shall see what we shall see,” and so on,—the unmeaningnesses of the crowd, which merely serve to show that it is at the command of the first who lays a strong hand upon it. Much more emphatic things were heard from the group in black.

“What! shall we let them do as they please, in this manner? What! dare to burn our letter to the king!”

“If the king knew it!”

“The barbarian impostors! how skilfully is their plot contrived. What! shall murder be committed under our very eyes? Shall we be afraid of these archers?”

“No, no, no!”

Attention was turned towards the young advocate, who, standing on a bench, began by tearing to pieces a roll of paper; then raising his voice, he cried,—

“Yes, I tear and scatter to the winds the defence I had prepared for the accused. They have suppressed discussion; I am not allowed to speak for him. I can only speak to you, people; I rejoice that I can do so. You heard these infamous judges. Which of them can hear the truth. Which of them is worthy to listen to an honest man? Which of them will dare to look him in the face? Yet what do I say? They all know the truth. They carry it in their guilty breasts; it preys upon their hearts like a serpent. They tremble in their den, where doubtless they are devouring their prey; they tremble

because they have heard the cries of three misled women. What was I about to do? I was about to speak for Urbain Grandier! What eloquence could equal that of these unfortunates? What words could better have shown you his innocence? Heaven has taken up arms for him in bringing these to repentance and to devotion; Heaven will finish its work—”

“Vade retro, Satanas,” was heard through a high window in the hall.

Fournier stopped for a moment, and then—

“You hear these voices parodying the divine language? If I mistake not, these instruments of an infernal power are, by this song of theirs, preparing some new spell.”

“But,” cried those who surrounded him, “what shall we do? What have they done with him?”

“Remain here; be immovable, be silent,” replied the young advocate. “The inertia of a people is all-powerful; that is its true wisdom, that its strength. Look on closely, and in silence; and you will make them tremble.”

“They surely will not dare to show themselves again,” said the Comte du Lude.

“I should like to have another look at the tall scoundrel in red,” said Grand-Ferré, who had lost nothing of what passed.

“And that good gentleman, the curé,” murmured old Father Guillaume Leroux, looking at all his indignant children, who were talking together in a low tone, measuring and counting the archers, ridiculing their dress, and beginning to point them out to the observation of the other spectators.

Cinq-Mars, still leaning with his back to the pillar behind which he had first placed himself, still enveloped in his black cloák, eagerly watched all that passed, lost not a word of what was said, and filled his heart with hate and bitterness. Violent desires for slaughter and revenge, an indefinite desire to strike, took possession of him, despite himself; this is the first impression which evil produces on the soul of a young man. Afterwards sadness takes the place of fury, then indifference and scorn, later still, a selfish admiration for the great villains who have been successful; but this is only when of the two elements which constitute man, earth gains the day over the spirit. Meanwhile, on the right of the hall near the judges' platform, a group of women were attentively regarding a child of about eight years old, who had taken it into his head to climb up to a cornice by the aid of his sister Martine, whom we have seen jested with in such unmeasured terms by the young soldier, Grand-Ferré. The child, having nothing to look at after the court had left the hall, had mounted by means of his hands and feet to a small window which admitted a faint light, and which he imagined to contain a swallow's nest or some other boyish treasure; but when he was well established with his feet on the cornice of the wall, and his hands holding on by the bars of an old shrine of Saint Jerome, he wished himself anywhere else, and cried out,—

“Oh, Sister, Sister, lend me your hand to get down!”

“What is it you see there?” asked Martine.

“Oh, I dare not tell; but I want to get down;” and he began to cry.

“Stay there, my child; stay there!” said all the women. “Don’t be afraid; tell us all that you see.”

“Well, then, they’ve put the curé between two great boards that squeeze his legs, and there are cords round the boards.”

“Ah! that is the rack,” said one of the townsmen. “Look, my little friend, what do you see now?”

The child, more confident, looked again through the window, and then withdrawing his head, said, —

“I cannot see the curé now, because all the judges stand round him, and are looking at him, and their great robes prevent me from seeing. There are also some Capuchins, stooping down to speak to him in a low voice.”

Curiosity brought more people under the boy’s feet; every one was silent, awaiting anxiously to catch his words, as though all their lives depended on them.

“I see,” he went on, “the executioner driving four little pieces of wood between the cords, after the Capuchins have blessed the hammer and nails. Ah, heavens! Sister, how enraged they seem with him, because he will not speak. Mother! Mother! give me your hand, I want to come down!”

Instead of his mother, the child, upon turning round, saw only male faces, looking up to him with a mournful eagerness, and signing him to proceed. He dared not descend, and looked again through the window, trembling.

“Oh! I see Father Lactantius and Father Barré themselves forcing in more pieces of wood, which squeeze his legs. Oh, how pale he is! he seems pray-

ing. There, his head falls back, as if he were dying! Oh, take me away!"

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

"Deus stetit in synagoga deorum: in medio autem Deus dijudicat—" chanted strong and nasal voices, issuing from the small window, which continued in full chorus one of the psalms, interrupted by blows of the hammer,—an infernal deed beating time to celestial songs. One might have supposed one's self near a smith's shop, but that the blows were dull, and manifested to the ear that the anvil was a man's body.

"Silence!" said Fournier, "he speaks. The chanting and the blows stop."

A weak voice within said with difficulty, "Oh, my fathers, mitigate the rigor of your torments, for you will reduce my soul to despair, and I might seek to destroy myself!"

At this, the fury of the people burst forth like an explosion, echoing along the vaulted roofs; the men fiercely sprang upon the platform, thrust aside the surprised and hesitating archers; the unarmed crowd drove them back, pressed them, almost suffocated them against the walls, and held them fast, then dashed against the doors which led to the question-chamber, and making them shake beneath their blows, threatened to drive them in; imprecations resounded from a thousand menacing voices and terrified the judges within.

"They are gone; they have taken him away!" cried a man, who had climbed to the little window.

The multitude at once stopped short, and changing the direction of their steps, fled from this detestable place and rapidly spread through the streets. There an extraordinary confusion prevailed.

Night had come on during the long sitting, and the rain was pouring down in torrents. The darkness was fearful. The cries of women slipping on the pavement or driven back by the horses of the guards; the shout of the assembled and furious men; the incessant tolling of the bells which had been keeping time with the strokes of the question; the roll of distant thunder,—all combined to increase the disorder. If the ear was astonished, the eyes were no less so. A few dismal torches lighted up the corners of the streets, and casting flitting gleams showed soldiers, armed and mounted, dashing along, regardless of the crowd, to assemble in the Place de St. Pierre le Marché; tiles were sometimes thrown at them on their way, but missing the distant culprit, fell upon some unoffending neighbor. The confusion was bewildering, and became still more so, when, hurrying through all the streets towards the Place de St. Pierre, the people found it barricaded on all sides, and filled with mounted guards and archers. Carts, fastened to the posts at each corner, closed each entrance, and sentinels, armed with arquebuses, were stationed close to the carts. In the midst of the Place, arose a pile composed of enormous beams placed crosswise upon one another, so as to form a perfect square; these were covered with a whiter and lighter wood; an immense stake arose from the centre of the scaffold. A man clothed in red and holding a lowered torch stood near this sort

of mast, which was visible from a distance. An enormous chafing-dish, covered on account of the rain, was at his feet.

At this spectacle, terror everywhere inspired a profound silence ; for an instant nothing was heard but the sound of the rain, which fell in torrents, and of the thunder, which came nearer and nearer.

Meanwhile Cinq-Mars, accompanied by MM. du Lude and Fournier and all the more important personages of the town, had taken shelter from the storm under the peristyle of the church of Ste. Croix, raised upon twenty stone steps. The pile was in front, and from this height they could see the whole of the square. The centre was entirely clear, large streams of water alone traversed it ; but all the windows of the houses were gradually lighted up, and showed the heads of the men and women who thronged them.

The young D'Effiat sorrowfully contemplated this lugubrious preparation ; brought up in sentiments of honor, and far removed from the black thoughts which hatred and ambition arouse in the heart of man, he could not conceive that such wrong could be done without some powerful and secret motive. The daring of such a condemnation seemed to him so enormous that its very cruelty began to justify it in his eyes ; a secret horror crept into his soul, the same that silenced the people. He almost forgot the interest with which the unhappy Urbain had inspired him, in thinking whether it were not possible that some secret correspondence with the infernal powers had justly provoked such excessive severity ; and the public revelations of the nuns,

and the statement of his respected tutor, faded from his memory, so powerful is success, even in the eyes of superior men ! so strongly does force impose upon men, despite the voice of conscience !

The young traveller was asking himself if it were not probable that the torture had forced some monstrous confession from the accused, when the obscurity which surrounded the church suddenly ceased. Its two great doors were thrown open ; and by the light of an infinite number of *flambeaux*, appeared all the judges and ecclesiastics, surrounded by guards. In the midst of them was Urbain, supported or rather carried by six men clothed as Black Penitents, — for his limbs, bound with bandages saturated with blood, seemed broken and incapable of supporting him. It was at most two hours since Cinq-Mars had seen him, and yet he could scarcely recognize the face he had so closely observed at the trial. All color, all roundness of form had disappeared from it ; a livid pallor covered a skin yellow and shining like ivory ; the blood seemed to have left his veins ; all the life that remained within him shone from his dark eyes, which appeared to have grown twice as large as before, as he cast them languidly around him ; his long chestnut hair hung loosely down his neck and over a white shirt, which entirely covered him, or rather a sort of robe with large sleeves, and of a yellowish tint, with an odor of sulphur about it ; a long, thick cord encircled his neck and fell upon his breast. He looked like an apparition ; but it was the apparition of a martyr.

Urbain stopped, or rather was set down upon the peri-

style of the church; the Capuchin Lactantius placed a lighted torch in his right hand, and held it there, as he said to him with his hard inflexibility, —

“Do penance, and ask pardon of God for thy crime of magic.”

The unhappy man raised his voice with great difficulty, and with his eyes to heaven said, —

“In the name of the living God, I cite thee, Laubarde-
mont, false judge, to appear before him in three years. They have taken away my confessor, and I have been fain to pour out my faults into the bosom of God himself, for my enemies surround me; I call that God of mercy to witness I have never dealt in magic. I have known no mysteries but those of the Catholic religion, apostolic and Roman, in which I die; I have sinned much against myself, but never against God and our Lord —”

“Proceed not!” cried the Capuchin, affecting to close his mouth ere he could pronounce the name of the Saviour. “Obdurate wretch, return to the demon who sent thee!”

He signed to four priests, who, approaching with sprinklers in their hands, exorcised with holy water the air the magician breathed, the earth he touched, the wood that was to burn him. During this ceremony, the judge-advocate hastily read the decree, dated the 18th of August, 1639, *declaring Urbain Grandier duly attainted and convicted of the crime of sorcery, witchcraft, and possession, in the persons of sundry Ursuline nuns of Loudun, and others, laymen, etc.*

The reader, dazzled by a flash of lightning, stopped

for an instant, and, turning to M. de Laubardemont, asked whether, considering the awful weather, the execution could not be deterred till the next day.

“The decree,” coldly answered Laubardemont, “commands execution within twenty-four hours. Fear not the incredulous people; they will soon be convinced.”

All the most considerable persons of the town 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 at this moment issued from the midst of the Penitents, with an enormous iron crucifix in his hand, which he seemed to hold with precaution and respect; he extended it to the lips of the sufferer, who indeed threw back his head, and collecting all his strength, made a gesture with his arm, which threw the cross from the hands of the Capuchin.

“You see,” cried the latter, “he has thrown down the cross!”

A murmur arose, the meaning of which was dubious.

“Profanation!” cried the priests.

The procession moved on towards the pile.

Meanwhile, Cinq-Mars, gliding behind a pillar, had eagerly watched all that passed; he saw with astonishment that the cross, in falling upon the steps, which were more exposed to the rain than the platform, smoked and made a noise like molten lead when thrown into water. While the public attention was elsewhere engaged, he advanced and touched it lightly with his hand, which was immediately scorched. Seized with indigna-

tion, with all the fury of a true heart he took up the cross with the folds of his cloak, stepped up to Laubardemont, and striking him with it on the forehead, cried,—

“Villain, bear the mark of this red-hot iron!”

The crowd heard these words, and rushed forward.

“Arrest this madman!” 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 Urbain towards the Place, while the judges and archers re-entered the church, struggling with the furious citizens; the executioner, having no time to tie up the victim, hastened to lay him on the wood, and to set fire to it. But the rain still fell in torrents, and each piece of wood had no sooner caught the flame than it became extinguished. In vain did Lactantius and the other canons themselves seek to stir up the fire; nothing could overcome the water which fell from heaven.

Meanwhile the tumult which had commenced in the peristyle of the church extended throughout the square. The cry of “Justice!” was repeated and circulated, with the information of what had been discovered; two barricades were forced, and despite three volleys of musketry, the archers were gradually driven back towards the centre of the square. They in vain spurred their horses against the crowd; it overwhelmed them

with its swelling waves. Half an hour passed in this struggle, the guards still receding towards the pile, which they concealed as they pressed closer upon it.

“On! on!” cried a man; “we will deliver him; do not strike the soldiers, but let them fall back. See, Heaven will not permit him to die! The fire is out; now, friend, one effort more! That is well! Throw down that horse! Forward! on!”

The guard was broken and dispersed on all sides. The crowd rushed to the pile, but there was no longer any light there: all had disappeared, even the executioner. They tore up and threw aside the beams; one of them was still burning, and its light showed under a mass of ashes and ensanguined mire a blackened hand, preserved from the fire by a large iron bracelet and chain. A woman had the courage to open it; the fingers clasped a small ivory cross and an image of Saint Magdalen.

“These are his remains,” she said, weeping.

“Say, the relics of a martyr,” exclaimed a citizen, uncovering.





CHAPTER VI.

THE DREAM.

Nous sommes au printemps, et nos bois sont déserts,
Et le printemps n'a pas, ramenant ses concerts,
Réveillé les oiseaux endormis sous les branches ;
L'aubépine est en deuil, et les faibles pervenches
De leurs boutons flétris s'échappent sans couleurs.
Les vergers languissants altérés de chaleurs,
Au lieu de nous donner des fleurs et de l'ombrage,
Balancent des rameaux dépourvus de feuillages ;
Il semble que l'hiver ne quitte pas les cieux.

JULES LEFEVRE, *Maria*.

MEANWHILE, Cinq-Mars, amid the fray which his outbreak had provoked, felt his left arm seized by a hand as hard as iron, which, drawing him from the crowd to the bottom of the steps, pushed him behind the wall of the church, and he then saw the dark face of old Grandchamp, who said to him in a sharp voice, —

“ Sir, your attacking thirty musketeers in a wood at Chaumont was nothing, because we were near you, though you knew it not, and, moreover, you had to do with men of honor ; but here 't is another thing. Your horses and people are at the end of the street ; I re-

quest you to mount and leave the town, or to send me back to Madame la Maréchale, for I am responsible for your limbs, which you expose so freely."

Cinq-Mars, though somewhat confounded at this rough mode of having a service done him, was not sorry to extricate himself thus from the affair, having had time to reflect how very awkward it might be for him to be recognized, after having struck the head of the judicial authority and the agent of the very cardinal who was to present him to the king. He observed also that there was assembled around him a crowd of the lowest class of people, among whom he blushed to find himself. He therefore followed his old domestic without arguing the matter with him, and found the other three servants waiting for him. Despite the rain and wind he mounted, and was soon upon the high-road with his escort, having put his horse to a gallop to avoid pursuit.

He had, however, no sooner got out of Loudun than the sandy road, furrowed by deep ruts completely filled with water, obliged him to slacken his pace. The rain continued to fall in torrents, and his cloak was almost saturated. He felt a thicker one thrown over his shoulders; it was his old *valet-de-chambre* who had approached him, and thus exhibited for him a maternal solicitude.

"Well, Grandchamp," said Cinq-Mars, "now that we are clear of the scuffle, tell me how you came to be there when I had ordered you to remain at the abbé's."

"*Parbleu, Monsieur!*" answered the old servant, in a grumbling tone, "do you suppose that I should obey you more than I did M. le Maréchal? When my late master, after telling me to remain in his tent, found me behind

him in the cannon's smoke, he made no complaint, because he had a fresh horse ready when his own was killed, and he only scolded me for a moment in his thoughts; but truly, during the forty years I served him, I never saw him act as you have done in the fortnight I have been with you. Ah!" he added with a sigh, "we are going on at a fine rate; and if it continues, there's no knowing what will be the end of it."

"But knowest thou, Grandchamp, that these scoundrels had made the crucifix red hot?—a thing at which there's no honest man but would have been as much enraged as I was."

"Except M. le Maréchal, your father, who would not have done at all what you have done, sir."

"What, then, would he have done?"

"He would very quietly have let this curé be burned by the other curés, and would have said to me, 'Grandchamp, see that my horses have oats, and let no one steal them;' or, 'Grandchamp, take care that the rain does not rust my sword or wet the priming of my pistols;' for M. le Maréchal thought of everything, and never interfered in what did not concern him. That was his great principle; and as he was, thank Heaven, alike good soldier and good general, he was always as careful of his arms as a recruit, and would not have stood up against thirty young gallants with a dress rapier."

Cinq-Mars felt the force of the worthy servitor's epigrammatic scolding, and feared that he had followed him beyond the wood of Chaumont; but he would not ask, lest he should have to give explanations or to tell a falsehood or to command silence, which would at once

have been taking him into confidence on the subject. As the only alternative, he spurred his horse and got before his old domestic; but the latter had not yet had his say, and instead of keeping behind his master, rode up to his left and continued the conversation.

“Do you suppose, sir, that I should allow you to go where you please? No, sir, I am too deeply impressed with the respect I owe to Madame la Marquise, to give her an opportunity of saying to me: ‘Grandchamp, my son has been killed with a shot or with a sword; why were you not before him?’ Or, ‘he has received a stab from the stiletto of an Italian, because he went at night beneath the window of a great princess; why did you not seize the assassin?’ This would be very disagreeable to me, sir, for I have never been reproached with anything of the kind. Once M. le Maréchal lent me to his nephew, M. le Comte, to make a campaign in the Netherlands, because I know Spanish; well, I fulfilled the duty with honor, as I always do. When M. le Comte received a bullet in his heart, I myself brought back his horses, his mules, his tent, and all his equipment, without so much as a pocket-handkerchief being missed; and I can assure you that the horses were as well dressed and harnessed when we re-entered Chaumont as if M. le Comte had been about to go a-hunting. And accordingly I received nothing but compliments and agreeable things from the whole family, just in the way I like.”

“Well, well, my friend,” said Henri d’Effiat, “I may some day, perhaps, have these horses to take back; but in the mean time take this great purse of gold, which I

have well-nigh lost two or three times, and thou shalt pay for me everywhere. The money wearies me."

"M. le Maréchal did not so, sir. He had been superintendent of finances, and he counted every farthing he paid out of his own hand. I do not think your estates would have been in such good condition, or that you would have had so much money to count yourself, had he done otherwise; have the goodness therefore to keep your purse, whose contents, I dare swear, you do not know."

"Faith, not I."

Grandchamp sent forth a profound sigh at his master's disdainful exclamation.

"Ah, M. le Marquis! M. le Marquis! When I think that the great King Henri, before my eyes, put his chamois gloves into his pocket to keep the rain from spoiling them; when I think that M. de Rosni refused him money when he had spent too much; when I think —"

"When thou dost think, thou art egregiously tedious, my old friend," interrupted his master; "and thou wilt do better in telling me what that black figure is that I think I see walking in the mire behind us."

"It looks like some poor peasant woman who wants alms of us; she may easily follow us, for we do not go at much of a pace in this sand, wherein our horses sink up to the hams. We shall go to the Landes perhaps some day, sir, and you will there see a country all the same as this sandy road, and great black firs all the way along. It looks like a churchyard; this is an exact specimen of it. Look, now the rain has ceased and we

can see a little ; there is nothing but furze-bushes on this great plain, without a village or a house. I don't know where we can pass the night ; but if you will take my advice, you will let us cut some boughs and bivouac where we are. You shall see how I can make a hut with a little earth as warm as a bed."

"I would rather go on to the light I see in the horizon," said Cinq-Mars ; "for I fancy I feel rather feverish, and I am thirsty. But fall back, I would ride alone ; rejoin the others and follow."

Grandchamp obeyed ; he consoled himself by giving Germain, Louis, and Etienne lessons in the art of reconnoitring a country by night.

Meanwhile, his young master was overcome with fatigue. The violent emotions of the day had profoundly affected his mind ; and the long journey on horseback, the last two days passed almost without nourishment, owing to the hurried course of events, the heat of the sun by day, the icy coldness of the night, all contributed to increase his indisposition and to weary his delicate frame. For three hours he journeyed on in silence before his people, yet the light he had seen in the horizon seemed no nearer ; at last he ceased to follow it with his eyes, and his head, feeling heavier and heavier, sank upon his breast. He gave the reins to his tired horse, which of its own accord followed the high-road, and crossing his arms, allowed himself to be rocked by the monotonous motion of his fellow-traveller, which frequently stumbled against the large stones that strewed the road. The rain had ceased, as had the voices of his domestics, whose horses followed in the track of their

master's. The young man abandoned himself to the bitterness of his thoughts; he asked himself whether the bright object of his hopes would not flee from him day by day, as that phosphoric light fled from him in the horizon, step by step. Was it probable that the young princess, almost forcibly recalled to the gallant court of Anne of Austria, would always refuse the hands, perhaps royal ones, that would be offered to her? What chance that she would resign herself to renounce a present throne, in order to wait till some caprice of fortune should realize romantic hopes, or take a youth almost in the lowest rank of the army and lift him to the elevation she spoke of, till the age of love should be passed? How could he be certain that even the vows of Marie de Gonzaga were sincere? "Alas," he soliloquized, "perhaps she has blinded herself as to her own sentiments; the solitude of the country had prepared her soul to receive deep impressions. I came; she thought I was he of whom she had dreamed. Our age and my love did the rest. But when at court, she, the companion of the queen, has learned to contemplate from an exalted position the greatness to which I aspire, and which I as yet only see from a very humble distance; when she shall suddenly find herself in actual possession of the future she aims at, and measures with a more correct eye the long road I have to journey over; when she shall hear around her vows like mine, pronounced by lips which could undo me with a word, with a word destroy him whom she awaits as her husband, her lord, — oh, madman that I have been! — she will see all her folly, and will be incensed at mine."

Thus did doubt, the greatest misery of love, begin to rack his sick heart; he felt his hot blood rush to his head and oppress it. Ever and anon he fell forward upon the neck of his horse, and a half sleep weighed down his eyes; the dark firs that bordered the road seemed to him gigantic corpses journeying by his side. He saw, or thought he saw, the same woman clothed in black, whom he had pointed out to Grandchamp, approach so near as to touch his horse's mane, pull his cloak, and then run off with a jeering laugh; the sand of the road seemed to him a river running beneath him, with opposing current, back towards its source. This strange sight dazzled his worn eyes; he closed them, and fell asleep on his horse.

Ere long, he felt himself stopped, but he was numbed with cold and could not move. He saw peasants, lights, a house, a great room into which they carried him, a vast bed, whose heavy curtains were closed by Grandchamp; and he fell asleep again, stunned by the fever that whirred in his ears.

Dreams, that followed one another more rapidly than grains of sand before the wind, dashed through his brain; he could not catch them, and moved restlessly on his bed. Urbain Grandier on the rack, his mother in tears, his tutor armed, Bassompierre loaded with chains, passed before him, making signs of farewell; at last, as he slept, he instinctively put his hand to his head to fix the just passing dream, which then seemed to unfold itself before his eyes like a quicksand.

There was a public square crowded with a foreign people, a northern people, who sent forth cries of joy,

but they were savage cries; there was a line of guards, ferocious soldiers, — these were Frenchmen. “Come with me,” said the soft voice of Marie de Gonzaga, taking his hand. “See, I have a diadem; here is thy throne, come with me.” And she hurried him on, the people still shouting. He went on, on, on, a long way. “Why, then, are you sad, if you are a queen?” he said, trembling. But she was pale, and smiled and spoke not. She ascended, step after step, up to a throne, and seated herself. “Mount,” said she, forcibly pulling his hand. But, at every movement, the massive stairs crumbled beneath his feet, so that he could not ascend. “Give thanks to love,” she continued; and the hand, now more powerful, raised him to the summit. The people still shouted. He bowed low to kiss that helping hand, that adored hand; it was the hand of the executioner!

“Oh, heavens!” exclaimed Cinq-Mars, as, sending forth a deep sigh, he opened his eyes. A flickering lamp lighted the ruinous chamber of the inn; he again closed his eyes, for he had seen, seated on his bed, a woman, a nun, so young, so beautiful! He thought he was still dreaming, but she grasped his hand tightly. He opened his burning eyes, and fixed them upon her.

“Is it you, Jeanne de Belfiel? How the rain has drenched your veil and your black hair! What do you here, unhappy woman?”

“Hark! awake not my Urbain; he sleeps there in the next chamber. Ay, my hair is indeed wet, and my feet — see, my feet that were once so white, see how

the mud has soiled them. But I have made a vow, — I will not wash them till I have seen the king, and he has granted me Urbain's pardon. I am going to the army to find him; I will speak to him as Grandier taught me to speak, and he will pardon him. And listen, I will also ask thy pardon, for I read it in thy face that thou too art condemned to death. Poor youth! thou art too young to die, thy curling hair is beautiful; but yet thou art condemned, for thou hast on thy brow a line that never deceives. The man thou hast struck will kill thee. Thou hast made too much use of the cross; it is that will bring evil upon thee. Thou hast struck with it, and thou wearest it round thy neck by a hair chain. Nay, hide not thy face; have I said aught to afflict thee, or is it that thou lovest, young man? Ah, reassure thyself, I will not tell all this to thy love. I am mad, but I am gentle, very gentle; and three days since I was beautiful. Is she also beautiful? Ah! she will weep some day! Yet, if she can weep, she will be happy!"

And then all at once Jeanne began to recite the service for the dead in a monotonous voice, but with incredible volubility, still seated on the bed, and turning the beads of a long rosary.

Suddenly the door opened; she looked up, and fled through a door in the partition.

"What the devil's that, — an imp or an angel, saying the funeral service over you, and you under the clothes, as in a shroud?"

This abrupt exclamation came from the rough voice of Grandchamp, who was so astonished at what he had

seen that he dropped the glass of lemonade he was bringing in. Finding that his master did not answer, he became still more alarmed, and raised the bed-clothes. Cinq-Mars was crimson in the face, and seemed asleep, but his old domestic saw that the blood rushing to his head had almost suffocated him; and seizing a pitcher full of cold water, he dashed the whole of it in his face. This military remedy rarely fails to effect its purpose, and Cinq-Mars returned to himself with a start.

“Ah! it is thou, Grandchamp; what frightful dreams I have had!”

“*Peste!* M. le Marquis, your dreams, on the contrary, are very pretty ones. I saw the tail of the last as I came in; your choice is not bad.”

“What dost mean, blockhead?”

“Nay, not a blockhead, sir; I have good eyes, and I have seen what I have seen. But, really, ill as you are, M. le Maréchal would never—”

“Thou art utterly doting, my friend, give me some drink, I am parched with thirst. Oh, heavens! what a night! I still see all those women.”

“All those women, sir? Why, how many are here?”

“I am speaking to thee of a dream, blockhead. Why standest there like a post, instead of giving me some drink?”

“Enough, sir; I will get more lemonade.” And going to the door he called over the staircase, “Germain! Etienne! Louis!”

The innkeeper answered from below, “Coming, sir, coming; they have been helping me to catch the mad-woman.”

“What mad-woman?” said Cinq-Mars, getting up in bed.

The host entered, and taking off his cotton cap, said respectfully, — “Oh, nothing, M. le Marquis, only a mad-woman that came here last night on foot, and whom we put in the next chamber; but she has escaped, and we have not been able to catch her.”

“Ah!” exclaimed Cinq-Mars, returning to himself and putting his hand to his eyes, “it was not a dream, then. And my mother, where is she? and the maréchal, and — Ah! and yet it is but a fearful dream! Leave me.”

As he said this, he turned towards the wall, and again pulled the clothes over his head.

The innkeeper, in amazement, touched his forehead three times with his finger, looking at Grandchamp as though to ask him whether his master were also mad.

Grandchamp signed him away in silence, and in order to watch the rest of the night by the side of Cinq-Mars, who was in a deep sleep, he seated himself in a large armchair, covered with carpet-work, and began to squeeze lemons into a glass of water with an air as grave and severe as Archimedes calculating the inflammatory power of his mirrors.





CHAPTER VII.

THE CABINET.

Men have rarely the courage to be wholly good or wholly bad.

MACCHIAVELLI.

Ne cherchez point ailleurs un arbitre suprême. — C. DE PQNS.

LET us leave our young traveller sleeping; he will soon pursue a long and beautiful route. Since we are at liberty to turn to all points of the map, we will fix our eyes upon the city of Narbonne.

See the Mediterranean, not far distant, washing with its blue waters the sandy shores. Enter that city resembling Athens; and to find him who reigns there, follow that dark and irregular street. Mount the steps of the old archiepiscopal palace, and enter the first and largest of its apartments.

It was a very long saloon, lighted by a series of high ogee windows, of which the upper part only have retained the blue, yellow, and red panes that diffuse a mysterious light through the apartment. An immense

round table occupied its entire breadth, near the great fireplace; around this table, covered with a colored cloth and laden with papers and portfolios, were seated, bending over their pens, eight secretaries, busied in copying letters which were passed to them from a smaller table. Other men, cautiously walking to and fro on the carpeted floor, arranged the completed papers in the shelves of a bookcase, partly filled with books bound in black.

Notwithstanding the number of persons assembled in the room, you might have heard the wings of a fly move. The only interruption to the otherwise dead silence was the sound of pens rapidly gliding over paper, and a shrill voice dictating, stopping every now and then to cough. This voice proceeded from a vast armchair placed by the side of the fire, which was blazing, notwithstanding the heat of the season and of the country. It was one of those armchairs that you still see in old castles, and which seem made to read you to sleep in, whatever the book may be, so easy is every part of it. You are received into a circular cushion of down; if the head leans back, the cheeks sink into pillows covered with silk, and the seat juts out so far beyond the elbows that you may believe the provident upholsterers of our forefathers sought to provide that the book should make no noise in falling so as to awaken the sleeper.

But to quit this digression, and proceed to the man who occupied the chair, and was very far from sleeping. He had a broad forehead, bordered with very white thin hair, large mild eyes, a wan, thin face, to which a small pointed white beard gave that air of subtlety and finesse

observable in all the portraits of the age of Louis XIII. ; a mouth almost without lips, which Lavater deems an indubitable sign of an evil mind, was framed, as it were, in a pair of slight gray mustaches and a royale, — an ornament then in fashion, and which somewhat resembled a comma in its form. The old man wore a red close cap, a large *robe-de-chambre*, and stockings of purple silk ; he was no less a personage than Armand Duplessis, Cardinal de Richelieu.

Near him, round the small table of which we have spoken, were four youths of from fifteen to twenty ; these were pages, or domestics, according to the term then in use, which signified *familiars*, friends of the house. This custom was a remnant of feudal patronage, which still existed in our manners. The younger members of high families received wages from the great lords, and were devoted to their service in all things, challenging the first comer at a nod from their patron. The pages we speak of drew up letters from the outline previously given them by the cardinal, and after their master had thrown a glance over them, passed them to the secretaries, who made fair copies of them. The old duc, for his part, wrote on his knee private notes upon small slips of paper, that he inserted in almost all the packets before sealing them, which he did with his own hand.

He had been writing for some moments, when, in a mirror before him, he saw the youngest of his pages writing something on a sheet of paper much smaller than the official sheet. He hastily wrote a few words and then slipped it under the large sheet which, much

against his inclination, he had to fill ; but, seated behind the cardinal, he hoped that the difficulty with which the latter turned round would prevent him from seeing the little manœuvre he seemed to exercise with much dexterity. Suddenly Richelieu said to him dryly, "Come hither, M. Olivier."

These words came like a thunder-clap on the poor boy, who seemed about sixteen. He however rose at once, and stood before the minister, his arms dependent at his side, and his head down.

The other pages and the secretaries stirred no more than soldiers when a comrade is struck down by a ball, so accustomed were they to this kind of summons. The present one, however, was delivered in a more energetic tone than usual.

"What were you writing?"

"My Lord, what your Eminence dictated."

"How!"

"My Lord, the letter to Don Juan de Braganza."

"No evasions, sir ; you were doing something else."

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

"Let me see it."

The page trembled in every limb and was obliged to lean against the chimney-piece, as he said in a scarcely audible tone, "It is impossible."

"M. le Vicomte Olivier d'Entraigues," said the minister, without showing the least emotion, "you are no longer in my service." The page withdrew. He knew that there was no reply ; so slipping his letter into his pocket, and opening the folding-doors just wide enough

to admit of his exit, he glided out like a bird escaped from his cage.

The minister went on writing his note upon his knee.

The secretaries were redoubling their zeal and silence, when the two wings of the door suddenly thrown back showed, standing in the opening, a Capuchin, who bowing, with his arms crossed over his breast, seemed waiting for alms or for an order to retire. He had a dark complexion, and was deeply pitted with the small-pox; his eyes mild, but somewhat squinting, were almost hidden by his thick eyebrows, which met in the middle of his forehead; on his mouth played a crafty, mischievous, and sinister smile; his beard was straight and red, and his costume that of the order of Saint Francis in all its disgusting details, with sandals on his bare feet, that looked altogether unworthy to tread upon carpet.

Such as he was, however, this personage seemed to create a great sensation throughout the room; for without finishing the phrase, the line, or even the word commenced, every person rose and went out by the door where he was still standing,—some saluting him as they passed, others turning away their heads, and the young pages holding their fingers to their noses, but not till they were behind him, for they seemed to have a secret fear of him. When they had all passed out, he entered, making a profound reverence, because the door was still open; but as soon as it was shut, unceremoniously advancing, he seated himself near the cardinal, who, having recognized him by the general movement he created, saluted him with a dry and silent inclination of the head,

regarding him fixedly, as if awaiting some intelligence, and unable to avoid knitting his brows, as at the aspect of a spider or some other disagreeable creature.

The cardinal had been unable to resist this movement of displeasure, because he felt himself obliged, by the presence of his agent, to resume those profound and painful conversations from which he had for some days been free, in a country whose pure air, favorable to him, had somewhat mitigated the pain of his malady; that malady had changed to a slow fever, but its intervals were long enough to enable him to forget during its absence that it must return. Giving, therefore, a little rest to his hitherto indefatigable mind, he had been awaiting, for the first time in his life perhaps, without impatience, the return of the couriers he had sent in all directions, as the rays of a sun which alone gave life and movement to France. He had not expected the visit he now received, and the sight of one of those men whom, to use his own expression, he *steeped in crime*, rendered all the habitual disquietudes of his life more present to him, without entirely dissipating the cloud of melancholy which just then obscured his thoughts.

The beginning of his conversation was overcast with the gloomy hue of his late reveries; but he soon issued from them more animated and vigorous than ever, when his powerful mind had perforce re-entered the real world.

His confidant, seeing that he was to break the silence, did so in this abrupt fashion, —

“ Well, my Lord, of what are you thinking ? ”

“Alas, Joseph, of what should we all think, whoever we be, but upon our future happiness in a better life? For many days past I have been reflecting that human interests have too much diverted me from this great thought; and I repent me of having spent some moments of my leisure in profane works, such as my tragedies of ‘Europe’ and of ‘Mirame,’ despite the glory they have already gained me among our greatest wits,—a glory which will extend unto futurity.”

Father Joseph, full of what he had to say, was at first surprised at this opening; but he knew his master too well to manifest his feelings, and well skilled how to change the direction of his ideas, replied,—

“Yes, their merit is very great, and France will see with regret that these immortal works are not followed by others like them.”

“Yes, my dear Joseph; but it is in vain that such men as Boisrobert, Claveret, Colletet, Corneille, and, above all, the celebrated Mairet, have proclaimed these tragedies the finest that the present or any past age has produced; I reproach myself for them, I swear to you, as for a mortal sin, and I now, in my hours of repose, only occupy myself with my ‘Méthode des Controverses,’ and my book on the ‘Perfection du Chrétien.’ I bear in mind that I am fifty-six years old, and that I have an incurable malady.”

“These are calculations which your enemies make as closely as your Eminence,” said the priest, who began to be annoyed with this conversation, and was eager to proceed to other matters.

The color mounted to the cardinal’s face.

“ I know it ! I know it well ! ” he said ; “ I know all their black villany, and I am prepared for it. But what then is there new ? ”

“ According to our arrangement, my Lord, we have removed Mademoiselle d’Hautefort, as Mademoiselle de la Fayette before her. So far it is well ; but her place is not supplied, and the king — ”

“ Well ! ”

“ The king has ideas which he never had before. ”

“ Hah ! and which proceed not from me ? ’T is well, truly, ” said the minister, with an angry sneer.

“ Why, then, my Lord, leave the place of the favorite vacant for six whole days ? It is not prudent ; pardon me for saying so. ”

“ He has ideas, — ideas ! ” repeated Richelieu, with a kind of terror ; “ and what are they ? ”

“ He talks of recalling the queen-mother, ” said the Capuchin, in a low voice ; “ of recalling her from Cologne. ”

“ Marie de Médicis ! ” cried the cardinal, striking the arms of his chair with his two hands. “ No, by Heaven, she shall not again set her foot upon the soil of France, whence I drove her, step by step ! England has not dared to receive her, exiled by me ; Holland fears to be crushed by her ; and my kingdom to receive her ! No, no, such an idea could not have originated with himself ! Recall my enemy ! recall his mother ! what perfidy ! he would not have dared to think of it. ”

Then, having mused for a moment, he added, fixing a penetrating look still full of fiery anger upon Father Joseph, —

“But in what terms did he express this desire? Tell me the exact words.”

“He said publicly, and in the presence of Monsieur, ‘I feel that one of the first duties of a Christian is to be a good son, and I will not resist the murmurs of my conscience.’”

“Christian! conscience! these are not his expressions. It is Father Caussin; it is his confessor who is betraying me,” cried the cardinal. “Perfidious Jesuit! I pardoned thee thy intrigue with La Fayette; but I will not pass over thy secret counsels. I will have this confessor dismissed, Joseph; he is an enemy to the State, I see it clearly. But I myself have acted with negligence for some days past; I have not sufficiently hastened the arrival of the young D’Effiat, who will doubtless succeed. He is handsome and intellectual, they say. What a blunder! I myself merit disgrace. To leave that fox of a Jesuit with the king, without having given him my secret instructions, without a hostage, a pledge for his fidelity to my orders! What neglect! Joseph, take a pen, and write what I shall dictate for the other confessor, whom we will choose better. I think of Father Sirmond.”

Father Joseph sat down at the large table, ready to write, and the cardinal dictated to him those duties of a new kind, which shortly afterwards he dared to have given to the king, who received them, respected them, and learned them by heart as the commandments of the Church. They have come down to us, — a painful monument of the empire that a man may seize upon by means of circumstances, intrigues, and audacity:

“ I. A prince should have a prime minister, and that minister three qualities : (1) He should have no passion but for his prince ; (2) He should be able and faithful ; (3) He should be an ecclesiastic.

“ II. A prince ought perfectly to love his prime minister.

“ III. 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 his people.

“ VII. Great honors and large possessions.

“ VIII. A prince has no treasure more precious than his prime minister.

“ IX. A prince should not put faith in what people say against his prime minister, nor listen to any such slanders.

“ X. A prince should reveal to his prime minister all that is said against him, *even though he has been bound to keep it secret.*

“ XI. A prince should prefer not only the well-being of the State, but also his prime minister, to all his relations.”

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

While he dictated his instructions, reading them from a small piece of paper, written with his own hand, a profound melancholy seemed to gain possession of him more and more at each successive word ; and when he had ended, he fell back in his chair, his arms crossed, and his head sunk on his breast.

Father Joseph, quitting his pen, arose and was inquiring whether he were ill, when he heard issue from the depths of his chest these mournful and memorable words, —

“What utter weariness! what endless disgust! If the ambitious man could see me, he would flee to a desert. What is my power? A miserable reflection of the royal power; and what labors to fix upon my star that incessantly wavering ray! For twenty years I have been in vain attempting it. I cannot comprehend that man. He dare not flee me; but they take him from me,—he glides through my fingers. What things could I not have done with his hereditary rights, had I possessed them? But employing such infinite calculation in merely keeping one’s balance, what of genius remains for high enterprises? I hold Europe in my hand, and I myself am suspended by a trembling hair. What is it to me that I can cast my eyes confidently over the map of Europe, when all my interests are concentrated in his narrow cabinet, and its few feet of space give me more trouble to govern than the whole country besides? See then what is a prime minister! Envy me my guards, if ye can.”

His features were so contorted as to give reason to fear some accident; and at the same moment he was seized with a long and violent fit of coughing, which ended in a slight expectoration of blood. He saw that Father Joseph, alarmed, was going to seize a gold bell that stood on the table, and suddenly rising with all the vigor of a young man, he stopped him, saying, —

“’Tis nothing, Joseph; I sometimes give way to these fits of depression; but they do not last long, and I quit them stronger than before they came on. As for my health, I know perfectly how I stand; but that is not the business in hand. What have you done at Paris?

I am glad to find the king has arrived in Béarn, as I wished him; we shall be able to keep a closer eye upon him. By what inducement did you get him away?"

"A battle at Perpignan."

"Come, that is not bad. Well, we can arrange that for him; the occupation will do as well as another just now. But the young queen, the young queen, what says she?"

"She is still furious against you; her correspondence discovered, the questioning to which you had subjected her —"

"Bah! a madrigal and a momentary 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 occupy herself with?"

"Machinations with Monsieur. But as we have his entire confidence, here are the daily accounts of their interviews."

"I shall not trouble myself to read them; while the Duc de Bouillon remains in Italy, I have nothing to fear in that quarter. She may have as many petty plots with Gaston in the chimney corner as she pleases; he never got beyond his *excellent intentions*, forsooth. He carries nothing into effect but his withdrawal from the kingdom. He has had his third now, I will manage a fourth for him whenever he pleases; he is not worth the pistol-shot you had the Comte de Soissons settled with, and yet the poor comte had scarce more energy than he."

And the cardinal, reseating himself in his chair, began to laugh gayly enough for a statesman.

“I always laugh when I think of their expedition to Amiens. They had me between them. Each had full five hundred gentlemen with him, armed to the teeth, and all going to despatch me, like Concini; but the big Vitry was not there. They very quietly let me talk for an hour with them about the hunt and the Fête Dieu, and neither of them dared make a sign to their cut-throats. I have since learned from Chavigny that for two long months had they been waiting that happy moment. For myself, indeed, I observed nothing of it, except that little villain, the Abbé de Gondi,¹ who prowled near me, and seemed to have something hidden under his sleeve; it was he that made me get into the coach.”

“Apropos of the abbé, my Lord, the queen insists upon making him coadjutor.”

“She’s mad! he will ruin her if she connects herself with him; he’s a musketeer in canonicals, the Devil in a cassock. Read his ‘Histoire de Fiesque;’ you may see himself in it. He will be nothing while I live.”

“How is it that with a judgment like yours you bring another ambitious man of his age to court?”

“It is an entirely different matter. This young Cinq-Mars, my friend, will be a puppet, a mere puppet. He will think of nothing but his ruff and his shoulder-knots; his handsome figure assures me of this. I know that he is gentle and infirm of purpose; it was for this reason I preferred him to his elder brother. He will do all we wish.”

“Ah, my Lord,” said the monk, with an expression of doubt, “I never place much reliance on people whose

¹ Afterwards the Cardinal de Retz.

exterior is so calm; the flame within is often all the more dangerous. Recollect the Maréchal d'Effiat, his father."

"But I tell you he is a boy, and I shall bring him up; while Gondi is already an accomplished conspirator, an ambitious knave who sticks at nothing. He has dared to dispute Madame de la Meilleraie with me. Can you conceive it? He dispute with me! A petty priestling, who has no other merit than a little lively tittle-tattle and a cavalier air. Fortunately, the husband himself took care to get rid of him."

Father Joseph, who listened with equal impatience to his master when he spoke of his *bonnes fortunes* and when he talked of his verses, made, however, a grimace which he meant to be very sly and insinuating, but which was simply unsightly and awkward; he fancied that the expression of his mouth, twisted about like a monkey's, conveyed, "Ah! who can resist your Eminence?" But his Eminence only read there, "I am a clownish pedant who knows nothing of the great world;" and without changing his voice, he suddenly said, taking up a despatch from the table,—

"The Duc de Rohan is dead, that is good news; the Huguenots are ruined. He's a lucky man. I had him condemned by the parliament of Toulouse to be torn in pieces by four horses, and here he dies quietly on the battle-field of Rhinfeld. But what matters? The result is the same. There's another great head laid low! How they have fallen since that of Montmorency! I now scarcely see any that do not bow before me. We have already punished almost all our dupes of Versailles;

assuredly they have nothing wherewith to reproach me. I simply exercise against them the law of retaliation, treating them as they would have treated me in the council of the queen-mother. The old dotard Bassompierre shall be quit for perpetual imprisonment, and so shall the assassin. Maréchal de Vitry, for that was the punishment they voted me. As for Marillac, who counselled death, I reserve death for him at the first false step he makes, and I beg thee, Joseph, to remind me of him; we must be just to all. There's the Duc de Bouillon still keeps up his head proudly on account of his Sedan, but I'll make him give way. Their blindness is truly marvellous! They think themselves all free to conspire, not perceiving that they are merely fluttering at the end of the threads that I hold in my hand, and which I lengthen now and then to give them air and space. Did the Huguenots yell as one man at the death of their dear duc?"

"Less so than at the affair of Loudun, which is happily concluded."

"How! happily? I hope that Grandier is dead?"

"Yes; that is what I meant. Your Eminence may be fully satisfied. All was settled in twenty-four hours. he is no longer thought of. Only Laubardemont committed a slight blunder in making the sitting public. This caused a little tumult; but we have a description of the rioters, and measures are taken to seek them out."

"This is well, very well. Urbain was too superior a man to be left there; he was turning Protestant. I would bet that he would have ended by abjuring. His work against the celibacy of priests made me conjecture

this ; and in cases of doubt, remember, Joseph, it is always best to cut the tree before the fruit is gathered. These Huguenots, you see, are a regular republic in the State. If once they had a majority in France, the monarchy would be lost ; they would establish some popular government which might be durable."

"And what deep pain do they daily cause our holy Father the Pope!" said Joseph.

"Ah," interrupted the cardinal, "I see ; thou wouldst remind me of his obstinacy in not giving thee the hat. Be tranquil ; I will speak to-day on the subject to the new ambassador we are sending, the Maréchal d'Estrées, and he will, on his arrival, doubtless obtain that which has been in train these two years, thy nomination to the cardinalate. I myself begin to think that the purple would become thee well, for it does not show blood-stains."

And both burst into laughter, — the one as a master, overwhelming the assassin whom he pays with his utter scorn, the other as a slave resigned to all the humiliations by which he rises.

The laughter which the ferocious pleasantry of the old minister had excited had scarce subsided, when the door of the cabinet opened, and a page announced several couriers who had arrived simultaneously from different points ; Father Joseph arose, and standing, his back leaning against the wall like an Egyptian mummy, allowed nothing to appear upon his face but a stolid contemplation. Twelve messengers entered successively, attired in various disguises ; one seemed a Swiss soldier, another a sutler, a third a master-mason. They were



A. Dawant, inv.

Gaujean sc.

RICHELIEU AND JOSEPH

introduced into the palace by a secret staircase and corridor, and left the cabinet by a door opposite that at which they had entered, without any opportunity of meeting one another or communicating aught of their despatches. Each laid a rolled or folded packet of papers on the large table, spoke for a moment with the cardinal in the embrasure of a window, and withdrew. Richelieu had risen on the entrance of the first messenger, and, careful to do all himself, had received them all, listened to all, and with his own hand closed the door upon all. When the last was gone, he signed to Father Joseph, and without speaking, both proceeded to open, or rather to tear open, the packets of despatches, and in a few words communicated to one another the substance of the letters.

“The Duc de Weimar pursues his advantage; the Duc Charles is defeated. Our general is in good spirits; here are some of his exhilarant remarks at table. Good!”

“Monseigneur le Vicomte de Turenne has retaken the towns of Lorraine; and here are his private conversations —”

“Oh! pass over them; they cannot be dangerous. He is ever a good and honest man, in no way mixing himself up with politics; so that he be given a little army to play at chess with, no matter against whom, he is content. We shall always be very good friends.”

“The Long Parliament still endures in England. The Commons pursue their project; here are massacres in Ireland. The Earl of Strafford is condemned to death.”

“To death! horrible!”

“I will read: ‘His Majesty Charles I. has not had the courage to sign the sentence, but he has appointed four commissioners.’”

“Weak king, I abandon thee. Thou shalt have no more of our money. Fall, since thou art ungrateful! Unhappy Wentworth!”

A tear rose in the eyes of Richelieu as he said this; the man who had but just played with the lives of so many others wept for a minister abandoned by his prince. The relation between that position and his own affected him, and it was himself he wept in the person of the foreign minister. He ceased to read aloud the despatches that he opened, and his confidant followed his example. He examined with scrupulous attention the detailed accounts of the most minute and most secret actions of each person of any importance, — accounts which he always required to be added to the official despatches, by his able spies. The despatches to the king all passed through his hands, and were carefully revised so as to reach the king amended to the state in which he wished him to read them. The private notes were all carefully burned by the monk when the cardinal had ascertained their contents. The latter, however, seemed by no means satisfied, and he was walking quickly up and down the apartment with gestures expressive of anxiety, when the door opened, and a thirteenth courier entered. This one seemed a boy of scarce fourteen; he held under his arm a packet sealed with black for the king, and gave to the cardinal only a small letter, of which a stolen glance from Joseph could

collect but four words. The duc started, tore the billet into a thousand pieces, and bending down to the ear of the boy, spoke to him for a long time; all that Joseph heard was, as the messenger went out:—

“*Take good heed to this; not until twelve hours from this time.*”

During this *aside* of the cardinal, Joseph was occupied in concealing an infinite number of libels from Flanders and Germany, which the minister ever insisted upon seeing, however bitter they might be to him. In this respect, he affected a philosophy which he was far from possessing, and to deceive those around him he would sometimes pretend that his enemies were not wholly wrong, and would outwardly laugh at their pleasantries; but those who knew his character better detected bitter rage lurking under this apparent moderation, and knew that he was never satisfied until he had got the hostile book condemned by the parliament to be burned in the Place de Grève, as “injurious to the king, in the person of his minister, the most illustrious cardinal,” as we read in the decrees of the time, and that his only regret was that the author was not in the place of his book,— a satisfaction he gave himself whenever he could, as in the case of Urbain Grandier.

It was his colossal pride which he thus avenged, without avowing it even to himself,— nay, laboring for a length of time, sometimes for a whole twelvemonth together, to persuade himself that the interest of the State was concerned in the matter. Ingenious in connecting his private affairs with the affairs of France, he had convinced himself that she bled from the wounds which he re-

ceived. Joseph, careful not to irritate his ill temper at this moment, put aside and concealed a book, entitled, "Mysteries Politiques du Cardinal de la Rochelle;" also another, attributed to a monk of Munich, entitled, "Questions quolibetiques, ajustées au temps présent, et Impiété Sanglante du dieu Mars." The worthy advocate Aubery, who has given us one of the most faithful histories of the *most eminent* cardinal, is transported with rage at the mere title of the first of these books, and exclaims that "the great minister had good reason to glorify himself that his enemies, inspired against their will with the same enthusiasm which conferred the gift of rendering oracles upon the ass of Balaam, upon Caiaphas and others, who seemed most unworthy of the gift of prophecy, called him with good reason Cardinal de la Rochelle, since three years after their writing he reduced that town; thus Scipio was called Africanus for having subjugated that PROVINCE!" Very little was wanting to make Father Joseph, who had necessarily the same feelings, express his indignation in the same terms; for he remembered with bitterness the ridiculous part he had played in the siege of Rochelle, which, though not a *province* like Africa, had ventured to resist the *most eminent* cardinal, and into which Father Joseph, piquing himself on his military skill, had proposed to introduce the troops through a sewer. However, he restrained himself, and had time to conceal the libel in the pocket of his brown robe ere the minister had dismissed his young courier, and returned to the table.

"And now to depart, Joseph," he said. "Open the doors to all that court which besieges me, and let us go

to the king, who awaits me at Perpignan ; this time I have him for good."

The Capuchin drew back, and immediately the pages, throwing open the gilded doors, announced in succession the greatest lords of the period, who had obtained permission from the king to come and salute the minister. Some, even, under the pretext of sickness or business had departed secretly, in order not to be among the last at Richelieu's levee ; and the unhappy monarch found himself almost as alone as other kings find themselves on their death-beds. But with him, the throne seemed, in the eyes of the court, his dying couch, his reign a continual last agony, and his minister a threatening successor.

Two pages, of the first families of France, stood at the door, where the ushers announced each of the persons whom Father Joseph had found in the anteroom. The cardinal, still seated in his great armchair, remained motionless as the common courtiers entered, inclined his head to the most distinguished, and to princes alone put his hands on the elbows of his chair and slightly rose ; each person, having profoundly saluted him, stood before him near the fireplace, waited till he had spoken to him, and then, at the motion of his hand, completed the circle of the room, and went out by the same door at which he had entered, paused for a moment to salute Father Joseph, whoaped his master, and who for that reason had been named his Gray Eminence, and at last quitted the palace, unless, indeed, he remained standing behind the chair, at the minister's intimation to that effect, which was considered a token of very great favor.

He let pass several insignificant persons, and many whose merits were useless to him; the first whom he stopped in the procession was the Maréchal d'Estrées, who, then about to set out on an embassy to Rome, came to make his adieux; all behind him stopped short. This circumstance gave notice to the anteroom that a longer conversation than usual was on foot, and Father Joseph, advancing to the threshold, exchanged with the cardinal a glance which seemed to say, on the one side, "Remember the promise you just made me," on the other, "Set your mind at rest." At the same time, the expert Capuchin let his master see that he held upon his arm one of his victims, whom he was forming into a docile instrument; this was a young gentleman who wore a very short green cloak, a *pourpoint* of the same color, close-fitting red breeches, with glittering gold garters below the knee, — the costume of the pages of Monsieur. Father Joseph, indeed, spoke to him secretly, but not in the way the cardinal imagined; for he contemplated being his equal, and was preparing other connections, in case of defection on the part of the prime minister.

"Tell Monsieur not to trust in appearances, and that he has no servant more faithful than I. The cardinal is on the decline, and my conscience tells me to warn against his faults him who may inherit the royal power during the minority. To give your great prince a proof of my faith, tell him that it is intended to arrest his friend, Puy-Laurens, and that he had better be kept out of the way, or the cardinal will put him in the Bastille."

While the servant was thus betraying his master, the master, not to be behindhand with him, betrayed his servant. His self-love, and some remnant of respect to the Church, made him shudder at the idea of seeing a contemptible agent invested with the same hat which he himself wore as a crown, and seated as high as himself, except as to the precarious position of minister. Speaking, therefore, in an undertone to the Maréchal d'Estrées, he said, —

“It is not necessary to importune Urban VIII. any further in favor of the Capuchin you see yonder; it is enough that his Majesty has deigned to name him for the cardinalate. One can readily conceive the repugnance of his Holiness to clothe this mendicant in the Roman purple.”

Then passing on to general matters, he continued, —

“Truly, I know not what can have cooled the holy Father towards us; what have we done that was not for the glory of our holy Mother, the Catholic Church? I myself said the first mass at Rochelle, and you see for yourself, M. le Maréchal, that our habit is everywhere; and even in your armies, the Cardinal de la Vallette has commanded gloriously in the palatinate.”

“And has just made a very fine *retreat*,” said the maréchal, laying a slight emphasis upon the word.

The minister continued, without paying any attention to this little ebullition of professional jealousy, and raising his voice, said, —

“God has proved that he did not scorn to send the spirit of victory upon his Levites, for the Duc de Weimar did not more powerfully aid in the conquest

of Lorraine than did this pious cardinal, and never was a naval army better commanded than by our Archbishop of Bordeaux at Rochelle."

It was well known that at this very moment the minister was incensed against this prelate, whose haughtiness was so overbearing, and whose impertinent ebullitions were so frequent as to have involved him in two very disagreeable affairs at Bordeaux. Four years before, the Duc d'Epéron, then governor of Guyenne, followed by all his train and by his troops, meeting him in the midst of his clergy in a procession, called him an insolent fellow, and gave him two smart blows with his cane; whereupon the archbishop excommunicated him. And again, recently, despite this lesson, he had quarrelled with the Maréchal de Vitry, from whom he had received "*twenty blows with a cane or stick, which you please,*" wrote the cardinal-duc to the Cardinal de la Vallette, "*and I think he would like to excommunicate all France.*" In fact, he did excommunicate the maréchal's baton, remembering that in the former case the pope had obliged the Duc d'Epéron to ask his pardon; but M. Vitry, who had caused the Maréchal d'Ancre to be assassinated, stood too well at court for that, and the archbishop, in addition to his beating, got well scolded by the minister.

M. d'Estrées thought, therefore, with tact, that there might be some irony in the cardinal's manner of referring to the warlike talents of the archbishop, and he answered with perfect *sang-froid*,—

"It is true, my Lord, no one can say that 't was upon the sea he was beaten."

His Eminence could not restrain a smile at this ; but seeing that the electrical effect of that smile had created others in the hall, as well as whisperings and conjectures, he immediately resumed his gravity, and familiarly taking the maréchal's arm, said, —

“Come, come, M. l'Ambassadeur, you are ready at repartee. With you I should not fear Cardinal Albornos, or all the Borgias in the world, or all the efforts of their Spain with the holy Father.”

Then, raising his voice, and looking round him, as if addressing himself to the silent, and, so to speak, captive assembly, he continued, —

“I hope that we shall no more be reproached, as formerly, for having formed an alliance with one of the greatest men of our day ; but as Gustavus Adolphus is dead, the Catholic king will no longer have any pretext for soliciting the excommunication of the most Christian king. How say you, my dear Lord ?” addressing himself to the Cardinal de la Vallette, who now approached, fortunately without having heard the late allusion to himself. “M. d'Estrées, remain near our chair ; we have still many things to say to you, and you are not one too many in our conversations, for we have no secrets. Our policy is frank, and open to all men ; the interest of his Majesty and of the State, — nothing more.”

The maréchal made a profound bow, fell back behind the chair of the minister, and gave place to the Cardinal de la Vallette, who, incessantly bowing and flattering and swearing devotion and entire obedience to the cardinal, as if to expiate the obduracy of his father the Duc

d'Épernon, received in return a few vague words, to no meaning or purpose, the cardinal all the while looking towards the door, to see who should follow. He had even the mortification to find himself abruptly interrupted by the minister, who cried at the most flattering period of his honeyed discourse, —

“ Ah! is that you at last, my dear Fabert? How I have longed to see you, to talk of the siege!”

The general, with a brusque and awkward manner, saluted the cardinal-generalissimo, and presented to him the officers who had come from the camp with him. He talked some time of the operations of the siege, and the cardinal seemed, as it were, to be paying him court now, in order to prepare him afterwards for receiving his orders even on the field of battle; he spoke to the officers who accompanied him, calling them by their names, and questioning them about the camp.

They all stood aside to make way for the Duc d'Angoulême, — that Valois, who, after having struggled against Henri IV., now prostrated himself before Richelieu. He solicited a command, having been only third in rank at the siege of Rochelle. After him came young Mazarin, ever supple and insinuating, but already confident in his fortune.

The Duc d'Halluin came after them; the cardinal broke off the compliments he was addressing to the others, to utter in a loud voice, —

“ M. le Duc, I inform you with pleasure that the king has made you a marshal of France; you will sign yourself Schomberg, will you not, at Leucate, delivered, as we hope, by you? But pardon me, here

is M. de Montauron, who has doubtless something important to communicate."

"Oh, no, my Lord, I would only say that the poor young man whom you deigned to consider in your service is dying of hunger."

"Pshaw! at such a moment to speak of things like this! Your little Corneille will not write anything good; we have only seen the 'Cid' and 'Les Horaces' as yet. Let him work, let him work; it is known that he is in my service, and that is disagreeable. However, since you interest yourself in the matter, I give him a pension of five hundred crowns on my privy purse."

And the chancellor of the exchequer retired, charmed with the liberality of the minister, and went home to receive with great affability the dedication of "Cinna," wherein the great Corneille compares his soul to that of Augustus, and thanks him for having given alms à *quelques Muses*.

The cardinal, vexed by this importunity, rose, observing that the day was advancing, and that it was time to set out to visit the king.

At this moment, and as the greatest noblemen present were offering their arms to aid him in walking, a man in the robe of a referendary advanced towards him, saluting him with a complacent and confident smile which astonished all the people there, accustomed to the great world, seeming as it did to say, "We have secret affairs together; you shall see how agreeable he makes himself to me. I am at home in his cabinet." His heavy and awkward manner, however, betrayed a very inferior being; it was Laubardemont.

Richelieu knit his brows when he saw him before him, and cast a glance at Joseph ; then turning towards those who surrounded him, he said with bitter scorn, —

“Is there some criminal about us to be apprehended ?

Then turning his back upon the utterly discomfited Laubardemont, the cardinal left him redder than his robe, and preceded by the crowd of personages who were to escort him in carriages or on horseback, he descended the great staircase of the palace.

All the people and authorities of Narbonne viewed this royal departure with stupefaction.

The cardinal entered alone a spacious litter of a square form, in which he was to travel to Perpignan, his infirmities not permitting him to go in a coach, or to perform the journey on horseback. This kind of moving chamber contained a bed, a table, and a small chair for the page who wrote or read for him. This machine, covered with purple damask, was carried by eighteen men, who were relieved at intervals of a league ; they were selected from among his guards, and always performed this service of honor with uncovered heads, however hot or wet the weather might be. The Duc d'Angoulême, the Maréchals de Schomberg and d'Estrées, Fabert and other dignitaries, were on horseback beside the litter ; after them, among the most forward were observed Cardinal de la Vallette and Mazarin, with Chavigny, and the Maréchal de Vitry, anxious to avoid the Bastille, with which it was said he was threatened.

Two coaches followed for the cardinal's secretaries, physicians, and confessor ; then eight others, each with four horses, for his gentlemen, and twenty-four mules for

his luggage. Two hundred musketeers on foot marched close after him, and his company of men-at-arms of the guard and his light-horse, all of them gentlemen, rode before and behind him on splendid horses.

Such was the equipage in which the prime minister proceeded to Perpignan; the size of the litter often made it necessary to enlarge the roads, and knock down the walls of some of the *towns and villages* on the way, into which it could not otherwise enter, "so that," say the authors and manuscripts of the time, full of a sincere admiration for all this luxury, — "so that he seemed a conqueror entering by the breach." We have sought in vain with great care, in these manuscripts, for any account of proprietors or inhabitants of these houses so making room for his passage who participated in this admiration; but we have been unable to find any mention of such.





CHAPTER VIII.

THE INTERVIEW.

“ Mon génie étonné tremble devant le sien.”

THE pompous *cortége* of the cardinal stopped at the entrance to the camp. All the troops under arms were drawn up in the finest order ; and it was amid the sound of cannon and the music of each regiment that the litter traversed a long line of cavalry and infantry, formed from the outermost tent to that of the minister, pitched at some distance from the royal quarters, and which its purple covering distinguished at a distance. Each general of division obtained a nod or a word from the cardinal, who at length reaching his tent and dismissing his train shut himself in, waiting for the time to present himself to the king. But, before him, every person of his escort had repaired thither individually, and without entering the royal abode, collected in the long galleries covered with striped stuff, and arranged as became avenues leading to the prince. The courtiers, walking in

groups, saluted one another and shook hands, regarding each other haughtily, according to their connections or the lords to whom they belonged. Others whispered together and gave signs of astonishment, pleasure, or anger, which showed that something extraordinary had taken place. Among a thousand others, one singular dialogue occurred in a corner of the principal gallery.

“May I ask, M. l’Abbé, why you look at me so fixedly?”

“*Parbleu!* M. de Launay, ’tis because I’m curious to see what you will do. All the world abandons your cardinal-duc since your journey into Touraine; if you do not believe it, go and ask the people of Monsieur or of the queen. You are behindhand ten minutes by the watch with the Cardinal de la Vallette, who has just shaken hands with Rochefort and the gentlemen of the late Comte de Soissons, whom I shall regret as long as I live.”

“Well, M. de Gondi, I understand you; ’tis a challenge with which you honor me?”

“Yes, M. le Comte,” answered the young abbé, saluting him with all the gravity of the time; “I sought an occasion to challenge you in the name of M. d’Attichi, my friend, with whom you had something to do at Paris.”

“M. l’Abbé, I am at your command. I will seek my seconds; do you the same.”

“On horseback, with sword and pistol, I suppose?” added Gondi, with the air of a man arranging a party of pleasure, brushing the sleeve of his cassock with his finger.

“If you please,” replied the other. And they separated for a time, saluting one another with the greatest politeness, and with profound bows.

A brilliant crowd of gentlemen circulated around them in the gallery. They mixed in it to procure friends for the occasion. All the elegance of the costumes of the day were displayed by the court that morning, — small cloaks of every color, in velvet or in satin, embroidered with gold or silver; crosses of Saint Michael and of the Holy Ghost; the ruffs, the infinite hat-plumes, the gold shoulder-knots, the chains by which the long swords hung: all glittered and sparkled, yet not so brilliantly as did the fiery glances of those warlike youths, or their sprightly conversation, or their intellectual laughter. Amid the assembly, grave personages and great lords passed on, followed by their numerous gentlemen.

The little Abbé de Gondi, who was very short-sighted, made his way through the crowd, knitting his brows and half shutting his eyes, that he might see the better, and twisting his mustache, for ecclesiastics wore them in those days. He looked closely at every one in order to recognize his friends, and at last stopped before a young man, very tall and dressed in black from head to foot; his sword, even, was of quite dark bronzed steel. He was talking with a captain of the guards, when the Abbé de Gondi took him aside.

“M. de Thou,” said he, “I need you as my second in an hour, on horseback, with sword and pistol, if you will do me that honor.”

“Sir, you know I am entirely at your service on all occasions. Where shall we meet?”

"In front of the Spanish bastion, if you please."

"Pardon me for returning to a conversation that greatly interests me. I will be punctual to the rendezvous."

And De Thou quitted him to rejoin the captain. He had said all this in the gentlest of voices with unalterable coolness, and even with somewhat of an abstracted manner.

The little abbé squeezed his hand with warm satisfaction, and continued his search.

He did not so easily effect an agreement with the young lords to whom he addressed himself; for they knew him better than did De Thou, and when they saw him coming at a distance, they tried to avoid him, or laughed at him to his face, and would not engage to serve him.

"Ah, Abbé! there you are hunting again; I'll engage it's a second you want," said the Duc de Beaufort.

"And I wager," added M. de la Rochefoucauld, "that it's against one of the cardinal-duc's people."

"You are both right, gentlemen; but since when laugh you at affairs of honor?"

"The saints forbid I should," said M. de Beaufort. "Men of the sword like us ever reverence tierce, quarte, and octave; but as for the folds of the cassock, I know nothing of them."

"*Pardieu!* sir, you know well enough that it does not embarrass my wrist, as I will prove to him who choose; as to the gown itself, I should like to throw it into the gutter."

"Is it then to tear it you fight so often?" asked

La Rochefoucauld. "But remember, my dear abbé, that you are inside it."

Gondi turned round to look at the clock, anxious to lose no more time in such sorry jests; but he had no better success elsewhere. Having stopped two gentlemen in the service of the young queen, whom he thought ill-affected towards the cardinal, and consequently glad to measure swords with his creatures, one of them said to him very gravely, —

"M. de Gondi, you know what has just happened; the king has said aloud, 'Whether our imperious cardinal please or no, the widow of Henri le Grand shall no longer remain in exile.' *Imperious!* the king never before said anything so strong as that, M. l'Abbé, mark that. *Imperious!* it is a clear disgrace. Assuredly no one will venture to speak to him; he will quit the court this very day."

"I have heard this, sir, but I have an affair —"

"It is lucky for you he stopped short in the middle of your career."

"An affair of honor —"

"Whereas Mazarin is quite a friend of yours."

"But will you, or will you not, listen to me?"

"Ay, a friend indeed! your adventures are always running in his head. Your fine duel with M. de Coutenan about the pretty little pin-seller, — he even spoke of it to the king. Adieu, my dear abbé, we are in a great hurry; adieu, adieu!" And taking his friend's arm, the young banterer, without listening to another word, rapidly walked down the gallery and disappeared in the crowd.

The poor abbé was standing very mortified at only being able to get one second, and watching grievously the departure of the hour and of the crowd, when he perceived a young gentleman whom he did not know, seated at a table, leaning on his elbow with a melancholy air ; he wore mourning which indicated no connection with any great house or party, and seeming to await, without any impatience, the time for attending the king, looked with a heedless air at those who surrounded him, seeming not to notice or to know any of them.

Gondi accosted him without hesitation :—

“Faith, sir, I have not the honor of your acquaintance, but a fencing party can never be unpleasant to a man of honor ; and if you will be my second, in a quarter of an hour we shall be on the ground. I am Paul de Gondi ; and I have challenged M. de Launay, one of the cardinal’s faction, but in other respects a very gallant fellow.”

The unknown, seeming in no way surprised at this address, answered without altering his position, “And who are his seconds ?”

“Faith, I don’t know ; but what matters it who seconds him ? We stand no worse with our friends for having exchanged a thrust with them.”

The stranger smiled carelessly, paused for an instant to pass his hand through his long chestnut hair, and then said, drowsily looking at a large round watch which hung at his girdle,—

“Well, sir, as I have nothing better to do, and as I have no friends here, I am with you ; ’t will pass the time as well as anything else.”

And taking his large black plumed hat off the table, he followed the warlike abbé, who hurried on before him, ever and anon running back to hasten him on, like a child running before his father, or a young dog that goes backwards and forwards twenty times before it gets to the end of a lane.

Meanwhile, two ushers, clothed in the royal livery, opened the great curtains which separated the gallery from the king's tent, and silence became universal. The courtiers began to enter slowly, and in succession, the temporary dwelling of the prince. He received them all gracefully, and himself first met the view of each person introduced.

Before a very small table surrounded with gilt arm-chairs stood Louis XIII., encircled by the great officers of the crown. His dress was very elegant: a kind of fawn-colored vest, with open sleeves, ornamented with shoulder-knots and blue ribbons, covered him down to the waist. Wide breeches reached only to above the knee, and the yellow and red striped stuff of which they were composed was ornamented below with blue ribbons. His boots *à l'écuyère*, reaching scarcely more than three inches above his ankle, were turned down with such a profusion of lace that they seemed to hold it as a vase holds flowers. A small mantle of blue velvet, on which was embroidered the cross of the Holy Ghost, covered the king's left arm, which rested on the hilt of his sword.

His head was uncovered, and his pale and noble face was perfectly visible, lighted up by the sun, which penetrated through the top of the tent. The small pointed

beard then worn aggravated the thinness of his face, while it added to its melancholy expression ; by his lofty brow, his classical profile, his aquiline nose, was at once recognized a prince of the great race of Bourbon. He had all the characteristic traits of his ancestors except their potent glance ; his eyes seemed red with tears, and veiled with a perpetual sleep ; and the weakness of his sight gave him a somewhat vacant look.

On this occasion, he ostentatiously called around him and was attentive to the greatest enemies of the cardinal, whom he expected every moment ; and balancing himself with one foot over the other, an hereditary habit of his family, he spoke quickly, but stopping from time to time to make a gracious inclination of the head, or a gesture of the hand, to those who passed before him with low bows.

The court had been thus paying its respects to the king for two hours ere the cardinal appeared ; the whole court was collected in close ranks behind the prince, and in the long galleries which extended from his tent. Already a longer interval began to elapse between the names of the courtiers who were announced.

“ Shall we not see our cousin the cardinal ? ” said the king, turning round, and looking at Montrésor, one of Monsieur’s gentlemen, as if to encourage him to answer.

“ He is said to be very ill just now, Sire,” was the answer.

“ And yet I do not see how any but your Majesty can cure him,” said the Duc de Beaufort.

“ We cure nothing but the evil,” replied Louis ; “ and

the complaints of the cardinal are always so mysterious that we own we cannot at all understand them."

The prince thus essayed to brave his minister beforehand, gaining strength in jests, the better to break his yoke, so insupportable but so difficult to remove. He almost thought he had succeeded in this, and, supported by the joyous air of all who surrounded him, he already inwardly congratulated himself on having been able to assume the supreme empire, and for the moment enjoyed all the power he thought himself possessed of. An involuntary agitation in the depth of his heart had warned him indeed that, the hour passed, all the weight of the State would fall upon himself alone; but he talked in order to divert the troublesome thought, and concealing from himself the firm assurance he had of his own inability to reign, he set his imagination to work upon the result of his enterprises, thus forcing himself to forget the tedious roads which led to them. Rapid sentences succeeded one another on his lips.

"We shall soon take Perpignan," he said to Fabert, who stood at some distance.

"Well, Cardinal, Lorraine is ours," he added to La Vallette. Then touching Mazarin's arm,—

"It is not so difficult to conduct a State as is supposed, eh?"

The Italian, who was not so sure as most of the courtiers of the cardinal's disgrace, answered without compromising himself,—

"Ah, Sire, the late successes of your Majesty at home and abroad manifest your skill in choosing your instruments and in directing them, and —"

But the Duc de Beaufort, interrupting him with that self-sufficiency, that loud voice and air, which subsequently procured him the surname of Important, cried out vehemently, —

“*Pardieu!* Sire, it needs only to will. A nation is driven like a horse, with spur and bridle; and as we are all good horsemen, there are plenty to choose among.”

This fine sally of the coxcomb duc had not time to take effect, for two ushers cried at the same moment, “His Eminence!”

The king reddened involuntarily, as if surprised *en flagrant délit*. But immediately resuming confidence, he put on an air of resolute haughtiness, which was not lost upon the minister.

The latter, attired in all the pomp of a cardinal, 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 and stopping at each step, as if forcibly arrested by his sufferings, but in reality to observe the faces before him. A glance sufficed.

His suite remained at the entrance of the royal tent; of all those within it, not one was bold enough to salute him, or to look towards him. Even La Vallette feigned to be deeply occupied in a conversation with Montrésor; and the king, who desired to give him an unfavorable reception, greeted him lightly and continued a conversation aside in a low voice with the Duc de Beaufort.

The cardinal was therefore forced, after the first salute, to stop and pass to the side of the crowd of

courtiers, as though he wished to mix with them, but in reality to test them more closely; they all recoiled as at the sight of a leper. Fabert alone advanced towards him with the frank and blunt air habitual with him, and making use of the terms belonging to his profession, said, —

“ Well, my Lord, you make a breach in the midst of them like a cannon-ball; I ask pardon in their name.”

“ And you stand firm before me as before the enemy,” said the cardinal; “ you will have no cause to regret it in the end, my dear Fabert.”

Mazarin also approached the cardinal, but with caution, and giving to his flexible features an expression of profound sadness, made him five or six very low bows, turning his back to the group gathered round the king, so that in the latter quarter they might be taken for those cold and hasty salutations which are made to a person one desires to be rid of, and, on the part of the duc, for tokens of respect, blended with a discreet and silent sorrow.

The minister, ever calm, smiled in disdain; and assuming that firm look and that air of grandeur which he wore so perfectly in the hour of danger, he again leaned upon his pages, and without waiting for a word or glance from his sovereign, he suddenly resolved upon his line of conduct, and walked directly towards him, traversing the whole length of the tent. No one had lost sight of him, although affecting not to observe him. Every one now became silent, even those who were talking to the king; all the courtiers bent forward to see and to hear.

Louis XIII. turned round in astonishment, and all presence of mind totally failing him, remained motionless, and waited with an icy glance, — his sole force, but a *vis inertiae* very effectual in a prince.

The cardinal, on coming close to the prince, did not bow; and without changing his position, his eyes lowered and his hands placed on the shoulders of the two boys half bending, he said, —

“Sire, I come to implore your Majesty at length to grant me the retirement for which I have long sighed. My health is failing; I feel that my life will soon be ended. Eternity approaches me, and before rendering an account to the eternal King, I would render one to my temporal sovereign. It is eighteen years, Sire, since you placed in my hands a weak and divided kingdom; I return it to you united and powerful. Your enemies are overthrown and humiliated. My work is accomplished. I ask your Majesty’s permission to retire to Citeaux, of which I am abbot, and where I may end my days in prayer and meditation.”

The king, irritated with some haughty expressions in this address, showed none of the signs of weakness which the cardinal had expected, and which he had always seen in him when he had threatened to resign the management of affairs. On the contrary, feeling that he had the eyes of the whole court upon him, Louis looked upon him with the air of a king, and coldly replied, —

“We thank you, then, for your services, M. le Cardinal, and wish you the repose you desire.”

Richelieu was deeply angered, but no indication of his

rage appeared upon his countenance. "Such was the coldness with which you left Montmorency to die," he said to himself; "but you shall not escape me thus." He then continued aloud, bowing at the same time, —

"The only recompense I ask for my services is that your Majesty will deign to accept from me, as a gift, the Palais-Cardinal I have lately erected at my own cost in Paris."

The king, astonished, bowed in token of assent. A murmur of surprise for a moment agitated the attentive court.

"I also petition your Majesty to grant me the revocation of an act of rigor, which I solicited (I publicly confess it), and which I perhaps regarded as too beneficial to the repose of the State. Yes, when I was of this world, I was too forgetful of my old sentiments of personal respect and attachment, in my eagerness for the public welfare; now that I already enjoy the enlightenment of solitude, I see that I have been wrong, and I repent."

The attention of the spectators was redoubled, and the uneasiness of the king became visible.

"Yes, there is one person, Sire, whom I have always loved, despite her wrongs towards you, and the banishment which the affairs of the kingdom forced me to procure for her; a person to whom I have owed much, and who should be very dear to you, notwithstanding her armed attempts against you; a person, in a word, whom I implore you to recall from exile, — the queen Marie de Médicis, your mother."

The king sent forth an involuntary exclamation, so far was he from expecting to hear that name. A repressed agitation suddenly appeared upon every face. All awaited in silence the king's reply. Louis XIII. looked for a long time at his old minister without speaking, and this look decided the fate of France; in that instant, he called to mind all the indefatigable services of Richelieu, his unbounded devotion, his wonderful capacity, and was surprised at himself for having wished to part with him. He felt deeply affected at this request, which hunted out, as it were, the exact cause of his anger at the bottom of his heart, rooted it up, and took from his hands the only weapon he had against his old servant; filial love brought the words of pardon to his lips and tears into his eyes. Delighted to grant what he desired most of all things in the world, he extended his hand to the duc with all the nobleness and kindliness of a Bourbon. The cardinal bowed, and respectfully kissed it; and his heart, which should have burst with remorse, only swelled in the joy of a haughty triumph.

The prince, much moved, abandoning his hand to him, turned gracefully towards his court and said with a tremulous voice, —

“We often deceive ourselves, gentlemen, and especially in our knowledge of so great a politician as this; I hope he will never leave us, since his heart is as good as his head.”

Cardinal de la Vallette on the instant seized the arm of the king's mantle, and kissed it with all the ardor of a lover, and the young Mazarin did much the same with Richelieu himself, assuming with admirable Italian

suppleness an expression radiant with joyful emotion. Two streams of flatterers hastened, one towards the king, the other towards the minister; the former group, not less adroit than the second, although less direct, addressed to the prince thanks which could be heard by the minister, and burned at the feet of the one incense which was destined for the other. As for Richelieu, bestowing a bow on the right and a smile on the left, he stepped forward, and stood on the right hand of the king, as his natural place. A stranger entering would rather have thought, indeed, that it was the king who was on the cardinal's left hand. The Maréchal d'Estrées, all the ambassadors, the Duc d'Angoulême, the Duc d'Halluin (Schomberg), the Maréchal de Châtillon, and all the great officers of the crown, surrounded him, each waiting impatiently for the compliments of the others to be finished, in order to pay his own, fearing lest some one else should anticipate him with the flattering epigram he had just improvised, or the turn of adulation he was inventing. As for Fabert, he had retired to a corner of the tent, and seemed to have paid no particular attention to the scene. He was chatting with Montrésor and the gentlemen of Monsieur, all sworn enemies of the cardinal, because, out of the crowd he avoided, he had found none but these to speak to. This conduct would have seemed extremely unskilful in one less known; but he was a man who, though living in the midst of the court, was ever ignorant of its intrigues. It was said of him that he returned from a battle he had gained, like the king's hunting horse, leaving the dogs to caress their master and divide the

quarry, without seeking even to remember the part he had had in the triumph.

The storm, then, seemed entirely appeased, and to the violent agitations of the morning there succeeded a gentle calm; a respectful murmur, varied with pleasant laughter and protestations of attachment, was all that was heard in the tent. The voice of the cardinal arose from time to time: "The dear queen! We shall, then, soon again see her! I had never dared to hope such happiness while I lived!" The king listened to him with full confidence, and did not attempt to conceal his satisfaction. "It was assuredly an idea sent to him from on high," he said; "this good cardinal, against whom they had so incensed me, was thinking only of the union of my family. Since the birth of the dauphin I have not tasted greater joy than at this moment. The protection of the holy Virgin is manifested over the kingdom."

At this moment, a captain of the guards came up and whispered in the king's ear.

"A courier from Cologne?" said the king; "let him wait in my cabinet."

Then, unable to restrain his impatience, "I come! I come!" he said, and entered alone a small square tent attached to the great one. In it was observed a young courier holding a black portfolio, and the curtains closed upon the king.

The cardinal, left sole master of the court, concentrated all its homage; but it was observed that he no longer received it with his former presence of mind. He frequently inquired what time it was, and exhibited an

anxiety clearly unfeigned; his hard, unquiet glances were cast towards the closet. It suddenly opened; the king appeared alone, and stopped on the threshold. He was paler than usual, and trembled in every limb; he held in his hand a large letter with five black seals.

“Gentlemen,” said he, with a loud but broken voice, “the queen has just died at Cologne; and I perhaps am not the first who have heard of it,” he added, casting a severe look towards the impassible cardinal, “but God knows all. To horse in an hour, and attack the lines! *Maréchals*, follow me.” And he turned his back abruptly, and re-entered his cabinet with them.

The court retired after the minister, who, without giving any sign of sorrow or annoyance, went forth as gravely as he had entered, but now a victor.





CHAPTER IX.

THE SIEGE.

Il papa, alzato le mane e fattomi un patente crocione sopra la mia figura, mi disse, che mi benediva e che mi perdonava tutti gli omicidii che io avevo mai fatti, et tutti quelli che mai io farei in servizio della Chiesa apostolica. —BENVENUTO CELLINI.

THERE are moments in our life when we long for vigorous excitement to drown our petty griefs, — times when the soul, like the lion in the fable, wearied with the continual attacks of the gnat, earnestly desires a mightier enemy and real dangers. Cinq-Mars experienced this condition of mind, which always results from a morbid sensibility in the organic constitution and a perpetual agitation of the heart. Weary of constantly turning over in his thoughts a combination of the events which he desired, and of those which he dreaded; of calculating his chances to the best of his power; of summoning to his assistance all that his education had taught him concerning the lives of illustrious men, in order to parallel it with his present situation; oppressed by his regrets,

his dreams, predictions, fancies, and all that imaginary world in which he had existed during his solitary journey,—he breathed freely upon finding himself thrown into a real world almost as full of agitation; and the sensation of two actual dangers restored circulation to his blood, and youth to all his being.

Since the nocturnal scene at the inn near Loudun, he had not been able to resume sufficient empire over his mind to occupy himself with anything save his beloved though mournful reflections; and consumption was already threatening his frame, when happily he arrived at the camp of Perpignan, and happily also had the opportunity of accepting the proposition of the Abbé de Gondi,—for the reader has no doubt recognized Cinq-Mars in the person of that young stranger in mourning, so indifferent and so melancholy, whom the duellist in the cassock took for his second.

He had ordered his tent to be pitched as a volunteer in the street of the camp assigned to the young noblemen who were to be presented to the king and were to serve as aides-de-camp to the generals; he soon repaired thither, and was quickly armed, horsed, and cuirassed, according to the custom of the time, and proceeded alone to the Spanish bastion,—the place of rendezvous. He was there first, and found that a small plot of turf, hidden among the works of the besieged place, had been well chosen by the little abbé for his homicidal purposes; for besides that no one would have suspected officers of going to fight one another immediately beneath the town which they were attacking, the body of the bastion separated them from the French camp, and would conceal

them like an immense screen. It was well to take these precautions, for at that time it cost a man his head to give himself the satisfaction of hazarding his body.

While waiting for his friends and adversaries, Cinq-Mars had time to examine the south side of Perpignan, before which he stood. He had heard that these works were not those which were to be attacked, and he tried in vain to account for the besiegers' projects. Between this southern face of the town, the mountains of Albère, and the Col du Perthus, there might have been advantageous lines of attack, and redoubts against the accessible point; but not a single soldier was stationed there. All the forces seemed directed upon the north of Perpignan, upon the most difficult side, against a brick fort called the Castillet, which surmounted the gate of Notre-Dame. He discovered that a piece of ground apparently marshy, but really very solid, led up to the very foot of the Spanish bastion; that this post was guarded with true Castilian negligence, although its sole strength lay entirely in its defenders, — for its battlements, almost in ruin, were furnished with four pieces of cannon of enormous calibre, embedded in the turf, and thus rendered immovable, and impossible to be directed against a troop advancing rapidly to the foot of the wall.

It was easy to perceive that these enormous pieces had discouraged the besiegers from attacking this point, and kept the besieged from any idea of addition to its means of defence. Thus, on the one side, the vedettes and advanced posts were at a distance, and on the other, the sentinels were few and ill supported. A young Spaniard, carrying a long gun, with its rest suspended

at his side and the burning match in his right hand, who was walking with nonchalance upon the rampart, stopped to look at Cinq-Mars, who was riding about the ditches and moats.

“*Senor caballero,*” said he, “are you going to take the bastion by yourself on horseback, like Don Quixote,—*Quixada de la Mancha?*”

And at the same time he detached from his side the iron rest, planted it in the ground, and supported upon it the barrel of his gun in order to take aim, when a grave and older Spaniard, enveloped in a dirty brown cloak, said to him in his own tongue,—

“*Ambrosio de Demonio,* don’t you know very well that it is forbidden to throw away powder uselessly, before sallies or attacks are made, merely to have the pleasure of killing a child not worth your match? It was in this very place that Charles V. threw the sleeping sentinel into the ditch and drowned him. Do your duty, or I will follow his example.”

Ambrosio replaced his gun upon his shoulder, his rest at his side, and continued his walk upon the rampart.

Cinq-Mars had been little moved by this menacing gesture, contenting himself with tightening the reins of his horse and approaching the spurs to his sides, knowing that with a single leap of the nimble animal he should be carried behind the wall of a cabin which stood hard by, and should then be sheltered from the Spanish fusil, before the operation of the fork and match could be completed. He knew too that a tacit convention between the two armies prohibited marksmen from firing upon the sentinels; each party would have regarded it as



A. Dawant inv.

Gaujean sc.

THE SIEGE

assassination. The soldier who had thus prepared himself for attacking Cinq-Mars must have been ignorant of the understanding in this respect. Young D'Effiat therefore made no visible movement; and when the sentinel resumed his walk upon the rampart, he again betook himself to his ride upon the turf, and presently saw five cavaliers directing their course towards him. The two first, who came on at full gallop, did not salute him, but stopping close to him, leaped to the ground; and he found himself in the arms of the Counsellor de Thou, who embraced him tenderly, while the little Abbé de Gondi, laughing with all his heart, cried, —

“Behold another Orestes recovering his Pylades, and at the moment of immolating a rogue who is not of the family of the king of kings, I can tell you.”

“What! is it you, my dear Cinq-Mars?” cried De Thou; “and I knew not of your arrival in the camp! Yes, it is indeed you; I recognize you, although indeed you are very pale. Have you been ill, my dear friend? I have often written to you; for my boyish friendship has remained deep in my heart.”

“And I,” answered Henri d'Effiat, “I have been very culpable towards you; but I will relate to you all the causes of my neglect. I can speak of them, but I was ashamed to write them. But how good you are! Your friendship has never relaxed.”

“I knew you too well,” replied De Thou; “I knew that there could be no coldness between us, and that my soul had its echo in yours.”

With these words they embraced once more, their eyes moist with those sweet tears which so seldom flow

in one's life, but with which it seems, nevertheless, that the heart is always charged, so much ease do they give in flowing.

This moment was short ; and during these few words, Gondi had been constantly pulling them by the cloak, saying, —

“ To horse ! to horse, gentlemen ! *Pardieu !* you will have time enough to embrace, if you are so affectionate ; but do not delay. Let our first thought be to have done with our good friends who are now coming. We are in a precious position, with those three *gaillards* there before us, the archers close by, and the Spaniards up yonder ; we shall be under three fires.”

He was still speaking, when De Launay, finding himself at about sixty paces from his opponents, with his seconds, who were chosen from his own friends rather than from among the partisans of the cardinal, put his horse to a canter, advanced gracefully towards his young adversaries, and gravely saluted them.

“ Gentlemen, I think that we shall do well to select our men, and to take the field ; for there is talk of attacking the lines, and I must be at my post.”

“ We are ready, sir,” said Cinq-Mars ; “ and as for selecting opponents, I shall be very glad to become yours, for I have not forgotten the Maréchal de Bassompierre and the wood of Chaumont. You know my opinion concerning your insolent visit to my mother.”

“ You are young, sir ; you are young. In regard to Madame, your mother, I fulfilled the duties of a man of the world ; towards the maréchal, those of a captain

of the guard; here, those of a gentleman towards M. l'Abbé, who has challenged me; afterwards I will have that honor with you."

"If I allow you," said the abbé, who was already on horseback.

They took sixty paces of ground, — all that was afforded them by the extent of the meadow which enclosed them. The Abbé de Gondi was stationed between De Thou and his friend, who sat nearest the ramparts, upon which two Spanish officers and a score of soldiers stood, as in a balcony, to witness this combat of six persons, — a spectacle common enough to them. They exhibited the same signs of joy as at their bull-fights, and laughed with that savage and bitter laugh which their physiognomy derives from their Arab blood.

At a sign from Gondi, the six horses set off at full gallop, and met, without coming in contact, in the middle of the arena; at that instant, six pistol-shots were heard almost together, and the smoke covered the combatants.

When it dispersed, of the six cavaliers and six horses there were but three men and three animals on their legs. Cinq-Mars was on horseback, giving his hand to his adversary, as calm as himself; at the other end of the field, De Thou stood by his opponent, whose horse he had killed, and whom he was helping to rise. As for Gondi and De Launay, neither of them was to be seen. Cinq-Mars, looking about for them anxiously, perceived the abbé's horse, which, caracoling and curvetting, was dragging after him the future cardinal, whose foot was engaged in the stirrup, and who was swearing as if he

had never studied anything but the language of the camp. His nose and hands were bloody with his fall and with his efforts to seize the grass; and he was regarding with considerable dissatisfaction his horse, which in spite of himself he irritated with his spurs, making its way to the fosse, filled with water, which surrounded the bastion, when, happily, Cinq-Mars, passing between the edge of the swamp and the animal, seized its bridle and stopped its career.

“Well, my dear abbé, I see that no great harm is come to you, for you speak with decided energy.”

“*Corbleu!*” cried Gondi, wiping the dust out of his eyes, “to fire a pistol in the face of that giant I had to lean forward and rise in my stirrups, and thus I lost my balance; but I fancy that he is down too.”

“You are right, sir,” said De Thou, coming up; “there is his horse swimming in the fosse with its master, whose brains are blown out. We must think now of escaping.”

“Escaping! that, gentlemen, will be rather difficult,” said the adversary of Cinq-Mars, approaching. “Hark! there’s the cannon-shot, the signal for the attack; I did not expect it would have been given so soon. If we return we shall meet the Swiss and the *lansquenets*, who are engaged in this direction.”

“M. de Fontrailles says well,” said De Thou; “but if we do not return, here are these Spaniards, who are running to arms, and whose balls we shall presently have whistling about our heads.”

“Well, let us hold a council,” said Gondi; “summon M. de Montrésor, who is uselessly occupied in searching

for the body of poor De Launay. You have not wounded him, M. de Thou?"

"No, M. l'Abbé; every one has not so good an aim as you," said Montrésor, bitterly, limping from his fall. "We shall not have time to continue with the sword."

"As to continuing, I will not hear of it, gentlemen," said Fontrailles; "M. de Cinq-Mars has behaved too nobly towards me. My pistol went off too soon, and his was at my very cheek, — I feel the coldness of it now, — but he had the generosity to withdraw it and fire in the air. I shall not forget it; and I am his in life and in death."

"We must think of other things now," interrupted Cinq-Mars; "a ball has just whistled past my ear. The attack has begun on all sides; and we are surrounded by friends and enemies."

In fact, the cannonade was general; the citadel, the town, and the army were covered with smoke. The bastion before them was unassailed, and its guards seemed less intent on defending it than on observing the fate of the other fortifications.

"I believe that the enemy has made a sally," said Montrésor, "for the smoke has subsided in the plain, and I see masses of cavalry charging under the protection of the batteries."

"Gentlemen," said Cinq-Mars, who had never ceased to observe the walls, "there is a very decided part which we could take, — to enter this ill-guarded bastion."

"An excellent idea, sir," said Fontrailles; "but we are but five against at least thirty, and are open to view and easily counted."

“I’ faith, the notion is not a bad one,” said Gondi; “it is better to be shot up there than hanged down here, as we shall be if we are found, for De Launay must be already missed by his company, and all the court is aware of our quarrel.”

“*Parbleu!* gentlemen,” said Montrésor, “there is help coming.”

A troop of horse, numerous, but greatly in disorder, advanced towards them at full gallop; their red uniform made them visible far off. It seemed to be their intention to stop upon the very ground on which were our embarrassed duellists, for scarcely had the first cavalier reached it than cries of “Halt!” were repeated and prolonged by the voices of the chiefs who were mingled with their cavaliers.

“Let us go to them; these are the men-at-arms of the king’s guard,” said Fontrailles. “I recognize them by their black cockades. I also see many of the light-horse with them; let us mingle in the disorder, for I fancy they are *ramenés*.”

This is a polite phrase signifying in military language “put to the rout.” All five advanced towards the animated and noisy troops, and found that this conjecture was right. But in place of the consternation which one might have expected in such a case, they found nothing but a youthful and rattling gayety, and heard nothing but shouts of laughter in the two companies.

“Ah, *pardieu!* Cahuzac,” said one, “thy horse runs better than mine; I suppose thou’st exercised it in the king’s hunts!”

“ Ah, I see, 't was that we might be the sooner *rallied* that thou got'st here first,” answered the other.

“ I think the Marquis de Coislin must be mad, to make four hundred of us charge eight Spanish regiments.”

“ Ah, ah, ah ! Loemaria, your plume is in fine trim ; it looks like a weeping willow. If we follow that, it will be to our burial.”

“ Ah, gentlemen, I told you before,” angrily replied the young officer, “ I was sure that that Capuehin Joseph, who meddles in everything, was mistaken in telling us to charge, upon the part of the cardinal. But would you have been satisfied if those who have the honor of commanding you had refused to — ”

“ No, no, no ! ” answered all the young men, at the same time forming themselves quickly into ranks.

“ I said,” interposed the old Marquis de Coislin, who, with a white head, had all the fire of youth in his eyes, “ that if you were commanded to mount to the assault on horseback, you would do it.”

“ Bravo ! bravo ! ” cried all the men-at-arms, clapping their hands.

“ Well, M. le Marquis,” said Cinq-Mars, approaching, “ here is an opportunity of executing what you have promised. I am merely a volunteer ; but an instant ago these gentlemen and I examined this bastion, and I believe that it is possible to take it.”

“ Sir, in the first place, we must examine the ditch to see — ”

At this moment a ball from the rampart of which they were speaking struck the horse of the old officer, and it fell.

“Locmaria, De Mouy, take the command, and to the assault!” cried the two noble companies, believing their leader dead.

“Stop a moment, gentlemen,” said old Coislin, rising, “I will lead you, if you please. Guide us, sir volunteer, for the Spaniards invite us to this ball, and we must reply politely.”

Scarcely had the old man mounted another horse, which one of his men brought him, and drawn his sword than, without awaiting his order, all these ardent youth, preceded by Cinq-Mars and his friends, whose horses were urged on by the squadrons behind, had thrown themselves into the morass, wherein, to their great astonishment and to that of the Spaniards, who counted too much upon its depth in that place, the horses were only in the water up to their hams; and in spite of a discharge of grape-shot from the two largest pieces, all reached pell-mell a slip of ground at the foot of the half-ruined ramparts. In the ardor of the onset, Cinq-Mars and Fontrailles, with the young Locmaria, forced their horses on to the rampart itself; but a brisk fusillade killed the three animals, which rolled over their masters.

“Dismount all, gentlemen!” cried the old Coislin; “forward with pistol and sword! Abandon your horses!”

All obeyed instantly, and threw themselves in a crowd upon the breach.

Meantime De Thou, whose coolness never quitted him any more than his friendship, had not lost sight of the young Henri, and had received him in his arms when

his horse fell. He placed him on his feet, restored to him his sword, which had escaped from his hand, and said to him with the greatest calmness, notwithstanding the balls which rained on all sides, —

“My friend, don't I seem very ridiculous amid all this skirmish, with my costume of counsellor in parliament?”

“*Parbleu!*” said Montrésor, advancing, “here's the abbé, who quite justifies you.”

And, in fact, the little Gondi, pushing on among the light-horsemen, was bawling with all his might, “Three duels and an assault! There's hopes of getting rid of my cassock at last!”

So saying, he cut and thrust at a tall Spaniard.

The defence was not long. The Castilian soldiers were no match for the French officers, and not one of them had time or courage to recharge his carbine.

“Gentlemen, we will relate this to our mistresses in Paris,” said Locmaria, throwing his hat up in the air; and Cinq-Mars, De Thou, Coislin, De Mouy, Londigny, officers of the red companies, and all the young noblemen, with swords in their right hands and pistols in their left, dashing, jostling, and doing each other by their eagerness as much harm as they did the enemy, finally dashed upon the platform of the bastion, as water poured from a vase, of which the opening is too narrow, leaps out by intermitted torrents.

Disdaining to occupy themselves with the vanquished soldiers who cast themselves at their feet, they left them to look about the fort, without even disarming them, and set off examining their conquest, like school-

boys in their holidays, laughing with all their hearts, as if it had been a party of pleasure.

A Spanish officer, enveloped in his brown cloak, watched them with a sombre air.

“What demons are these, Ambrosio?” said he to a soldier. “I have never met with any such before in France. If Louis XIII. has an entire army thus composed, it is very good of him not to conquer Europe.”

“Oh, I do not believe that they are very numerous; they must be some poor adventurers, who have nothing to lose, and all to gain by pillage.”

“You are right,” said the officer; “I will go and try to get one of them to let me escape.”

And slowly approaching, he accosted a young light-horseman, of about eighteen, who was sitting apart from his comrades upon the parapet. He had the white and red complexion of a young girl; his delicate hand held an embroidered handkerchief, with which he wiped his forehead and his golden locks. He was looking at a great round watch set with rubies and suspended from his girdle by a knot of ribbons.

The astonished Spaniard paused. If he had not seen him overthrow his soldiers, he would not have believed him capable of anything beyond singing a romance, reclined upon a couch. But filled with the suggestion of Ambrosio, he thought that he might have stolen these objects of luxury in the pillage of the apartments of a woman; so, going abruptly up to him, he said, —

“*Hombre!* I am an officer; will you restore me to liberty, that I may once more see my country?”

The young Frenchman looked at him with the gentle

air of his age, and thinking of his own family, he said, —

“Sir, I will present you to the Marquis de Coislin, who will, I doubt not, grant your request; is your family of Castile or of Aragon?”

“Your Coislin will ask the permission of somebody else, and will make me wait a year. I will give you four thousand ducats if you will afford me the means of escape.”

That gentle face, those girlish features, became infused with the purple of fury; those blue eyes shot forth lightning; and exclaiming, “Money to me! away, fool!” the young man gave the Spaniard a ringing box on the ear. The latter, without hesitating, drew a long poniard from his breast, and seizing the arm of the Frenchman, thought to plunge it readily into his heart; but, nimble and vigorous, the youth took him by the right arm, and lifting it with force above his head, sent it back with the weapon it held upon the head of the Spaniard, who was furious with passion.

“Eh! eh! Softly, Olivier!” cried his comrades, running from all directions; “there are Spaniards enough on the ground already.”

And they disarmed the hostile officer.

“What shall we do with this madman?”

“I should not like to have him for my *valet-de-chambre*,” returned another.

“He deserves to be hanged,” said a third; “but, i’ faith, gentlemen, we don’t know how to hang. Send him to that battalion of Swiss which is now passing on the plain.”

And that calm and sombre man, enveloping himself anew in his cloak, began his march of his own accord, followed by Ambrosio, to join the battalion, pushed by the shoulders and urged on by five or six of these young madcaps.

Meantime, the first troop of the besiegers, astonished at their success, had followed it out to the end; Cinq-Mars, so advised by the aged Coislin, had made with him the circuit of the bastion, and found to their vexation that it was completely separated from the city, and that they could not follow up their advantage. They therefore returned slowly to the platform, talking by the way, to rejoin De Thou and the Abbé de Gondi, whom they found laughing with the young light-horsemen.

“We have Religion and Justice with us, gentlemen; we could not fail to triumph.”

“Yes, for they struck as hard as we.”

There was silence at the approach of Cinq-Mars, and they remained for an instant whispering and asking his name; then all surrounded him, and took his hand with transport.

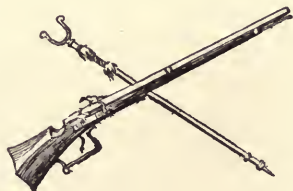
“Gentlemen, you are right,” said their old captain; “he is, as our fathers used to say, *the best doer of the day*. He is a volunteer, who is to be presented to-day to the king by the cardinal.”

“By the cardinal! we will present him ourselves. Ah, don’t let him be a *Cardinalist*; he is too good a fellow for that!” exclaimed all the young men, with vivacity.

“Sir, I will disgust you with him,” said Olivier d’Entraigues, approaching Cinq-Mars, “for I have been

his page. Rather serve in the red companies ; come, you will have good comrades there."

The old marquis saved Cinq-Mars the embarrassment of answering by causing the trumpets to sound and rally his brilliant companies. The cannon was no longer heard, and a soldier announced that the king and the cardinal were traversing the lines to examine the results of the day ; he made all the horses pass through the breach, which was tolerably wide, and ranged the two companies in battle order, upon a spot whither it seemed impossible for any but infantry to penetrate.





CHAPTER X.

THE REWARD.

Ah ! comme du butin ces guerriers trop jaloux
Courent bride abattue au-devant des mes coups,
Agitez tous leurs sens d'une rage insensée,
Tambour, fifre, trompette, ôtez-leur la pensée.

N. LEMERCIER, *Panhypocrisiade.*

RICHELIEU had said within himself, "To assuage the first paroxysm of the royal grief, to open a source of emotions which shall withdraw this wavering soul from its sorrow, let this city be besieged; I consent. Let Louis go; I will allow him to strike a few poor soldiers with the blows which he would, but dare not, inflict on me. Let his anger quench itself in this obscure blood; I agree. But this caprice of glory shall not derange my immutable designs; this city shall not fall yet. It shall not be French forever until two years have past; it shall come into my nets only on the day which I have determined in my own mind. Thunder, bombs and cannons; meditate your operations, skilful captains; hurry on, young warriors. I will silence your noise, I will dissi-

pate your projects, and make your efforts abortive; all shall end in empty smoke, for I will conduct in order to mislead you."

Such is pretty nearly what passed in the bald head of the old cardinal before the attack of which we have witnessed a portion. He was stationed on horseback, to the north of the city, upon one of the mountains of Salces; from this point he could see the plain of Roussillon before him, sloping to the Mediterranean. Perpignan, with its ramparts of brick, its bastions, its citadel, and its spire, formed upon this plain an oval and sombre mass amid broad and verdant meads; and the vast mountains surrounded it and the valley like an enormous bow bent from north to south, while, stretching its white line in the east, the sea seemed its silver cord. On his right rose that immense mountain which is called the Canigou, whose sides send forth two rivers into the plain below. The French line extended to the foot of this western barrier. A crowd of generals and of great lords were on horseback behind the minister, but at twenty paces' distance and profoundly silent. He had at first slowly followed the line of operations, but afterwards returned and stationed himself upon this height, whence his eye and his thought hovered over the destinies of besiegers and besieged. The army had its eyes upon him, and could see him from every point. The whole of the troops looked upon him as their immediate chief, and awaited the direction of his gesture before they acted. For a long time France had bent beneath his yoke; and admiration shielded all his actions from the ridicule to which another would have been often subjected. At this

moment, for instance, no one thought of smiling, or of feeling surprised even, that the cuirass should clothe the priest; and the severity of his character and aspect suppressed every thought of ironical comparisons or impertinent conjectures. This day the cardinal appeared in a costume entirely warlike: he wore a coat of a reddish-brown, embroidered with gold, a water-colored cuirass, a sword at his side, pistols at his saddle-bow, and he had a plumed hat; but this he rarely placed upon his head, which was still covered with the red cap. Two pages were behind him; one carried his gauntlets, the other his casque, and the captain of his guards was at his side.

As the king had recently named him generalissimo of his troops, it was to him that the generals sent for their orders; but he, knowing full well the secret motives of his master's present anger, ostentatiously referred to that prince all who sought a decision from his own mouth. It happened as he had foreseen; for he regulated and calculated the movements of that heart as those of a watch, and could have told with precision through what sensations it had passed. Louis XIII. came and placed himself at his side; but he came as a pupil, forced to acknowledge that his master is in the right. His air was haughty and dissatisfied, his language brusque and dry. The cardinal displayed no emotion. It was remarked that the king, in consulting him, employed the words of command, thus reconciling his weakness and his power of place, his irresolution and his pride, his ignorance and his pretensions, while his minister dictated laws to him in a tone of the most profound obedience.

“I will have them attack immediately, Cardinal,” said the prince, on coming up; “that is to say,” added he, with an air of carelessness, “when all your preparations are made, and you have determined with our generals upon the hour.”

“Sire, if I might venture to express my judgment, I should be glad did your Majesty think fit to commence the attack in a quarter of an hour, for that will give time enough to advance the third line.”

“Yes, yes; right, M. le Cardinal! I think so too. I will go and give my orders myself; I wish to do everything myself. — Schomberg, Schomberg! in a quarter of an hour let me hear the signal gun; I will have it so.”

And Schomberg, proceeding to take the command of the right wing, gave the order, and the signal was made.

The batteries, arranged long since by the *Maréchal de la Meilleraie*, began to batter a breach, but slackly, because the artillerymen felt that they had been directed to attack two impregnable points; and because with their experience, and above all with the straightforward sense and rapid perception of French soldiers, any one of them could at once have indicated the point against which the attack ought to have been directed. The king was surprised at the slowness of the firing.

“*La Meilleraie*,” said he, impatiently, “these batteries do not play; your cannoneers are asleep.”

With the *maréchal* the principal artillery officers were present; but no one answered a syllable. They had looked towards the cardinal, who remained as immovable as an equestrian statue, and they imitated his example. The answer must have been that the fault

was not with the soldiers, but with him who had ordered this false disposition of the batteries; and this was Richelieu himself, who, pretending to believe them more useful as they were, had at once stopped the remarks of the chiefs.

The king was astonished at this silence, and fearing that he had committed some gross military blunder by his question, slightly blushed, and approaching the group of princes who had accompanied him, said, in order to reassure himself, —

“D’Angoulême, Beaufort, it is very tiresome, is it not? We stand here like mummies.”

Charles de Valois drew near, and said, —

“It seems to me, Sire, that they are not employing here the machines of the engineer Pompée-Targon.”

“*Parbleu!*” said the Duc de Beaufort, fixedly regarding Richelieu, “that is because we had more desire to take Rochelle than Perpignan at the time that Italian came. Here we have not an engine ready, not a mine, not a petard beneath these walls; and the Maréchal de la Meilleraie told me this morning that he had proposed to bring up some to open the breach with. It was neither the Castillet, nor the six great bastions which surround it, nor the half-moon, we ought to have attacked. If we go on in this way, the great stone arm of the citadel will show us its fist long enough yet.”

The cardinal, still motionless, said not a single word; he only beckoned to him Fabert, who left the group in attendance, and ranged his horse behind that of the cardinal, close to the captain of the guards.

The Duc de la Rochefoucauld, drawing near the king, said, —

“ I believe, Sire, that our inactivity makes the enemy insolent, for see, here’s a numerous sally, directing itself right towards your Majesty ; the regiments of Biron and De Ponts fall back after firing.”

“ Well ! ” said the king, drawing his sword, “ let us charge, and force those vagabonds back again. Set on the cavalry with me, D’Angoulême. Where is it, Cardinal ? ”

“ Behind that hill, Sire, there are in column six regiments of dragoons, and the carabineers of La Roque ; below you are my men-at-arms and my light-horse, whom I pray your Majesty to employ, for those of your Majesty’s guard are ill guided by the Marquis de Coislin, ever too zealous. Joseph, go tell him to return.”

He whispered to the Capuchin, who had accompanied him, huddled up in a military dress which he wore awkwardly, and who immediately advanced into the plain.

In the mean time, the compact columns of the old Spanish infantry issued from the gate of Notre-Dame like a dark and moving forest, while from another gate came forth the heavy cavalry, which drew up upon the plain. The French army, in battle-array at the foot of the hill where the king stood, behind fortifications of earth, behind redoubts and fascines of turf, perceived with alarm the men-at-arms and the light-horse pressed between these two forces, ten times their superiors in numbers.

“ Sound the charge ! ” cried Louis XIII. ; “ or my old Coislin is lost.”

And he descended the hill, with all his suite as ardent as himself; but before he was on the plain and at the head of his musketeers, the two companies had taken their course, dashing off with the rapidity of lightning, and to the cry of "Vive le roi!" fell upon the long column of the enemy's cavalry like two vultures upon the sides of a serpent; and making a large and bloody gap, they passed beyond, and rallied behind the Spanish bastion, as we have seen, leaving the enemy's cavalry so astonished that they thought only of re-forming themselves, and not of pursuing.

The French army sent forth one shout of applause; the king paused in amazement. He looked around him, and saw a burning desire for attack in all eyes; the valor of his race shone in his own. He paused yet another instant in suspense, listening with intoxication to the roar of the cannon, respiring and snuffing up the odor of the powder; he seemed to receive another life, and to become once more a Bourbon. All who looked on him felt as though they were commanded by another man, when, raising his sword and his eyes towards the sun, he cried, —

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

His cavalry, deploying, dashed off with an ardor which devoured space, and raising billows of dust from the ground, which trembled beneath them, they were in an instant mingled with the Spanish cavalry, and both were swallowed up in an immense and fluctuating cloud.

"Now! now!" cried the cardinal, in a voice of thunder, from his elevation, "now remove the guns

from their useless position! Fabert, give your orders; let them be all directed upon the infantry which slowly approaches to surround the king. Haste, save the king!”

Immediately the cardinal's suite, hitherto sitting erect as so many statues, were in motion. The generals gave their orders; the aides-de-camp galloped off into the plain, where, leaping over the ditches, barriers, and palisades, they arrived at their destination almost as rapidly as the thoughts that directed them and the glances that followed them.

Suddenly the few and interrupted flashes which had shone from the before discouraged batteries became a continual and immense flame, leaving no room for the smoke, which rose to the sky in an infinite number of light and floating wreaths; the volleys of cannon, which seemed of late like far and feeble echoes, changed into a formidable thunder whose roll was as unintermitted as that of drums beating the charge; while from three opposite points large red flashes from fiery mouths fell upon the dark columns which issued from the besieged city.

Meantime, without changing his position, but with ardent eyes and imperative gestures, Richelieu ceased not to multiply his orders, casting upon those who received them a look which implied a sentence of death if he was not at once obeyed.

“The king has overthrown the cavalry; but the foot still resist. Our batteries have only killed, they have not conquered. Forward with three regiments of infantry instantly, Gassion, La Meilleraie, and Lesdi-

guières! Take the enemy's columns in flank. Order the rest of the army to cease from the attack, and to remain motionless throughout the whole line. Some paper! I will write myself to Schomberg."

A page alighted and advanced, holding a pencil and paper. The minister, supported by four men of his suite, also alighted with difficulty, sending forth a cry, wrested from him by pain; but he quelled it by an effort, and seated himself upon the carriage of a cannon. The page presented his shoulder as a desk; and the cardinal hastily penned that order which contemporary manuscripts have transmitted to us, and which might well be imitated by the diplomatists of our day, who are, it would seem, more anxious to maintain themselves in perfect balance between two ideas than to wield those combinations which decide the destinies of the world, regarding the clear and obvious dictates of true genius as beneath their profound subtlety.

"M. le Maréchal, do not risk anything, and think well before you attack. When you are thus told that the king desires you not to risk anything, you are not to understand that his Majesty forbids you to fight at all; but his intention is that you do not engage in a general battle unless it be with a notable hope of gain from the advantage which a favorable situation may present, the responsibility of the battle naturally falling upon you."

These orders given, the old minister, still seated upon the carriage of the gun, his arms resting upon the touch-hole, and his chin upon his arms, in the attitude of one who adjusts and points a cannon, continued in silence to watch the battle, like an old wolf, which, sated with

victims and torpid with age, contemplates in the plain the ravages of a lion among a herd of cattle, which he dares not himself attack. From time to time his eye glares ; the smell of blood rejoices him ; and, full of the recollection of past feasts, he passes his burning tongue over his toothless jaw.

Upon that day, it was remarked by his servants — or in other words, by all around him — that from the time of his rising till night he took no nourishment, and so fixed all the application of his soul upon the events which he had to conduct that he triumphed over his physical pains, seeming in forgetting to have destroyed them. It was this power of attention, this constant presence of mind, that raised him almost to genius. He would have attained it quite, had he not wanted native elevation of soul and generous sensibility of heart.

Everything passed upon the field of battle as he had planned, fortune attending him alike there and in the cabinet. Louis XIII. appropriated with eager hand the victory which his minister had procured for him ; he had contributed personally, however, only that grandeur which consists in personal valor.

The cannon had ceased to roar when the broken columns of infantry fell back into Perpignan ; the Spanish cavalry, greatly cut up, was already within the walls, and no living man was to be seen on the plain, save the glittering squadrons of the king, who followed him, forming their ranks as they went.

He returned at a walking pace, and contemplated with satisfaction the battle-field swept clear of enemies ; he passed haughtily under the very fire of the Spanish

pieces, which, whether from unskilfulness, or by a secret agreement with the prime minister, or from very shame to kill a king of France, only sent after him a few balls, which, passing two feet above his head, fell in front of the lines, and merely served to increase the royal reputation for courage.

At every step, however, that he made towards the place where Richelieu awaited him, his countenance changed and visibly fell; he lost all the flush of combat; the noble sweat of triumph died upon his brow. In proportion as he approached, his accustomed paleness returned to his face, as if having the right to sit alone on a royal head; his look lost its transient fire, and at last, when he joined him, a profound melancholy entirely possessed him. He found the cardinal as he had left him, on horseback; the latter, still coldly respectful, bowed, and after a few words of compliment, placed himself near Louis to traverse the lines and examine the results of the day, while the princes and great lords, riding at some distance before and behind, formed, as it were, a crowd around them.

The skilful minister was careful not to say a word or make a gesture that could suggest the idea that he had the slightest share in the events of the day; and it was remarkable that of all those who came up to give in their reports, each seemed to divine his thoughts, to be careful not to compromise his occult power by open obedience. Every report was made to the king. The cardinal then traversed, by the side of the prince, the right of the camp, which had not been under his view from the height where he had placed himself; and he

saw with satisfaction that Schomberg, who knew him well, had acted precisely as he had directed, bringing into action only a few of the light troops, and fighting just enough not to incur reproach for inaction, and not enough to obtain any distinct result. This line of conduct delighted the minister, and in no way displeased the king, whose vanity cherished the idea of having been the sole conqueror that day. He even wished to persuade himself, and to have it supposed, that all the efforts of Schomberg had been ineffectual, telling him that he was not angry with him, that he had himself just had proof that the enemy before him was less despicable than had been supposed.

“To show you that you have lost nothing in our estimation,” he added, “we name you a knight of our order, and we give you public and private access to our person.”

The cardinal affectionately pressed his hand as he passed him, and the *maréchal*, astonished at this deluge of favors, followed the prince with his head down, like a culprit, recalling, to console himself, all the brilliant actions of his career which had remained unnoticed, and mentally attributing to them these unmerited rewards, as a salvo to his conscience.

The king was about to retrace his steps, when the Duc de Beaufort, with an amazed air, exclaimed,—

“But, Sire, have I still the powder in my eyes, or have I been struck mad with the sun? It appears to me that I see upon yonder bastion cavaliers in a red uniform who monstrously resemble your light-horse whom we thought to be killed.”

The cardinal knitted his brows.

“Impossible, Monsieur,” he said; “the imprudence of M. de Coislin has destroyed his Majesty’s men-at-arms and those cavaliers. It is for that reason I ventured just now to say to the king that if the useless corps were suppressed, it might be very advantageous in a military point of view.”

“*Pardieu!* your Eminence will pardon me,” answered the Duc de Beaufort; “but I do not deceive myself, and there are seven or eight of them driving prisoners before them.”

“Well! let us go to the point,” said the king; “I shall be very glad to find my old Coislin there.”

It was with great caution that the horses of the king and his suite passed across the marsh, and with infinite astonishment that their riders saw on the ramparts the two red companies in battalia as on parade.

“*Vive Dieu!*” cried Louis; “I don’t think there’s one of them missing. Well, Marquis, you keep your word,—you take walls on horseback.”

“The place taken was well selected,” said Richelieu, contemptuously; “it in no way advances the taking of Perpignan, and must have cost many lives.”

“I’ faith, there you are right,” said the king, for the first time since the intelligence of the queen’s death addressing the cardinal without coldness or asperity; “I regret the blood which must have been spilled here.”

“There have only been two of our young people wounded in the attack, Sire,” said old Coislin; “and we have gained new companions in arms, in the volunteers who guided us.”

“Who are they?” said the prince.

“Three of them have modestly retired, Sire; but the youngest, whom you see, was the first who proposed the assault, and the first to venture his body in making it. The two companies claim the honor of presenting him to your Majesty.”

Cinq-Mars, who was on horseback behind the old captain, took off his hat and showed his pale face, his large dark eyes, and his long chestnut hair.

“Those features remind me of some one,” said the king; “what say you, Cardinal?”

The latter, who had already cast a penetrating glance at the new-comer, replied, —

“Unless I am mistaken, this young man is —”

“Henri d’Effiat,” said the volunteer, bowing.

“Sire, it is the same whom I had announced to your Majesty, and who was to have been presented to you by me; the second son of the *maréchal*.”

“Ah!” said Louis, warmly, “I am glad to see the son of my old friend presented by this bastion. ’T is a suitable introduction, my boy, for one bearing your name. You will follow us to the camp, where we have much to say to you. But what! you here, M. de Thou? Whom came you to judge?”

“Sire,” answered Coislin, “he has condemned to death, without judging, sundry Spaniards, for he was the second to enter the place.”

“I struck no one, sir,” interrupted De Thou, reddening; “’t is not my business. Herein I have no merit; I merely accompanied my friend, M. de Cinq-Mars.”

“We love your modesty alike with your bravery, and we will not forget this. Cardinal, is there not some presidency vacant?”

Richelieu did not like De Thou. And as the source of his dislike was always mysterious, it was difficult to guess the cause of this animosity; it revealed itself in a heartless expression that escaped him. The motive was a passage in the history of the President De Thou, — the father of the young man now in question, — wherein he stigmatized in the eyes of posterity a grand-uncle of the cardinal, an apostate monk, sullied with every human vice.

Richelieu, bending his head to the ear of Joseph, whispered, —

“You see that man; his father put my name into his history. Well, I will put his into mine.” And, truly enough, he subsequently wrote it in blood. At this moment, to avoid answering the king, he feigned not to have heard his question, and to be wholly intent upon the merit of Cinq-Mars and the desire to see him well placed at court.

“I promised you beforehand to make him a captain in my guards,” said the prince; “let him be nominated to-morrow. I would know more of him, and raise him to a higher fortune, if he pleases me. Let us now retire; the sun has set, and we are far from our army. Tell my two good companies to follow us.”

The minister, after repeating the order, omitting the implied praise, placed himself on the king’s right hand, and the whole escort quitted the bastion, now confided to the care of the Swiss, and returned to the camp.

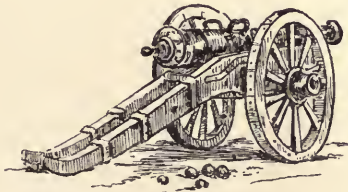
The two red companies slowly defiled through the breach which they had effected with such promptitude; their countenances were grave and silent.

Cinq-Mars went up to his friend.

“These are heroes but ill recompensed,” said he; “not a favor, not a compliment.”

“I, on the other hand,” said the simple De Thou, — “I, who came somewhat against my will, — receive one. Such are courts, such is life; but the true Judge is on high, whom men cannot blind.”

“This will not prevent us from meeting death to-morrow, if necessary,” said the young Olivier, laughing.





CHAPTER XI.

THE MISTAKES.

Quand vint le tour de saint Guilin,
Il jeta trois dés sur la table.
Ensuite il regarda le diable,
Et lui dit d'un air très-malin :
Jouons donc cette vieille femme !
Qui de nous deux aura son âme !

Ancienne Légende.

IN order to appear before the king, Cinq-Mars had been fain to mount the charger of one of the light-horse, wounded in the affair, having lost his own at the foot of the rampart. As the two companies were marching out, he felt some one touch his shoulder, and turning round, saw old Grandchamp holding a very beautiful gray horse.

“Will M. le Marquis mount a horse of his own?” said he. “I have put on the saddle and housings of velvet embroidered in gold that remained in the trench. Alas, when I think that a Spaniard might have taken it, or even a Frenchman! For just now there are so many people who take all they find, as though it were

their own; and then, as the proverb says, 'What falls in the ditch is for the soldier.' They might also have taken the four hundred gold crowns that M. le Marquis, be it said without reproach, forgot to take out of the holsters. And the pistols! Oh, what pistols! I bought them in Germany; and here they are as good, and with the locks as perfect as ever. It was quite enough to kill the poor little black horse, that was born in England as sure as I was at Tours in Touraine, without also exposing these valuables to pass into the hands of the enemy."

While making his lamentation, the worthy man finished saddling the gray horse. The column was long enough filing out to give him time to pay a scrupulous attention to the length of the stirrups and of the bands, all the while continuing his harangue.

"I beg your pardon, sir, for being somewhat long about this; but I slightly sprained my arm in getting up M. de Thou, who himself raised M. le Marquis during the grand scuffle."

"How camest thou there at all, blockhead?" said Cinq-Mars. "'Tis not thy trade. I told thee to remain in the camp."

"Oh, as to remaining in the camp, that is out of the question. I can't keep there; when I hear a musket-shot, I should be ill if I did not see the flash. As for my trade, my trade is to take care of your horses, and you are on them. Sir, think you I should not have saved the life of the poor black if I could? Ah, how I loved him, a horse that has gained three races in his time,—a time too short for those who loved him as I

did! He would never take his corn but from his dear Grandchamp; and then he would caress me with his head. The end of my left ear that he carried away one day, poor fellow, proves it, for it was not out of ill-will he bit it off, quite the contrary. You should have heard how he neighed with rage when any one else came near him; that was why he broke Jean's leg. Good creature, I loved him so! When he fell, I held him on one side with one hand and M. de Locmaria with the other. I thought at first that both he and that gentleman would recover; but unhappily only one of them returned to life, and this was he whom I least knew. You seem to be laughing at what I say about your horse, sir; you forget that in times of war the horse is the soul of the cavalier. Yes, sir, his soul; for what is it that intimidates the infantry? 'Tis the horse! It certainly is not the man, who, once seated, is little more than a bundle of hay. Who is it that performs the fine deeds that men admire? The horse. There are times when his master, who but just before would fain have been far away, finds himself victorious and rewarded for his horse's valor, while the poor beast gets nothing but blows. Who is it gains the prize in the race? The horse, that scarcely sups better than usual, while the master pockets the gold, and is envied by his friends and admired by all the lords as though he had run himself. Who is it that hunts the roebuck, yet puts but a morsel in his own mouth? Again, the horse; sometimes the horse is even eaten himself, poor animal! I remember in a campaign with M. le Maréchal, it happened that — But what is the matter, sir, you grow pale?"

“Bind up my leg with something, — a handkerchief, a strap, or what thou wilt. I feel a burning pain there; I know not what.”

“Your boot is cut, sir. It may be some ball; however, *lead is the friend of man.*”

“It is no friend of mine, at all events.”

“Ah, *who loves, chastens!* Oh, lead, lead must not be ill spoken of! What is that —”

While occupied in binding his master's leg below the knee, the worthy Grandchamp was about to hold forth in praise of lead as absurdly as he had done in praise of the horse, when he was fain, in common with Cinq-Mars, to lend an ear to a warm and clamorous dispute among some Swiss soldiers who had remained behind the other troops. They were talking with much gesticulation, and seemed busied with two men who were in the midst of about thirty soldiers.

D'Effiat, still holding out his leg to his servant, and leaning on the saddle of his horse, tried, by listening attentively, to learn the subject of the controversy; but he knew nothing of German, and could not comprehend the dispute. Grandchamp, who, still holding the boot, had also been listening very seriously, suddenly burst into loud laughter.

“Ha, ha, ha! sir, here are two sergeants disputing which they ought to hang of the two Spaniards there; for your red comrades did not take the trouble to tell them. One of the Swiss says that it's the officer, the other that it's the soldier; a third has just made a proposition for meeting the difficulty.”

“And what says he?”

“He suggests the hanging them both.”

“Stop! stop!” cried Cinq-Mars to the soldiers, attempting to walk; but his leg would not support him.

“Put me on my horse, Grandchamp.”

“You forget, sir, your wound.”

“Do as I bid thee, and then mount thyself.”

The old servant grumblingly obeyed, and then galloped off, in fulfilment of another imperative order, to stop the Swiss, who were on the point of hanging their two prisoners to a tree, or rather of letting them hang themselves; for the officer, with the *sang-froid* of his nation, had himself passed the running noose of a rope round his own neck, and without being told, had ascended a small ladder placed against the tree, in order to tie the other end of the rope to one of its branches. The soldier, with the same indifferent tranquillity, was looking on at the Swiss disputing around him, while holding the ladder.

Cinq-Mars arrived in time to save them, gave his name to the Swiss sergeant, and employing Grandchamp as interpreter, said that the two prisoners were his, and that he would take them to his tent; that he was a captain in the guards, and would be responsible for them. The Germans, ever exact in discipline, made no reply; the only resistance was on the part of the prisoner. The officer, still on the top of the ladder, turned round, and speaking thence as from a pulpit, said with a sardonic laugh,—

“I should much like to know what you do here? Who told you I wanted to live?”

“I don’t want to know anything about that,” said

Cinq-Mars; "it matters not to me what becomes of you afterwards. All I propose now is to prevent an act which seems to me unjust and cruel. You are quite welcome to kill yourself afterwards, if you like."

"Well said," returned the ferocious Spaniard; "you please me. I thought at first you meant to affect the generous in order to oblige me to be grateful, which is what I detest. Well, I consent to come down; but I shall hate you as much as ever, for you are a Frenchman. Nor do I thank you, for you only discharge a debt you owe me, since it was I who this morning kept you from being shot by this young soldier while he was taking aim at you; and he's a man who never missed a chamois in the mountains of Leon."

"Be it as you will," said Cinq-Mars; "come down."

It was his character ever to assume with others the mien they wore towards him; and the savage ferocity of the Spaniard made him hard as iron towards him.

"A singularly pleasant person, that, sir," said Grandchamp; "in your place M. le Maréchal would certainly have left him on his ladder. Come, Louis, Etienne, Germain, escort Monsieur's prisoners, — a fine acquisition, truly! if you don't regret it one of these days, I shall be very much surprised."

Cinq-Mars, suffering from the motion of his horse, rode only at the pace of his prisoners on foot, and was accordingly at a distance behind the red companies, who followed close upon the king. He meditated on his way what it could be that the prince desired to say to him. A ray of hope presented to his mind's eye the figure of Marie de Mantua in the distance; and for a moment his

thoughts were tranquil. But all his future lay in that brief sentence, — “please the king;” and he began to reflect upon all the bitterness in which this task might involve him.

Ere long he saw approaching his friend, De Thou, who, anxious at his remaining behind, had sought him in the plain, eager to aid him if necessary.

“’T is late, my friend; night approaches. You have been long on your way; I feared for you. Whom bring you here? What has detained you? The king will soon be asking for you.”

Such were the rapid inquiries of the young counsellor, whose anxiety, more potent herein than the battle itself, had made quit his accustomed serenity.

“I was slightly wounded; I bring a prisoner, and I was thinking of the king. What can he want me for, my friend? What must I do if he proposes to place me about his person? I must please him; and at this thought — shall I own it? — I am tempted to fly. But I trust that I shall not have that fatal honor. ‘To please,’ how humiliating the word! ‘to obey,’ how much more endurable! A soldier runs the chance of death, and there’s an end. But what base compliances, what sacrifices of himself, what compositions with his conscience, what degradation of his own thought, may not a courtier be involved in! Ah, De Thou, my dear De Thou! I am not made for the court; I feel it, though I have seen it but for a moment. There is in my temperament a certain, so to speak, savageness, which education has only polished on the surface. At a distance, I thought myself adapted to live in this all-powerful world; I even

desired it, led by a cherished hope of my heart. But I shuddered at the first step; I shuddered at the mere aspect of the cardinal. The recollection of the last of his crimes, at which I was present, kept me from addressing him. He horrified me; I never can speak to him. The king's favor, too, has that about it which dismays me, as though I knew it would be fatal to me."

"I am glad to perceive this apprehension in you; it may be most salutary," said De Thou, as they rode on. "You are about to enter into contact with power. Before, you did not even conceive it; now you will touch it with your very hand. You will see what it is, and what it is hurls the lightning. Heaven grant that lightning may never strike you! You will probably be present in those councils which regulate the destiny of nations; you will see, you will perchance originate, those caprices whence are born sanguinary wars, conquests, and treaties; you will hold in your hand the drop of water that proves the source of mighty torrents. It is from the high places of the world that men justly view human affairs; you must look from the mountain-top ere you can appreciate the littleness of those things which from below appear to us great."

"Ay, if I were on those heights, I should at least have the lesson you speak of; but this cardinal, this man to whom I must be under an obligation, this man whom I know too well by his works, — what will he be to me?"

"A friend, a protector, no doubt," answered De Thou.

"Death were a thousand times preferable to his friendship! I hate his whole being, his very name; he spills the blood of men with the cross of the Redeemer."

“What horrors are you saying, my friend? You will ruin yourself if you exhibit your sentiments respecting the cardinal to the king.”

“Never mind; in the midst of these tortuous ways, I desire to take a new one, the right line. My whole opinion, the opinion of a just man, shall be unveiled to the king himself, if he interrogate me, even should it cost me my head. I have at last seen this king, who has been described as so weak to me; I have seen him, and his aspect has touched me to the heart in spite of myself. Certainly, he is very unfortunate, but he cannot be cruel; he will listen to the truth.”

“Yes; but he will not dare to make it triumph,” answered the sage De Thou. “Beware of this warmth of heart, which often draws you by sudden and dangerous movements. Do not attack a colossus like Richelieu without having measured him.”

“That is just like my tutor, the Abbé Quillet. My dear and prudent friend, neither one nor the other of you know me; you do not know how weary I am of myself, and whither I have cast my gaze. I must mount or die.”

“What! already ambitious?” exclaimed De Thou, with an extreme surprise.

His friend inclined his head upon his hands, abandoning the reins of his horse, and did not answer.

“What! has this selfish passion of a riper age obtained possession of you at twenty, Henri? Ambition is the most sorrowful of hopes.”

“And nevertheless, it possesses me entirely at pres-

ent, for I see but by it, and by it my whole heart is penetrated.”

“Ah, Cinq-Mars, I no longer recognize you! how different you were formerly! I do not conceal from you that you appear to me to have much deteriorated. In those walks of our childhood, when the life, and, above all, the death of Socrates, caused tears of admiration and envy to run from our eyes; when, raising ourselves to the ideal of the highest virtue, we wished that those illustrious sorrows, those sublime misfortunes, which create great men, might in the future come upon us; when we constructed for ourselves imaginary occasions of sacrifices and devotion,—if the voice of a man had pronounced, between us two, the single word, ‘ambition,’ we should have believed that we were touching a serpent.”

De Thou spoke with the heat of enthusiasm and of reproach. Cinq-Mars went on without answering, and with his face in his hands. After an instant of silence he removed them, and allowed his eyes to be seen, full of generous tears. He strongly pressed the hand of his friend, and said to him with a penetrating accent,—

“M. de Thou, you have recalled to me the most beautiful thoughts of my earliest youth. Believe that I have not fallen; I am consumed by a secret hope which I cannot confide even to you. I despise, as much as you, the ambition which will seem to possess me. All the world will believe it; but what do I care for the world? As for you, my noble friend, promise me that you will not cease to esteem me, whatever you may see me do. I swear by heaven that my thoughts are pure as it!”

“ Well,” said De Thou, “ I swear by it that I believe you blindly ; you give me back my life ! ”

They shook hands again with effusion of heart, and then perceived that they were arrived almost before the tent of the king.

Day was nearly over ; but one might have believed that a softer day was rising, for the moon issued from the sea in all her splendor. The transparent sky of the south was not charged with a single cloud, and it seemed like a veil of pale blue sprinkled with silver spangles ; the air, still inflamed, was agitated only by the rare passage of some breezes from the Mediterranean ; and all sounds had ceased upon the earth. The fatigued army reposed beneath their tents, the line of which was marked by the fires, and the besieged city seemed oppressed by the same slumber ; upon its ramparts nothing was to be seen but the arms of the sentinels, which shone in the rays of the moon, or the wandering fire of the night-rounds. Nothing was to be heard but the gloomy and prolonged cries of its guards, who warned each other not to sleep.

It was only around the king that all things waked, but at a great distance from him. This prince had dismissed all his suite ; he walked alone before his tent, and stopping sometimes to contemplate the beauty of the heavens, he appeared plunged in a melancholy meditation. No one dared to interrupt him ; and those of the nobility who had remained in the royal quarters had gathered about the cardinal, who, at twenty paces from the king, was seated upon a little hillock of turf, fashioned into a seat by the soldiers. There he wiped his

pale forehead, fatigued with the cares of the day and with the unaccustomed weight of a suit of armor; he bade adieu in a few hurried but always attentive and polite words to those who came to salute him as they retired. He had now no one near except Joseph, who was talking with Laubardemont. The cardinal was looking at the king, to see if, before re-entering, this prince would not speak to him, when the sound of the horses of Cinq-Mars was heard. The guards of the cardinal questioned him, and allowed him to advance without followers, and only with De Thou.

“You are come too late, young man, to speak with the king,” said the cardinal-duc, with a sharp voice. “One cannot make his Majesty wait.”

The two friends were going to retire, when the voice of Louis XIII. himself made itself heard. This prince was at that moment in one of those false positions which constituted the misfortune of his entire life. Profoundly irritated against his minister, but not concealing from himself that he owed the success of the day to him, desiring, moreover, to announce to him his intention to quit the army and to raise the siege of Perpignan, he was tossed between the desire of speaking to the cardinal and the fear lest his anger might be weakened. The minister, upon his part, dared not be the first to speak, being uncertain as to the thoughts which occupied the head of his master, and fearing to choose his time ill, but yet not able to decide upon retiring. Both found themselves precisely in the position of two lovers who had quarrelled and desired to have an explanation, when the king seized with joy the first opportunity of extri-

eating himself. The chance was fatal to the minister. See upon what trifles depend those destinies which are called great!

“Is it not M. de Cinq-Mars?” said the king, in a loud voice. “Let him approach; I am waiting for him.”

Young D’Effiat approached on horseback, and at some paces from the king desired to set foot to earth; but scarcely had his leg touched the ground than he dropped upon his knees.

“Pardon, Sire!” said he, “I believe that I am wounded;” and the blood issued violently from his boot.

De Thou had seen him fall, and had approached to sustain him. Richelieu seized this opportunity of also advancing with dissembled eagerness.

“Remove this spectacle from the eyes of the king,” said he. “You see very well that this young man is dying.”

“Not at all,” said Louis, himself supporting him; “a king of France knows how to see a man die, and has no fear of the blood which flows for him. This young man interests me. Let him be carried into my tent, and let him have doctors with him. If his wound is not serious, he shall come with me to Paris, for the siege is suspended, M. le Cardinal. Such is my desire; other affairs call me to the centre of the kingdom. I will leave you here to command in my absence. This is what I desired to say to you.”

With these words the king went abruptly into his tent, preceded by his pages and his officers, carrying *flambeaux*.

The royal pavilion was closed, and Cinq-Mars borne in by De Thou and his people, while the Duc de Richelieu, motionless and stupefied, still regarded the spot where this scene had passed. He appeared thunderstruck, and incapable of seeing or hearing those who observed him.

Laubardemont, still intimidated by his ill reception of the preceding day, dared not speak a word to him, and Joseph hardly recognized in him his former master. For an instant he regretted having given himself to him, and fancied that his star was waning; but reflecting that he was hated by all men and had no resource save in Richelieu, he seized him by the arm, and shaking him roughly, said to him in a low voice, but with asperity, —

“Come, come, Monseigneur, you are chicken-hearted; come with us.”

And seeming to sustain him by the elbow, but in fact drawing him in spite of himself, with the aid of Laubardemont, he made him enter his tent, as a school-master forces a schoolboy to rest, fearing the effects of the evening mist upon him.

The prematurely aged man slowly obeyed the wishes of his two parasites, and the purple of the pavilion dropped upon him.





CHAPTER XII.

THE NIGHT-WATCH.

O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!
The lights burn blue. Is it not dead midnight?
Cold, fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.
What do I fear? Myself?
I love myself!

SHAKSPEARE.

SCARCELY was the cardinal in his tent before he dropped, armed and cuirassed, into a great armchair; and there, holding his handkerchief to his mouth with a fixed look, he remained in this attitude, letting his two dark confidants wonder whether contemplation or annihilation maintained him in it. He was deadly pale, and a cold sweat streamed upon his brow. In wiping it, with a sudden movement he threw behind him his red cap, the only ecclesiastical sign which remained upon him, and dropped again with his mouth upon his hands. The Capuchin on one side, and the sombre magistrate on the other, considered him in silence, and seemed with their brown and black costumes like the priest and the notary of a dying man.

The friar, drawing from the depth of his chest a voice which seemed better suited to repeat the service of the dead than to administer consolation, spoke first, —

“If Monseigneur will please to recall my counsels given at Narbonne, he will confess that I had a just presentiment of the troubles which this young man would one day cause him.”

The magistrate continued, —

“I have learned from the old deaf abbé who dined at the house of the Maréchale d’Effiat, and who heard all, that this young Cinq-Mars exhibited more energy than one would have imagined, and that he attempted to rescue the Maréchal de Bassompierre. I have still by me the detailed report of the deaf man, who played his part very well. His Eminence the Cardinal must be sufficiently convinced by it.”

“I have told Monseigneur,” recommenced Joseph, — for these two ferocious Seyds alternated their discourse like the shepherds of Virgil, — “I have told him that it would be well to get rid of this young D’Effiat, and that I would charge myself with the business, if such were his good pleasure. It would be easy to destroy him in the opinion of the king.”

“It would be safer to make him die of his wound,” answered Laubardemont; “if his Eminence would have the goodness to command me, I know intimately the assistant-physician, who has cured me of a blow on the forehead, and is now attending to him. He is a prudent man, who is quite devoted to Monseigneur the Cardinal-Duc, and whose affairs have been somewhat embarrassed by gambling.”

“I believe,” replied Joseph, with an air of modesty, mingled with a little bitterness, “that if his Excellency proposed to employ any one in this useful project, it would be rather his accustomed negotiator, who has had some success on past occasions.”

“I fancy that I could enumerate some signal instances,” answered Laubardemont, “and very recent ones, of which the difficulty was great.”

“Ah, no doubt,” said the father, with a bow and an air of consideration and politeness, “your most bold and skilfully executed commission was the trial of Urbain Grandier, the magician. But with Heaven’s assistance one may be enabled to execute things as excellent and bold. It is not quite without merit, for instance,” added he, dropping his eyes like a young girl, “to have vigorously extirpated a royal Bourbon branch.”

“It was not very difficult,” answered the magistrate, with bitterness, “to select a soldier from the guards to kill the Comte de Soissons; but to preside, judge —”

“And execute one’s self,” interrupted the heated Capuchin, “is certainly less difficult than to educate a man from infancy in the thought of accomplishing great things with discretion, and to bear all tortures, if necessary, for the love of Heaven, rather than reveal the name of those who have armed him with their justice, or to die courageously upon the body of him that he has struck, as did one who was commissioned by me. He uttered no cry at the blow of the sword of Riquemont, the squire of the prince. He died like a saint; he was my pupil.”

' "To give orders is a different thing from running risk one's self."

"And did I risk nothing at the siege of Rochelle?"

"Of being drowned in a sewer, no doubt," said Laubardemont.

"And you," said Joseph, "has your danger been that of catching your fingers in instruments of torture? And all this because the abbess of the Ursulines is your niece."

"It was a good thing for your brothers of Saint Francis, who held the hammers; but I,—I was struck in the forehead by this same Cinq-Mars, who was leading an enraged multitude."

"Are you quite sure of that?" cried Joseph, delighted. "Did he dare to act thus against the commands of the king?" The joy which this discovery gave him made him forget his anger.

"Fools!" exclaimed the cardinal, suddenly breaking silence, and taking from his lips his handkerchief stained with blood. "I would punish your miserable dispute had it not taught me many secrets of infamy on your part. You have exceeded my orders; I commanded no torture, Laubardemont. That is your second fault. You get me hated for nothing; that was useless. But you, Joseph, do not neglect the details of this disturbance in which Cinq-Mars was engaged; it may be of use in the end."

"I have all the names and descriptions," said the secret judge, eagerly, bending his tall form and thin and olive-colored visage, wrinkled with a servile smile, down to the armchair.

“It is well! it is well!” said the minister, pushing him back; “but that is not the question yet. You, Joseph, be in Paris before this young upstart, who will be favorite, I am certain. Become his friend; make him of my party or destroy him. Let him serve me or fall. But, above all, send me every day safe persons to give me verbal accounts. I will have no more writing for the future. I am very ill satisfied with you, Joseph. What a miserable courier you chose to send from Cologne! He could not understand me. He saw the king too soon, and here we are still in disgrace in consequence. You have just missed losing me entirely. Go and watch what is about to be done at Paris. A conspiracy will soon be hatched against me; but it will be the last. I remain here in order to let them all act more freely. Go, both of you, and send me my valet after the lapse of two hours; I wish to be alone.”

The steps of these two men were still to be heard as Richelieu, with eyes fixed upon the entrance to the tent, seemed to pursue them with his irritated looks.

“Wretches!” exclaimed he, when he was alone, “go and accomplish some more secret work, and afterwards I will crush yourselves, impure instruments of my power. The king will soon succumb beneath the slow malady which consumes him. I shall then be regent; I shall be King of France myself; I shall no longer have to dread the caprices of his weakness. I will destroy the haughty races of this country. I will be alone above them all. Europe shall tremble. I —”

Here the blood, which filled his mouth, obliged him to apply his handkerchief to it again.

“Ah, what do I say? Unhappy victim that I am! Here am I, death-stricken! My dissolution is near; my blood flows, and my spirit desires to labor still. Why? For whom? Is it for glory? 'Tis an empty word. Is it for men? I despise them. For whom, then, since I shall die, perhaps, in two or three years? Is it for God? What a name! I have not walked with him! He has seen all —”

Here he let his head fall upon his breast, and his eyes met the great cross of gold which was suspended from his neck. He could not help throwing himself back in his chair; but it followed him. He took it; and considering it with fixed and devouring looks, he said in a low voice, —

“Terrible sign! thou followest me! Shall I find thee elsewhere, — divinity and suffering? What am I? What have I done?”

For the first time a singular and unknown terror penetrated him. He trembled, at once frozen and scorched by an invincible shudder. He dared not lift his eyes, fearing to meet some terrible vision. He dared not call, fearing to hear the sound of his own voice. He remained profoundly plunged in the contemplation of eternity, so terrible for him, and he murmured the following kind of prayer: —

“Great God, if you hear me, judge me then, but do not isolate me in judging me! Look upon me surrounded by the men of my generation; consider the enormous work which I had undertaken! Was not an enormous lever wanted to bestir those masses; and if this lever in falling crushes some useless wretches, am

I very culpable? I seem wicked to men; but thou, Supreme Judge, dost thou regard me thus? No; thou knowest that it is boundless power which makes creature culpable against creature. It is not Armand de Richelieu who destroys; it is the prime minister. It is not for his personal injuries; it is to carry out a system. But a system — what is this word? Is it permitted me to play thus with men, to regard them as numbers for working out a thought, which perhaps is false? I overturn the framework of the throne. What 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 did I quit thy path? Why am I not a simple priest? If I dared to break with man and give myself to God, the ladder of Jacob would again descend in my dreams.”

At this moment his ear was struck by a great noise outside, — laughter of soldiers, ferocious shouts and oaths, mingled with words which were a long time sustained by a weak and clear voice; one would have said that it was the voice of an angel interrupted by the laughter of demons. He rose and opened a sort of linen window, worked in the sides of his square tent. A singular spectacle presented itself to his view; he remained some instants contemplating it, attentive to the conversation which was going on.

“Listen, listen, La Valeur!” said one soldier to another. “See, she begins again to speak and to sing! Set her in the middle of the circle between us and the fire.”

“Don’t you know her? Don’t you know her?” said

another. "Here is Grand-Ferré, who says that he knows her."

"Yes, I tell you I know her; and, by Saint Peter of Loudun, I will swear that I have seen her in my village, when I had leave of absence; and it was upon an occasion at which one shuddered, but concerning which one dares not talk, especially to a Cardinalist like you."

"Eh! and pray why dare not one speak of it, you great simpleton?" said an old soldier, raising his mustache.

"It is not spoken of because it burns the tongue. Do you understand that?"

"No, I don't understand it."

"Well, nor I neither; but they were citizens who told it to me."

Here a general laugh interrupted him.

"Ha, ha, ha! is he a fool?" said one. "He listens to what the townfolk tell him."

"Ah, well! if you listen to their jabber, you have time to lose," said another.

"You do not know, then, what my mother said, greenhorn?" said the eldest, gravely dropping his eyes with a solemn air, to get himself listened to.

"Eh! how can you think that I know it, La Pipe? Your mother must have died of old age before my grandfather came into the world."

"Well, greenhorn, I will tell you! You shall know, first of all, that my mother was a respectable Bohemian, as much attached to the regiment of carabineers of La Roque as my dog Canon there. She carried brandy

round her neck in a barrel, and drank better than the best of us. She had fourteen husbands, all soldiers, who died upon the field of battle."

"Ha! that was a woman!" interrupted the soldiers, full of respect.

"And never once in her life did she speak to a townsman, unless it was to tell him on coming to her lodging, 'Light my candle, and warm my soup.'"

"Well, and what is that your mother said to you?"

"If you are in such a hurry, you shall not know, greenhorn. She said habitually in her talk, 'A soldier is better than a dog; but a dog is better than a *bourgeois*.'"

"Bravo! bravo! that was well said!" cried the soldier, filled with enthusiasm at these fine words.

"That," said Grand-Ferré, "does not prove that the citizens who made the remark to me that it burned the tongue were unreasonable; besides, they were not altogether citizens, for they had swords, and they were grieved at a curé being burned, and so was I."

"Eh! what was it to you that they burned your curé, great simpleton?" said a sergeant, leaning upon the fork of his arquebuse; "after him another would come. You might have taken one of our generals in his stead, who are all curés at present; for me, I am a Royalist, and I say it frankly."

"Hold your tongue!" cried La Pipe; "let this girl speak. It is these dogs of Royalists who always disturb us in our amusements."

"What do you say?" answered Grand-Ferré. "Do you even know what it is to be a Royalist?"

“Yes,” said La Pipe; “I know you all very well. Go, you are for the old self-called princes of the peace, together with the wranglers against the cardinal and the *gabelle*; there, am I right or not?”

“No, old red-legs. A Royalist is one who is for the king; that’s what it is. And as my father was the king’s valet, I am for the king, you see; and I have no liking for the red-legs, that’s flat.”

“Ah, do you call me red-legs?” answered the old soldier. “You shall give me satisfaction to-morrow morning. If you had made war in the Valteline, you would not talk in that style; and if you had seen his Eminence marching upon the dike at Rochelle, with the old Marquis de Spinola, while volleys of cannon-shot were sent after him, you would have nothing to say about red-legs.”

“Come, let us amuse ourselves instead of quarrelling,” said the other soldiers.

The men who conversed thus were standing round a great fire, which illuminated them more than the moon, beautiful as it was; and in the middle of them was the object of their gathering together and their cries. The cardinal perceived a young woman arrayed in black and covered with a long white veil. Her feet were naked; a thick cord clasped her elegant person; a long rosary fell from her neck almost to her feet; her hands, delicate and white as ivory, turned its beads and made them pass rapidly beneath her fingers. The soldiers with a barbarous joy amused themselves with laying little brands in her way to burn her naked feet. The oldest took the smoking match of his arquebuse, and

approaching it to the edge of her robe, said in a hoarse voice, —

“Come, madcap, tell me your history, or I will fill you with powder and blow you up like a mine; take care, for I have already played that trick to others besides you, in the old wars of the Huguenots. Come, sing.”

The young woman, looking at him gravely, replied nothing, and let down her veil.

“You don’t manage her well,” said Grand-Ferré, with a drunken laugh; “you will make her cry. You don’t know the fine language of the court; let me speak to her.” And touching her on the chin, “My little heart,” he said, “if you will please, my sweet, to recommence the little story you told just now to these gentlemen, I will pray you to travel with me upon the river Du Tendre, as the great ladies of Paris say, and to take a glass of brandy with your faithful chevalier, who met you formerly at Loudun, when you played a comedy in order to burn a poor devil.”

The young woman crossed her arms, and looking around her with an imperious air, cried, —

“Withdraw, in the name of the God of armies; withdraw, impious men! There is nothing in common between us. I do not understand your tongue, nor you mine. Go, sell your blood to the princes of the earth at so many oboles a day, and leave me to accomplish my mission! Conduct me to the cardinal.”

A coarse laugh interrupted her.

“Do you think,” said a carabineer of Maurevert, “that his Eminence the Generalissimo will receive you with your feet naked? Go and wash them.”

“The Lord has said, ‘Jerusalem, lift thy robe, and pass the rivers of water,’” answered she, her arms still crossed. “Let me be conducted to the cardinal.”

Richelieu cried in a loud voice, “Bring the woman to me, and let her alone!”

All were silent; they conducted her to the minister.

“Why,” said she, beholding him, — “why bring me before an armed man?”

They left her alone with him without answering.

The cardinal looked at her with a suspicious air. “Madame,” said he, “what are you doing in the camp at this hour? And if your mind is not disordered, why these naked feet?”

“It is a vow; it is a vow,” answered the young woman, with an air of impatience, seating herself beside him abruptly. “I have also made one not to eat until I have found the man I seek.”

“My sister,” said the cardinal, astonished and softened, approaching to observe her, “God does not exact such rigors from a weak body, and particularly from one of your age, for you seem very young.”

“Young! oh, yes, I was very young a few days ago; but I have since passed two existences at least, so much have I thought and suffered. Look on my countenance.”

And she discovered a face perfectly beautiful. Black and very regular eyes gave life to it; but in their absence one might have thought her features were those of a phantom, she was so pale. Her lips were blue and quivered; and a strong shudder made the encounter of her teeth audible.

"You are ill, my sister," said the minister, touched, taking her hand, which he felt to be burning hot. A sort of habit of inquiring concerning his own health, and that of others, made him touch the pulse of her emaciated arm; he felt the arteries lifted by the beatings of a terrible fever.

"Alas," continued he, with more of interest, "you have killed yourself with rigors beyond human strength! I have always blamed them, and especially at a tender age. What, then, has induced you to this? Is it to confide it to me that you are come? Speak calmly, and be sure of succor."

"Confide in men!" answered the young woman; "oh, no, never! They have all deceived me. I will confide myself to no one, not even to M. Cinq-Mars, although he must soon die."

"What!" said Richelieu, contracting his brows, but with a bitter laugh,—"what! do you know this young man? Has he been the cause of your misfortune?"

"Oh, no! He is very good, and hates wickedness; that is what will ruin him. Besides," said she, suddenly assuming a harsh and savage air, "men are weak, and there are things which women must accomplish. When there were no more valiant men in Israel, Deborah arose."

"Ah! how came you with all this fine learning?" continued the cardinal, still holding her hand.

"Oh, I can't explain that!" answered she, with a touching air of naïveté and a very gentle voice; "you would not understand me. It is the Devil who has taught me all, and who has destroyed me."

“Ah, my child! it is always he who destroys us; but he instructs us ill,” said Richelieu, with an air of paternal protection and an increasing pity. “What have been your faults? Tell them to me; I have much power.”

“Ah,” said she, with a look of doubt, “you have much influence over warriors, brave men and generals! Beneath your cuirass there must beat a noble heart; you are an old general who knows nothing of the tricks of crime.”

Richelieu smiled; this mistake flattered him.

“I heard you ask for the cardinal; do you desire to see him? Did you come here to seek him?”

The girl drew back and placed a finger upon her forehead.

“I had forgotten it,” said she; “you have talked to me too much. I had overlooked this idea, and yet it is an important one; it is for it that I have condemned myself to the hunger which kills me. I must accomplish it, or I shall die first. Ah,” said she, putting her hand beneath her robe in her bosom, whence she appeared to take something, “behold it! this idea—”

She suddenly blushed, and her eyes widened extraordinarily. She continued, bending to the ear of the cardinal,—

“I will tell you; listen. Urbain Grandier, my lover Urbain, told me this night that it was Richelieu who had been the cause of his death. I took a knife from an inn, and I come here to kill him; tell me where he is.”

The cardinal, surprised and terrified, recoiled with

horror. He dared not call his guards, fearing the cries of this woman and her accusations; and nevertheless, a transport of this madness might be fatal to him.

“This frightful history will pursue me everywhere!” cried he, looking fixedly at her, and thinking within himself of the course he should take.

They remained in silence, face to face, in the same attitude, like two wrestlers who contemplate before attacking one another, or like the pointer and his victim petrified by the power of a look.

In the mean time, Laubardemont and Joseph had gone forth together; and ere separating they talked for a moment before the tent of the cardinal, because they wanted mutually to deceive each other. Their hatred had just acquired new force by their quarrel; and each had resolved to ruin his rival in the mind of his master. The judge began the dialogue, which each of them had prepared, taking the arm of the other as by one and the same movement.

“Ah, reverend father! how you have afflicted me by seeming to take in ill part some trifling pleasantries which I said to you just now.”

“Heavens, no! my dear sir, I am far from that. Charity, where would be charity? I have sometimes a holy warmth in conversation, for the good of the State and of Monseigneur, to whom I am entirely devoted.”

“Ah, who knows it better than I, reverend father? But render me justice; you also know how completely I am attached to his Eminence the Cardinal, to whom I owe all. Alas! I have employed too much zeal in serving him, since he reproaches me with it.”

“Reassure yourself,” said Joseph; “he bears no ill-will towards you. I know him well; he can appreciate one’s actions in favor of one’s family. He too is a very good relative.”

“Yes, there it is,” answered Laubardemont; “consider my condition. My niece was totally lost with her convent if Urbain had triumphed; you feel that as well as I do, particularly as she did not quite comprehend us, and acted the child when she was obliged to appear.”

“Is it possible? In full audience! What you tell me indeed makes me feel for you. How painful it must have been!”

“More so than you can imagine. She forgot, in her possession, all that she had been told, committed a thousand blunders in Latin, which we patched up as well as we could; and she even caused an unpleasant scene on the day of the trial, very unpleasant for me and the judges,—there were faintings-away and shrieks. Ah, I swear that I would have scolded her well if I had not been forced to quit precipitately that little town of Loudun. But, look you, it is natural enough that I am attached to her. She is my nearest relative; for my son has turned out ill, and no one knows what has become of him during the last four years. Poor little Jeanne de Belfiel! I made her a nun, and then abbess, in order to preserve all for that scamp. If I had foreseen his conduct, I would have retained her for the world.”

“She is said to have great beauty,” answered Joseph; “that is a precious gift for a family. She might have

been presented at court, and the king— Ah! ah! Mademoiselle de la Fayette— eh! eh!— Mademoiselle d'Hautefort— you understand; it may be even possible to think of it yet.”

“Ah, that is like you, Monseigneur! for we know that you have been nominated to the cardinalate; how good you are to remember the most devoted of your friends!”

Laubardemont was yet talking to Joseph when they found themselves at the end of the line of the camp, which led to the quarter of the volunteers.

“May God and his holy Mother protect you during my absence!” said Joseph, stopping. “To-morrow I depart for Paris; and as I shall have frequent business with this young Cinq-Mars, I will first go to see him, and 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!” answered Joseph, with a profound sigh, and raising his eyes to heaven; “but the cardinal is no longer the same man. He will not take advantage of good ideas; he will ruin us if he goes on so.”

And making a low bow to the judge, the Capuchin took the road which he had indicated to him.

Laubardemont followed him for some time with his eyes, and when he was quite sure of the route which he had taken, he returned, or rather ran back, to the tent of the minister. “The cardinal sends him away, he tells me; that shows that he is tired of him. I know secrets which will ruin him. I will add that he is gone

to pay court to the future favorite. I will replace this monk in the favor of the minister. The moment is propitious. It is midnight; he is to be alone for an hour and a half yet. Let me run."

He arrived at the tent of the guards, which was before the pavilion.

"Monseigneur gives audience to some one," said the captain, hesitating; "you cannot enter."

"Never mind; you saw me leave an hour ago, and there are things passing 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 the nun in one of his, and with the other he imposed silence upon his stupefied agent, who remained motionless, not yet seeing the face of this woman. She spoke volubly, and the strange things she said contrasted horribly with the sweetness of her voice. Richelieu seemed moved.

"Yes, I will stab him with a knife. It is the knife which the demon Beherith gave me at the inn; but it is the nail of Sisera. It has a handle of ivory, look you; and I have wept much over it. Is it not singular, my good general? I will turn it in the throat of him who killed my friend, as he himself told me to do; and afterwards I will burn the body. There is like for like, the punishment which God permitted to Adam. You have an astonished air, my brave general; but you would be much more so, if I were to repeat to you his song,—the song which he sang to me again yesterday night, at

the hour of the funeral-pyre, — you understand? — the hour when it rains, the hour when my hand burns, as now. He said to me, ‘They are much deceived, the magistrates, the red judges. I have eleven demons at my command; and I shall come to see you when the clock strikes, under a canopy of purple velvet, with torches, — torches of resin to give us light —’ Ah, that is beautiful! Listen, listen to what he sings!”

And she sang a strange and melancholy strain to the air of *De Profundis*.

“Is it not singular, my good general?” said she, when she had finished; “and I, — I answer him every evening. Then he speaks, and speaks as spirits and prophets do. He says, ‘Woe, woe to him who has shed blood! Are the judges of the earth gods? No, they are men who grow old and suffer, and yet they dare to say aloud, Let that man die! The penalty of death, the pain of death, — who has given to man the right of imposing it on man? Is the number two? One would be an assassin, look you! But count well, one, two, three. Behold, they are wise and just, these grave and salaried criminals! O crime, the horror of Heaven! If you looked upon them from above as I look upon them, you would be yet paler than I am. Flesh destroys flesh! That which lives by blood sheds blood coldly and without anger, like a God with power to create!’”

The cries which the unhappy girl uttered, as she rapidly spoke these words, terrified Richelieu and Laubardemont so much that they still remained motionless. The delirium and the fever continued to transport her.

“‘Did the judges tremble?’ said Urbain Grandier to me. ‘Did they tremble at deceiving themselves?’ They work the death of the just. The question! They bind his limbs with ropes to make him speak. His skin cracks, tears away, and rolls up like a parchment; his nerves are naked, red, and glittering; his bones crack; the marrow spurts out. But the judges sleep! they dream of flowers and spring. ‘How hot the grand chamber is!’ says one, awaking; ‘this man has not chosen to speak! Is the torture finished?’ And pitiful at last, he dooms him to death, — death, the sole fear of the living! death, the unknown world! He sends before him a furious soul which will wait for him. Oh! has he never seen the vision of vengeance? Has he never seen before falling to sleep the flayed prevaricator?”

Already, weakened by fever, fatigue, and grief, the cardinal, seized with horror and pity, exclaimed, —

“Ah, for the love of God, let this terrible scene have an end! Take away this woman; she is mad!”

The frantic creature turned, and suddenly uttering loud cries, “Ah, the judge! the judge! the judge!” she said, recognizing Laubardemont.

The latter, clasping his hands, and trembling before the cardinal, said with terror, —

“Alas, Monseigneur, pardon me! she is my niece, who has lost her reason. I was not aware of this misfortune, or she would have been shut up long ago. Jeanne! Jeanne! come, Madame, to your knees! ask forgiveness of Monseigneur the Cardinal-Duc.”

“It is Richelieu!” cried she; and astonishment seemed wholly to paralyze this young and unhappy

beauty. The flush which had animated her at first gave place to a deadly paleness, her cries to a motionless silence, her wandering looks to a frightful fixedness of her large eyes, which constantly followed the agitated minister.

“Take away this unfortunate child quickly,” said he; “she is dying, and so am I. So many horrors pursue me since that sentence that I believe all hell is loosed upon me.”

He rose as he spoke; Jeanne de Belfiel, still silent and stupefied, with haggard eyes, open mouth, and head bent forward, yet remained beneath the shock of her double surprise, which seemed to have extinguished the rest of her reason and her strength. At the movement of the cardinal, she shuddered to find herself between him and Laubardemont, looked by turns at one and the other, let the knife which she held fall from her hand, and retired slowly towards the opening of the tent, covering herself completely with her veil, and looking wildly and with terror behind her upon her uncle who followed, like an affrighted lamb, which already feels at its back the burning breath of the wolf about to seize it.

Thus they both went forth; and scarcely in the open air, the furious judge caught the hands of his victim, tied them with a handkerchief, and easily led her, for she uttered no cry, not even a sigh, but followed him with her head still drooping upon her bosom, and as if plunged in profound somnambulism.





A. Dawant inv.

Gaujean sc.

THE NIGHT WATCH



CHAPTER XIII.

THE SPANIARD.

Qu'un ami véritable est une douce chose !
Il cherche vos besoins au fond de votre cœur ;
Il vous épargne la pudeur
De les lui découvrir vous-même.

LA FONTAINE.

IN the mean time, a scene of quite a different nature was passing in the tent of Cinq-Mars ; the words of the king, the first balm to his wounds, had been followed by the anxious care of the surgeons of the court. A spent ball, easily extracted, had been the only cause of his accident. He was allowed to travel ; and all was ready. The invalid had received up to midnight friendly or interested visits ; among the first were those of little Gondi and of Fontrailles, who were also preparing to quit Perpignan for Paris. The ex-page, Olivier d'Entraigues, joined with them in complimenting the fortunate volunteer, whom the king seemed to have distinguished. The habitual coldness of the prince towards all who surrounded him having caused those who knew of them to

regard the few words he had spoken as assured signs of high favor, all came to congratulate him.

At length, released from visitors, he lay upon his camp-bed. De Thou sat by his side, holding his hand, and Grandchamp at his feet, still grumbling at the numerous interruptions that had fatigued his wounded master. Cinq-Mars himself tasted one of those moments of calm and hope, which so refresh the soul as well as the body. The hand unoccupied by his friend secretly pressed the gold cross that hung next to his heart, and the beloved donor of which he was so soon to behold. It was but outwardly that with kindly looks he heard the counsels of the young magistrate; his inward thoughts were all turned towards the object of his journey,—the object, also, of his life. The grave De Thou went on in a calm, gentle voice,—

“I shall soon follow you to Paris. I am happier than yourself at seeing the king take you there with him. You are right in looking upon it as the commencement of a friendship which must be turned to profit. I have deeply reflected on the secret causes of your ambition, and I think I have divined your heart. Yes; that feeling of love for France, which made it beat in your earliest youth, must have gained greater strength. You would be near the king in order to serve your country, in order to put in action those golden dreams of your early years. *Certes*, the thought is a vast one, and worthy of you! I admire you; I bow before you. To approach the monarch with the chivalrous devotion of our fathers, with a heart full of candor, and prepared for any sacrifice; to receive the confidences of his soul;

to pour into his those of his subjects; to soften the sorrows of the king by telling him the confidence his people have in him; to cure the wounds of the people by laying them open to its master, and by the intervention of your favor thus to re-establish that intercourse of love between the father and his children which for eighteen years has been interrupted by a man whose heart is marble; for this noble enterprise, to expose yourself to all the horrors of his vengeance and, what is even worse, to brave all the perfidious calumnies which pursue the favorite to the very steps of the throne,—this dream was worthy of you. Pursue it, my friend. Be never discouraged. Speak loudly to the king of the merit and misfortunes of his most illustrious friends who are trampled on. Tell him fearlessly that his old nobility have never conspired against him; and that from the young Montmorency to the amiable Comte de Soissons, all have opposed the minister, and never the monarch. Tell him that the old families of France were born with his race; that in striking them he affects the whole nation; and that if he destroy them, his own race will suffer, that it will stand alone exposed to the blast of time and events, as an old oak trembling and exposed to the wind of the plain, when the forest which surrounded and supported it has been destroyed. Yes," cried De Thou, growing animated, "this aim is a fine and noble one. Go on in your course with a resolute step; expel even that secret shame, that bashfulness, which a noble soul experiences before it can resolve upon flattering,—upon paying what the world calls its court. Alas, kings are accustomed to these continual

expressions of false admiration for them! Look upon them as a new language which must be learned,—a language hitherto foreign to your lips, but which, believe me, may be nobly spoken, and which may express high and generous thoughts.”

During this warm discourse of his friend, Cinq-Mars could not refrain from a sudden blush; and he turned his head on his pillow towards the tent, so that he might not be seen. De Thou stopped:—

“What is the matter, Henri? You do not answer. Am I deceived?”

Cinq-Mars gave a deep sigh, and was still silent.

“Is not your heart affected by these ideas which I thought would have transported it?”

The wounded man looked more calmly at his friend, and said,—

“I thought, my dear De Thou, that you were not going to interrogate me farther, and that you were willing to have a blind confidence in me. What evil genius has moved you thus to sound my soul? I am not a stranger to these ideas which possess you. Who told you that I had not conceived them? Who told you that I had not formed the firm resolution of prosecuting them infinitely farther in action than you have put them into words? Love for France, virtuous hatred of the ambition which oppresses and shatters her ancient institutions with the axe of the executioner, the firm belief that virtue may be as skilful as crime,—these are my gods as much as yours. But when you see a man kneeling in a church, do you ask him what saint or what angel protects him and receives his prayer? What

matters it to you, provided that he pray at the foot of the altars that you adore, provided that if called upon, he fall a martyr at the foot of those altars? When our forefathers journeyed with naked feet towards the holy sepulchre, with a pilgrim's staff in their hands, did men inquire the secret vow which led them to the Holy Land? They struck, they died; and men, perhaps God himself, asked no more. The pious captain who led them never stripped their bodies to see whether the red cross and haircloth concealed any other mysterious symbol; and in heaven, doubtless, they were not judged with any greater rigor for having aided the strength of their resolutions upon earth by some hope permitted to a Christian,—some second or secret thought, more human, and nearer the mortal heart."

De Thou smiled, and slightly colored, lowering his eyes.

"My friend," he answered, gravely; "this excitement may be injurious to you. Let us not continue this subject; let us not mingle God and heaven in our discourse. 'T is not well; and draw the clothes over your shoulder, for the night is cold. I promise you," he added, covering his young invalid with a maternal care,—"I promise not to again offend you with my counsels."

"And I," cried Cinq-Mars, despite the interdiction to speak, "swear to you by this gold cross you see, and by the holy Mary, to die rather than renounce the plan that you first traced out! You may one day, perhaps, be forced to pray me to stop; but then it will be too late."

"Well, well!" repeated the counsellor, "now sleep; if you do not stop, I will go on with you, wherever you lead me."

And taking a prayer-book from his pocket, he began to read attentively ; in a short time he looked at Cinq-Mars, who was still awake. He made a sign to Grandchamp to put the lamp out of sight of the invalid ; but this new care succeeded no better. The latter, with his eyes still open, tossed restlessly on his narrow bed.

“Come, you are not calm,” said De Thou, smiling ; “I will read to you some pious passage which will put your mind in repose. Ah, my friend, it is here that true repose is to be found ; it is in this consolatory book, for, open it where you will, you will always see, on the one hand, man in the only condition that suits his weakness, — prayer, and the uncertainty as to his destiny, — and, on the other, God himself speaking to him of his infirmities ! What a glorious and heavenly spectacle ! What a sublime bond between heaven and earth ! Life, death, and eternity are there ; open it at hazard.”

“Yes !” said Cinq-Mars, rising with a vivacity which had something infantine in it ; “you shall read to me, but let me open the book. You know the old superstition of our country, — when the mass-book is opened with a sword, the first page on the left contains the destiny of him who reads, and the first person who enters after he has read is powerfully to influence the reader’s future fate.”

“What childishness ! But be it as you will. There’s your sword ; put in the point. Let us see.”

“Let me read myself,” said Cinq-Mars, taking one side of the book. Old Grandchamp gravely advanced his tawny face and his gray hair to the foot of the bed to listen. His master read, stopped at the first phrase,

but with a smile, perhaps slightly forced, he went on to the end.

“ I. Now it was in the city of Milan that they appeared.

“ II. The high-priest said to them, ‘ Bow down and adore the gods.’

“ III. And the people were silent, looking at their faces, which appeared as the faces of angels.

“ IV. But Gervais, taking the hand of Protais, cried, looking to heaven, and filled with the Holy Ghost, —

“ V. Oh, my brother! I see the Son of man smiling upon us; let me die first.

“ VI. For if I see thy blood, I fear I shall shed tears unworthy of the Lord our God.

“ VII. Then 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 people ground their teeth at them.

“ X. And the soldiers having struck them, their heads fell together on the same stone.

“ XI. Now it was in this same place that the blessed Saint Ambrose found the ashes of the two martyrs which gave sight to the blind.”

“ Well,” said Cinq-Mars, looking at his friend when he had finished, “ what do you say to that ? ”

“ God’s will be done ! but we should not scrutinize it.”

“ Nor put off our designs for a child’s play,” said D’Effiat, impatiently, and pulling round him a cloak which was thrown over him. “ Remember the lines we formerly so frequently quoted, ‘ Justum et tenacem propositi virum ; ’ these iron words are stamped upon

my brain. Yes; let the universe crumble around me, its wrecks shall carry me away still resolute."

"Let us not compare the thoughts of man with those of Heaven; and let us be submissive," said De Thou, gravely.

"*Amen!*" said old Grandchamp, whose eyes had filled with tears, which he hastily brushed away.

"What hast thou to do with it, old soldier? Thou weepest," said his master.

"*Amen!*" said a voice, in a nasal tone, at the entrance of the tent.

"*Parbleu, Monsieur!* rather put that question to his Gray Eminence, who comes to visit you," answered the faithful servant, pointing to Joseph, who advanced with his arms crossed, making a salutation with a frowning air.

"Ah, it will be he, then!" murmured Cinq-Mars.

"Perhaps I come *mal à propos*," said Joseph, soothingly.

"Perhaps very *à propos*," said Henri d'Effiat, smiling, with a glance at De Thou. "What can bring you here, Father, at one in the morning? It should be some good work."

Joseph saw he was ill received; and as he had always sundry reproaches to make himself with reference to all the persons whom he addressed, and as many resources in his mind for getting out of the difficulty, he fancied that they had discovered the object of his visit, and felt that it was not a moment of ill humor that he ought to select for preparing the way to friendship. Therefore, seating himself coldly near the bed, he said, —

“I come, sir, to speak to you on the part of the cardinal-generalissimo, of the two Spanish prisoners you have made ; he desires to have the most prompt information concerning them. I am to see and question them. But I did not suppose you were still awake ; I merely wished to receive them of your people.”

After a forced interchange of politeness, they ordered into the tent the two prisoners, whom Cinq-Mars had almost forgotten.

They appeared,—the one, young and displaying an animated and rather wild countenance, was the soldier ; the other, concealing his form under a brown cloak, and his gloomy features, which had something ambiguous in their expression, under his broad-brimmed hat, which he did not take off, was the officer. He spoke first :—

“Why do you make me leave my straw and my sleep ? Is it to deliver me or hang me ?”

“Neither,” said Joseph.

“What have I to do with thee, man with the long beard ? I did not see thee at the breach.”

It took some time after this amiable exordium to make the stranger understand the right a Capuchin had to interrogate him.

“Well,” he said, “what dost want ?”

“I would know your name and country.”

“I shall not tell my name ; and as for my country, I have the air of a Spaniard, but perhaps am not one, for a Spaniard never acknowledges his country.”

Father Joseph, turning towards the two friends, said, “Unless I deceive myself, I have heard his voice some-

where. This man speaks French without any accent ; but it seems he wishes to give us enigmas, as in the East."

"The East? that's it," said the prisoner. "A Spaniard is a man from the East; he is a Catholic Turk; his blood flags or boils; he is lazy or indefatigable; indolence makes him a slave, ardor a tyrant; immovable in his ignorance, ingenious in his superstition, he wants only a religious book and a tyrannical master; he obeys the law of the pyre; he commands by that of the poniard; at night he falls asleep in his bloodthirsty misery, nurses fanaticism, and awakes to crime. Who is this gentleman? Is it the Spaniard or the Turk? Guess! Ah, ah! you seem to discover that I have wit, because I light upon analogy. Truly, gentlemen, you do me honor; and yet the idea may be carried much further, if desired. If I pass to the physical order, for example, may I not say to you, this man has serious and long features, a black and almond-shaped eye, rugged brows, a sad and changeable mouth, tawny, meagre, and wrinkled cheeks; his head is shaved, and he covers it with a black handkerchief in the form of a turban; he passes a whole day lying or standing under a burning sun, without motion, without utterance, smoking a pipe that intoxicates him. Is this a Turk or a Spaniard? Are you content, gentlemen? Truly, it would seem so; you laugh, and what do you laugh at? I, who have presented this idea to you,—I have not laughed; see, my countenance is sad. Ah! perhaps it is because the gloomy prisoner has suddenly become a gossip, and talks quick. Ah, that's nothing! I might

tell you other things, and render you some service, my worthy friends. If I ran into anecdote, for example; if I told you I knew a priest who 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 for his orders, 'Kill them all! kill them all!' — should you all laugh, gentlemen? No, not all! This gentleman here, for instance, would bite his lips and his beard. Oh! it is true he might answer that he did wisely, and that they were wrong to interrupt his unsullied prayer. But if I added that he concealed himself for an hour behind the curtain of your tent, M. de Cinq-Mars, to listen while you talked, and that he came to betray you, and not for me, what would he say? Now, gentlemen, are you content? May I retire after this display?"

The prisoner had uttered this with the rapidity of a quack vending his wares, and in so loud a voice that Joseph was quite confounded. He indignantly arose at last, and addressing himself to Cinq-Mars, said, —

"How can you suffer a prisoner who ought to have been hanged to speak to you thus, sir?"

The Spaniard, without deigning to attend to him any farther, leaned towards D'Effiat, and whispered in his ear, —

"I can be of no farther use to you; give me my liberty. I might ere this have taken it; but I would not do so without your consent. Give it me, or have me killed."

"Go, if you will!" said Cinq-Mars to him. "I assure you I shall be very glad;" and he told his people

to retire with the soldier, whom he wished to keep in his service.

This was the affair of a moment. There no longer remained any one in the tent but the two friends, — the abashed Joseph and the Spaniard, — when the latter, taking off his hat, showed a French but savage countenance. He laughed, and seemed to respire more air into his broad chest.

“Yes, I am a Frenchman,” he said to Joseph. “But I hate France, because she gave birth to my father, who is a monster, and to me, who have become one, and who once struck him. I hate her inhabitants, because they have robbed me of my whole fortune at play, and because I have robbed them and killed them. I have been two years in Spain in order to kill more Frenchmen; but now I hate Spain still more. No one will know why. Adieu! I must live henceforth without a nation; all men are my enemies. Go on, Joseph, and you will soon be as good as I. Yes, you saw me once before,” continued he, violently, pushing him in the breast and throwing him down. “I am Jacques de Laubardemont, the son of your worthy friend.”

At these words, quickly leaving the tent, he disappeared like an apparition. De Thou and the servants, who ran to the entrance, saw him with two bounds spring over a surprised and disarmed soldier, and run towards the mountains with the swiftness of a hart, despite various musket-shots. Joseph took advantage of the disorder to slip away, stammering a few words of politeness, and left the two friends laughing at his adventure and his disappointment, as two schoolboys laugh

at seeing the spectacles of their pedagogue fall off, and at last preparing to seek a rest of which they both stood in need, and which they soon found,—the wounded man in his bed, and the young counsellor in his chair.

As for the Capuchin, he walked towards his tent, meditating how he should turn all this so as to take the greatest possible revenge, when he met Laubardemont, dragging by her two hands the young mad-woman. They recounted to one another their mutual and horrible adventures.

Joseph had no small pleasure in turning the poniard in the wound of his friend's heart, by telling him of the fate of his son.

“You are not singularly happy in your family,” he added. “I advise you to shut up your niece and hang your son, if you are fortunate enough to find him.”

Laubardemont replied with a hideous laugh, —

“As for this idiot here, I am going to give her to an ex-secret judge, at present a smuggler in the Pyrenees at Oleron. He can make what he pleases of her, — a servant in his *posada*, for instance. I care not, so that my Lord never hears of her.”

Jeanne de Belfiel, her head hanging down, gave no sign of sensibility. Every glimmer of reason was extinguished in her; one word alone remained upon her lips, and this she continually pronounced.

“The judge! the judge! the judge!” she said murmuringly, and was silent.

The uncle and Joseph threw her, almost like a sack of corn, on one of the horses which were led up by two servants. Laubardemont mounted another, and prepared

to leave the camp, wishing to get into the mountains before day.

“A good journey to you!” he said to Joseph. “Execute your business well in Paris. I commend to you Orestes and Pylades.”

“A good journey to you!” answered the other. “I commend to you Cassandra and Œdipus.”

“Oh! he has neither killed his father nor married his mother.”

“But he is on the high-road to those little pleasantries.”

“Adieu, my reverend father!”

“Adieu, my venerable friend!”

They said aloud, but in a low voice, —

“Adieu, assassin in the gray robe! During thy absence I shall have the ear of the cardinal.”

“Adieu, villain in the red robe! Go thyself and destroy thy cursed family. Finish shedding that portion of thy blood that is in others’ veins. What of it remains in thee, I will take charge of. I’ faith, a well-employed night!”



NOTES AND HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS.

WHEN this work appeared for the first time,¹ it appeared without notes, simply as a work of art, as a summary of a century. That it might be rightly judged by the public, the author would not surround it in any way with the apparent *éclat* of historical research, with which it is too easy to decorate a new book. He wished not to show the *true* in detail, but the epic work, the composition with its tragedy, the scenes of which comprise all the eminent personages of the time of Louis XIII. The author, however, soon found it necessary to indicate the principal sources of his labors; and as he had ever desired to go back to the purest sources, — that is to say, to the manuscripts, and in their default, to their contemporary impressions, — he added the present documents to the second edition of “Cinq-Mars,”² to correct the erroneous ideas prevalent as to the authenticity of some facts. Subsequently, he returned to the simple and primitive unity of his work. But now again that his production has been multiplied in editions far more numerous than he could have expected, he is desirous that minds inquisitive as to the details of the *vrai anecdotique*, need not have to seek elsewhere for the documents.

¹ March, 1826, 2 vols.

² June, 1826.

PAGE 103.

Father Joseph.

“In his youth,” says the historian of Father Joseph, “his hair and beard were of a somewhat fiery red. He perceived that Louis XIII. could not bear this color; and he accordingly took pains to turn it brown, with combs of lead and steel, until he learned the secret of turning it white, which was afterwards communicated to him by a quack doctor. The king’s horror for red hair was so great that one day his first gentleman of the chamber (whose brother held the finest governorship in the kingdom) having the honor to accompany his Majesty to Fontainebleau on a hunting expedition, it rained so hard that it washed away all the paint with which he concealed the redness of his hair. The prince, perceiving it, was terrified, and said to him, ‘Good God, what do I see? never appear again before me!’ The gentleman was obliged to resign his post.”

PAGE 104.

“His confidant.”

The same historian says:—

“This too celebrated Capuchin, whom one of his historians calls *the assistant spirit* of the cardinal, was not only his confidant, but that of the king himself. Inflexible, pliant, and base, he strengthened the steps of the minister in the path of blood, and assisted him to draw thither the feeble prince. The history of this man is known everywhere. Here are the details of one of his tricks, which is little known:—

“Montmorency was taken at Castelnaudary. Louis XIII. hesitated to execute him. Monsieur, who had abandoned him on the field of battle, earnestly demanded his pardon. The cardinal desired his death, but did not know how to obtain this precious favor. Bouillon was charged with the negotiation. It was he who counselled Gaston. To him Joseph first addressed himself.

“He got hold of him with the address of a serpent, and through him counselled Monsieur not to demand assurances from the king of the young duke’s pardon, but to remit the affair entirely to Louis’s goodness alone, whose heart, he said, was afflicted by the appearance of a

doubt on the subject. Monsieur thought he saw in this suggestion an intention to pardon, insinuated by his brother himself, and made his peace for himself alone, without stipulating anything for the young duke, and referring him to the king's clemency. It was then that, in a *conseil étroit* of the king, the cardinal, and Joseph, the latter ventured to speak first, and playing off the energy of his political vociferations with the phlegmatic arguments of the cardinal, forced from Louis the promise, too well kept, that he would be inflexible."

Brulart de Léon, ambassador at Ratisbon with Joseph, says that the Capuchin had nothing Christian about him but the name, and sought only to deceive all the world.

A work in 1635, entitled "*La Vérité Défendue*," speaks of him in these terms:—

"He is the grand inquisitor of the State, interrogates alleged criminals, throws them into prison without any charge, preventing their justification being heard, and by panic terrors draws out declarations which serve to hide the cardinal's injustice. He shamefully makes use of heaven for his earthly purposes, and of the name of God for deceptions, and of religion for the knaveries of the State."

He was of a very good family; the name, Du Tremblay.

I refer to the published life of this unworthy monk those who would be better acquainted with him.

PAGE 107.

"The cardinal dictated to him those duties of a new kind," etc.

The insolent commands of the ministerial religion, laid down by Richelieu, are extracted from a manuscript mentioned in the history of Father Joseph.

This is what the reverend and ingenious historian and genealogist, the continuator of the Abbé Richard, says on the subject:—

"He composed, with the cardinal, a book entitled, '*L'Unité du Ministre, et les Qualités qu'il doit avoir.*' This work never saw the

light at the time, but in the king's hands; and it is this treatise which determined his Majesty to vest the entire government of his kingdom in his Eminence. I have seen this manuscript in folio; it is well written. It is not difficult to see that Father Joseph is the author of it by reading the principal propositions set forth there, — first, as Christian truths; secondly, as political truths. This work might be entitled, 'Testament politique du P. Joseph.' All the great men of the past century left such."¹

PAGE 113.

"As for Marillac," etc.

"The Maréchal de Marillac was deprived of his legitimate judges, — the members of the parliament, — who in vain endeavored to take cognizance of the affair, and saw Molé, their attorney-general, silenced. Dragged from tribunal to tribunal, without finding one sufficiently clever to detect a crime in him, the Maréchal de Marillac finally fell under the decree of commissioners, read by a keeper of the ecclesiastical seals (Châteauneuf), a dispensation from Rome being got for him expressly to enable him to condemn a man without reproach. The cardinal laughed at the *spectacles* he had forcibly put on the noses of the judges, as he phrased it. What confusion! what a time! We cannot throw too great a light upon the principal points of history, to extinguish the puerile regrets for the past in some minds which do not sufficiently examine the history of the period."

PAGE 194.

"To have vigorously extirpated a royal Bourbon branch."

The Comte de Soissons, assassinated at the battle of Marfée, which he gained over the troops of the king, or rather of the cardinal. I have before me the most detailed contemporary accounts of this affair. They state as follows: —

"The regiments of Metternich and the infantry of Lamboy having broken their ranks, there remained near the said comte only two or

¹ Hist. du P. Joseph.

three of his men. In this confusion, he was approached by a single cavalier, whom his men did not recognize in this confusion as an enemy, and who fired a pistol at him below the eye, which killed him upon the spot. This great prince, having no other design than to serve his Majesty and his kingdom, and to stop the violence of him who seeks to undermine all who were above him, he, the cardinal, has thus extirpated a royal branch of Bourbon, having had this prince marked and shot by one of his guards, who had placed himself, with this horrible design and by his command, among this prince's men, — being recognized as such on being killed on the spot, as the villain was, by Riquemont, esquire of the same defunct prince."¹

There exists, in the "Bibliothèque de Paris," a curious autograph, which shows how much the cardinal relied on such expeditions. It runs thus:—

Letter of M. des Noyers to M. le Maréchal de Chatillon, after the battle of Sedan.

The king has resolved to give a government and a pension for life to the soldier who killed the enemy's general. M. le Maréchal will send the soldier in question to Reims to his Majesty immediately upon his arrival. Done at Péronne, this 9 July, 1641.

DES NOYERS.
Vol. g. 6, 233 MM.

Examination of the Secret Correspondence of the Cardinal de Richelieu, relative to the trial of MM. de Cinq-Mars and de Thou.

The indefatigable activity, the vivid penetration, the ingenious perseverance of the Cardinal de Richelieu at the close of his life, when illness, fatigue, and vexation might well have deadened his rare faculties, are not alone evidenced in the conduct of this affair. It is curious and most painful to observe the subterrene ways through which he passed to arrive at his end, — this potent miner, this *worthy pioneer!* All the meannesses to which political laborers are forced to stoop would render their imitators less arro-

¹ Montglat, Fabert, etc., Relation de Montrésor, t. ii. p. 520.

gant, did they consider that this man after the entire accomplishment of his projects only succeeded in hastening and confirming the fall of the absolute monarchy which he thought he had confirmed forever.

To place these documents properly before the reader, it is necessary to omit the long technicalities of the *procès-verbal*, the dryness and confusion of which have, no doubt, disgusted all those who have looked at it. But it is desirable to extract the singular and vivid facts which are distinguishable in the chaos, when we look attentively at it.

As soon as M. de Cinq-Mars is arrested, and the Duc d'Orléans has excused himself in the letter we have cited in the course of this work,¹ the first anxiety of the cardinal is to know whether M. de Bouillon is arrested. In this doubt, and fearing the return of Louis XIII. to his affection for Cinq-Mars, he stops at Tarascon, and thus seeks to satisfy himself that his influence is in the ascendant. Like a gladiator preparing for battle, he essays his arms and balances his club.

Instructions after the arrest of M. le Grand to MM. de Chavigny and des Noyers, being with the king, to learn, among other things, from his Majesty if his Eminence shall act, as heretofore, as he shall think fit.

If M. de Bouillon is taken, it is necessary to show promptly that he has been justly arrested. To do this, it must be found out who of the friends of Madame have taken part in the matter; and in case the said lady will not afford information, you must devise some plan by which it may appear that you have a knowledge of the matter. For this purpose all the prisoners must be separated, and not be allowed to speak with any one. By this means you *may make one believe that another has confessed all he knows, and thus induce each to confess*, or at least to believe the matter confessed elsewhere.

Cioniac must be arrested. He is said to have secret papers. The *casket* with hair and love-tokens must be taken from M. de Choisy.

¹ Vol. ii., chap. xxiv.

It must be represented to the king that it is important not to say he has burned all the papers; and in fact it is generally believed that he has not done so.

If M. de Bouillon is taken, Italy must be provided with a general of great fidelity for several pressing reasons. One is wanted in Guyenne, another in Roussillon, it being doubtful whether M. de Turenne will serve, or whether, indeed, he ought to be left there alone. The king can see to this if he pleases.

We see the snare here indicated. M. de Cinq-Mars was the first to fall into it.

The answer is not long delayed. M. de Bouillon has been arrested. The king has consented to tell all the lies dictated to him; and as a proof of his obedience, he writes with his own hand the following letter:—

Letter from the King to his Eminence.

I am always happy to see you. I am much better since yesterday; and after the capture of M. de Bouillon, which is a great stroke, I hope with the aid of God that all will go well, and that he will grant me perfect health. It is what I pray of him with all my heart.

Louis.

With this gage he could act. He menaced Monsieur, and answered him vaguely. Gaston again supplicated. The same day he wrote to the king, to Cardinal Mazarin, to M. des Noyers, to M. de Chavigny, and a second time to the cardinal. Remark that it was of the latter he had at first demanded pardon, the 17th of June, before supplicating the king on the 25th, following the hierarchy established by the cardinal. He asks pardon from every one, and promises a full confession.

Hereupon, the cardinal sets his foot upon the king's brother, and crushes him by the cold letter in which he counsels him to confess all, and which is in the text of this book.

Then come fresh reports from the faithful agent Chavigny, who has not sufficiently humble terms in which to

address the cardinal, whose creature he incessantly calls himself. Chavigny laughs at Monsieur and the cholera-morbus (already known, as we see) which had seized the agent of this prince from the fear of being arrested.

He counsels Gaston to withdraw from France. We see that the king does not venture to answer until the cardinal has *corrected* the letter he is to write.

M. de Chavigny to his Eminence.

The king spoke yesterday to M. de la Rivière *as well and as firmly as one could wish*. I have made him write down and sign all he said to him on the part of Monsieur, as your Eminence will see by the copy I send you; and when he raised some difficulties in obeying the commands of his Majesty, *his Majesty spoke to him as a master*, and he was in such fear of being arrested that he was seized nearly with a fainting fit, and then with a species of cholera-morbus, of which he was only cured by reassuring his mind. The king was delighted that Monseigneur had no intention of seeing Monsieur. In speaking to M. de la Rivière, I made him fall *insensibly* into the idea of proposing to Monsieur himself to confess all betimes in a letter to the king, so that he may, after having seen his Majesty, go for a while out of the kingdom with his Majesty's good favor and that of your Eminence.

He told me that he would make this proposition to Monseigneur, and that he would get his guarantee for the safety of Monsieur, if he would confess everything in writing and come to the king, and afterwards quit France.

In this case your Eminence will be pleased to inform your *creature* if Venice would not be the best place to which Monsieur could go, and what sum you think he should have allowed him annually.

I send Monseigneur the king's reply, to be put at the foot of La Rivière's declaration, that it may be *corrected as it shall please you*, and then be placed in his hands when he shall pass.

CHAVIGNY.

MONTFRIN, the last June, 1642.

The cardinal permits Monsieur to leave the kingdom and to go to Venice, and fixes the pension he shall have to make him wiser.

Note to MM. de Chavigny and des Noyers.

I have no difficulty, if the king thinks fit, in giving my word to M. de la Rivière that if Monsieur will declare to the king all that he knows in writing, without reservations, and shall come to see his Majesty before leaving the kingdom, according to the proposition which the said Sieur de la Rivière made to us, his Majesty will let him depart freely, relieve him well, if he leave with the king's consent. Venice is a suitable residence, and in that case he will require the king's permission to set forth, — not to return to France until it shall please the king to permit and order it.

As to money, I think that he ought to be contented with what the King of Spain was to have given him; namely, ten thousand crowns a month. To give him more, were to give him the means of doing ill; and it being impossible for the king to consent that he should take with him the evil spirits who have misled him, he needs no more for himself and well-intentioned people. However, if we must go so far as four hundred thousand livres, I think we must not be stopped by so small a difference. I am entirely the friend of those who love me as you do.

THE CARDINAL DE RICHELIEU.

TARASCON, this last June, 1642.

Either M. de la Rivière comes with a mere mouth-compliment and a confession of a disguised fault, or charged to discover a part of what has been done. If the former, the king *ought to believe or feign to believe what he says*, and answer that he readily pardons Monsieur, and that M. de la Rivière may tell him all he has upon his conscience without being troubled about it.

If the latter, he should still feign to believe that what he says is all there is to say, and answer, "What you have just confessed surprises me, yet does not surprise me.

"It surprises me because I did not expect this new proof of want of affection in my brother. It does not surprise me, because M. le Grand, now he is taken, inquires very anxiously whether he is not charged with an understanding with Monsieur.

"M. de la Rivière, I will speak to you frankly. Those who have given my brother these evil counsels must expect nothing from me but the rigor of justice. As to my brother, if he discovers to me, without reservation, all he has done, he will find the effects of my goodness, as he has already done various times already."

Whatever entreaties La Rivière may employ to obtain a promise of general pardon, without obligation of confessing all that has passed, the king shall adhere to his last reply, telling him that he himself could hardly desire to counsel him to do more than God, who requires a true repentance and unfeigned gratitude before he pardons an offence; that he ought to be satisfied with the assurance that Monsieur will find the effects of his goodness, if he behaves towards his Majesty as he ought to do, — namely, as is above set forth.

We see here that the parts are written out word for word, and that the king is neither to add nor take anything from them. The agent of Monsieur (La Rivière) hastens to him, and the cardinal sends him to the king to dictate beforehand his reply. With what pliancy every personage obeys the director of this sanguinary play!

The political observers do not sleep. They excite Louis XIII. by all possible means against the scapegoat upon whom every sin is to fall. The prisoner is treated with redoubled rigor.

Des Noyers writes on the 30th of June, 1642, to the cardinal:—

“The king has told me that he thinks M. le Grand capable of turning Huguenot. I added that he would have turned Turk, if by that means he could reign and deprive his Majesty of what God had so legitimately given him. Upon which the king said to me, ‘I believe it.’

“His Majesty told me this morning that Treville had conversed with M. le Marquis on the arrival of M. le Grand at Montpellier, and that on entering the citadel he said, ‘Ah! must I then die at twenty-two? Thus ’t is to conspire against one’s country so early,’ which he received very well.”

M. des Noyers to his Eminence.

PARIS, July 1.

His Majesty is more than ever irritated against M. le Grand, for he has discovered that during his illness this wretch whom Monsieur the first president truly calls *le perfide public*, had said, speaking of the king, “He will still linger on.”

Nothing is omitted that can irritate Louis XIII., though it is difficult to appreciate the point of the first president's phrase.

The same man (Des Noyers) again writes, on the 1st of July, 1642, from Pierrelate: "His Majesty continues to give the greatest demonstrations of love for Monseigneur, and of an equal hatred to this wretched *perfidé public*."

Thus the bulletin of the royal anger is sent to the cardinal every hour, and care is taken that the fever shall not abate. The parents of the two young men wish to petition; they are prevented. M. de Chavigny writes, the 3d July, 1642: "The Abbé d'Effiat and the Abbé de Thou came to see the king, as we have been assured. His Majesty thought proper to send to them and command them to withdraw."

The correspondence is urgent; the next day (July 4, 1642), the cardinal writes from Tarascon:—

"The most obscure enigmas begin to be explained, — *le perfidé public* confessing, in the place where he is, *that he had ill designs against the person of M. le Cardinal, but none to which the king had not given his consent*; the mischief is that the liberty he has hitherto enjoyed, of walking twice a day, has occasioned this statement to be much spread in the province, which may produce very ill effects."

A mortal fear agitated the cardinal lest it should be discovered that the king had been concerned in the conspiracy; he makes the imprisonment still more strict. He adds:

"Seyton, the lieutenant of the Scottish guards, sixty-six years of age, allowed M. le Grand to walk twice a day. He did so up to within these three days, which gives me reason to suppose that the former orders have been lost.

"M. de Bouillon required only a doctor and two *valets-de-chambre*; *le perfidé public* has six attendants, who must be reduced. Otherwise, it is impossible to prevent his making known whatever he pleases; no prince ever had more.

“You will adroitly introduce this subject, *without mentioning my name in any way.*”

Impatiently awaiting a good commissioner, he says:—

“I expect M. de Chazé, whom we will try with M. de Thou. Make him hasten by the Rhone, for time presses, and it is necessary I should be here to assist him in his interrogations, which I will give him ready arranged.”

As it is necessary to envenom the wound in the royal heart, he does not forget a circumstance which may have this effect.

“It were well that the faithful Marquis de Mortemar tell the king how *le perfide public* said that Fontrailles had jested upon his illness; namely, ‘*He is not yet bad enough.*’

“This will tend to prove that the *perfide* and his principal confidants were ill intentioned against the king.”

We see that no light word or youthful thoughtlessness, real or supposed, is omitted by political cunning. Chavigny immediately answers in the same spirit.

“The faithful marquis has not yet had an opportunity of saying what M. le Cardinal has directed; it will be done to-morrow. We shall see what the king will say.”

Then the next day, the same Chavigny writes in all haste:—

“Mortemar has told the king what M. le Grand said. The king did not fail, immediately upon hearing it, to repeat it to M. de Chavigny. [The same who thus sneers at Louis XIII. for his docility!] And I think he is the same with M. des Noyers.

“The king expressly commanded me to mention it to your Eminence, and to say to you that he believes M. le Grand quite detestable enough to have entertained this horrible thought, and that he remembers he had at Lyons more than fifty gentlemen dependent on him.

“Nothing has been omitted to keep his Majesty in a good humor. The king has several times repeated that M. le Grand is the greatest liar in the world. Thus we may hope that friendship is tolerably worn out in the heart of Louis XIII.”

The 6th of January, 1642 (mark this rapidity), the two creatures of the cardinal-duc, Chavigny and Des Noyers, inform him of the result of their insinuations.

“We humbly entreat Monseigneur to tranquillize his mind, and to believe that he was never so powerful with the king as he is now; that his presence will effect all he wishes.”

That same day the cardinal-duc writes very humbly to the king, in the tone of an innocent victim and priest, whom the king is defending.

His Eminence to the King.

“I have learned,” says he, “the new discovery which the king has been pleased to make of the evil design M. le Grand had against me, — against a cardinal who for twenty-five years has, by the permission of God, successfully served his master; the greater the malice of this wretch, the more the goodness of your Majesty is apparent.

“This Seventh July, 1642.”

And on the 7th, he sends for M. de Thou into his chamber, bringing him from the prison of Tarascon. I have before me this curious interrogatory, and give it here, as it has been preserved, word for word. It is not superfluous to point out the tone of exquisite politeness of these two personages, neither of whom forgets the rank and character of the other, and who seem to have constantly in their minds the old adage: “One gentleman is as good as another.”

Interrogatory and replies of M. de Thou to Monseigneur the Cardinal-Duc, when sent for from the prison of the château of Tarascon. (Journal de M. le Cardinal de Richelieu, which he made during the great storm in the year 1642, and taken from the memoirs he wrote with his own hand. MDC.XLVIII.

M. LE CARDINAL. Monsieur, I entreat you to excuse my having given you the trouble to come here.

M. DE THOU. Monseigneur, it is an honor and a pleasure.

After which the cardinal made him sit down on a chair at his bedside.

M. LE CARDINAL. Monsieur, I entreat you to tell me the origin of these things that have just taken place.

M. DE THOU. Monseigneur, no one can know it better than your Eminence.

M. LE CARDINAL. I have no correspondence with Spain which might inform me.

M. DE THOU. The king having ordered these things, Monseigneur, it cannot have been without your being made acquainted with it.

M. LE CARDINAL. Did you write to Rome and Spain?

M. DE THOU. Yes, Monseigneur, by the king's order.

M. LE CARDINAL. Are you, then, secretary of State?

M. DE THOU. No, Monseigneur; but the king having ordered me, I could do no otherwise than obey.

M. LE CARDINAL. Have you any power?

M. DE THOU. Yes, Monseigneur, the king's word, and an order in writing.

M. LE CARDINAL. Yet M. de Cinq-Mars has not said anything about it.

M. DE THOU. He was wrong then, Monseigneur, for he received the order as well as I.

M. LE CARDINAL. Where are these orders?

M. DE THOU. They are in good hands, to be produced when they are needed.

But this is what it is desirable to avoid. The cardinal does not wish to be assured thus that the king has given orders against him. He sends to Paris for commissioners, one especially whom he indicates, M. de Lamou, to assist M. de Chazé in the fresh interrogatories applied to this same De Thou, so imposing, so firm, so grave, so honorable, and so formidable by his virtue.

While the young magistrate is replying thus, Gaston d'Orléans, Monsieur, the king's brother, sends his confession, and throwing himself on his knees in these terms: "I, Gaston, son of France, the only brother of the king, being touched by true repentance for having again failed in

the fidelity I owe to Monseigneur the King, and desiring to render myself worthy of grace and pardon, — I sincerely confess everything of which I am guilty.”

Then follow the accusations against M. le Grand, upon whom he very handsomely throws the whole affair.

Then a second confession accompanies the first, relating to the other offence.

Monsieur the King's brother to his Eminence.

D'AIGUEPERCE, July 7, 1642.

Gaston, etc. Unable to express sufficiently to my cousin, the Cardinal de Richelieu, my extreme grief at having entered into relations and correspondence with his enemies, I protest before God, and entreat M. le Cardinal to believe, that I never had any knowledge of anything that might affect your person, and that were I to die for it I would never have lent my ear or my heart to the slightest proposition against you, etc.

The politeness of terror can assuredly go no farther or lower.

He sends his orders what Monsieur is to say if he wishes to be allowed to remain in the kingdom and to have wherewith to subsist.

Monsieur and M. de Cinq-Mars shall be confronted with each other.

Instructions of his Eminence.

When M. le Grand shall be brought to the place in which Monsieur is, Monsieur must say to him, —

“M. le Grand, although our rank is different, we are in the same difficulty, and we must have recourse to the same remedy. I confess our fault, and entreat the king to pardon it.”

Either M. le Grand will take the same step, and agree with what Monsieur has said, or he will play the innocent, in which case Monsieur will say, —

“You spoke to me in such a place. You told me so and so. You came to St. Germain to me in the stables with M. de Bouillon, or who-

ever else it may have been." Then Monsieur will relate the rest of the story.

He will do the same when M. de Bouillon shall be brought on.

He will content himself with the promise of remaining in the kingdom, without pretending to any charge or office.

I say this, after having well considered the affair, *which may be the most important of this nature that has ever happened in this kingdom.*

But Monsieur raises great difficulties in the way of confronting the accused. He is afraid of wanting assurance before them. The king cannot venture to compel his brother to appear; but it is necessary to find a subterfuge. The Chancellor Seguier devises one and despatches it.

"I have proposed to the king to send M. Talon, councillor of State and solicitor-general, Le Bret, and Du Bignon, who are all learned in criminal matters, to confer with me upon all the propositions I shall make to him.

"Their opinion is that we can dispense Monsieur from being present at the reading of his declaration to the accused.

"This opinion is supported by precedents and reasons. As to precedents, we have the trial of La Mole and Coconnas, who were accused of high treason. In that trial the declarations of the King of Navarre, and of the Duc d'Alençon, were received and read to the accused, without confrontation, although the prisoners demanded it.

"The deposition of a witness with *infallible presumptions serves as proof and conviction* against a person accused of *high treason*, which is not the case with other crimes."

We see that the chancellor goes to work here with good will.

Then follows the opinion given by Jacques Talon and Hierosme Bignon and Omer Talon, deciding "*that no son of France* has been heard in any trial, and that the declaration of such suffices for proof without confrontation."

The chancellor receives Monsieur's declaration in the company of the judges, the Sieurs de Laubardemont, Marca,

de Paris, Champigni, Miraumesnil, de Chazé, and de Sève, in which the Duc d'Orléans confesses to *have given two signed blanks to Fontrailles to treat with the King of Spain*, at the instigation of M. le Grand, whom he charges also with having seduced M. de Bouillon.

According to these opinions, the cardinal is armed on every side and sure of success. He may go. He arrives at Paris; and while at Lyons they are trying Cinq-Mars and De Thou, he places his hand upon the king, and pardons Monsieur on condition of his political nullity, and M. de Bouillon in exchange for his fortress of Sedan.

The indictment is very curious, but too extensive to be inserted here. It is found at the end of the interrogations. The reporter there accuses M. de Cinq-Mars, after having passed lightly over Monsieur and the Duc de Bouillon.

“As to M. le Grand, he is accused not only of being an accomplice in this conspiracy, but also of being its author and promoter.

“M. le Grand poisons the mind of Monsieur by imaginary fears invented by himself. That is a crime.

“To relieve him from his terrors, *he persuades him* to make a party in the State. Here are two crimes.

“*He persuades him* to combine with Spain. This is a third.

“*He persuades him* to destroy M. le Cardinal, and *drive him from affairs*. This is a fourth.

“*He persuades him* to make war with France during the siege of Perpignan, in order to interrupt the happiness of this State. This is a fifth.

“He himself draws up the treaty of Spain. This is a sixth.

“He brings Fontrailles to Monsieur to be sent about the treaty, and to Monsieur, the Comte d'Aubigny. These results *may be looked upon* as a seventh crime, or at least the accomplishment of all the rest.

“All of them are crimes of high treason, he who attacks the persons of the king's ministers being reputed by the ancient laws and constitutions of the emperors *equally guilty with those who attack the persons of the kings themselves*.

“A minister serves his prince and the State. A man deprives the prince and the State of him. This is the same as if they were to deprive the first of an arm, and the second of a part of its power.”

I refer these arguments to the reflections of juriconsults. They may think, perhaps, that there might have been something to say in reply to them, were it considered possible to answer these absurdities of uncontrolled power. The grand fact of the Spanish treaty sufficed; and I only transcribe what the reporter adds, to show the animosity which was prescribed him towards the enemy, the rival for favor of the first minister.¹

If M. de Cinq-Mars had been less ardent, less haughty, and more able, he ought not to have placed himself in the wrong by a treaty with foreigners. He might have overthrown the old minister at less expense, and without attaching to his brow the label, *ally of the foreigner*, always detested by monarchical or republican nations, alike that of the Constable de Bourbon and of Coriolanus. But he was twenty-two years old, and his head was not entirely applied to great affairs. He acted hastily, prompted by passion, against a man of experience, who knew how to wait coldly for circumstances which would place his enemy in a false position.

Upon the secret interrogatory.

(Extracted from the Registers.)

“M. de Cinq-Mars avowed to M. le Chancelier that the strongest passion which had led him to act as he did was the desire to drive M. le Cardinal from State affairs, against whom he had an aversion which he could neither overcome nor moderate.

“He said that six things had given him this aversion:—

“1. The first, that after the siege of Arras, at the close of which he had been present, M. le Cardinal had spoken of him as of a person who had not much courage.

¹ There are few words as involuntarily and cruelly comical as those which he so often repeats: “He persuaded him to,” etc. Monsieur is thus represented as a schoolboy under the age of reason and not responsible, whom a tutor leads in some trifling errors. Preceptor of *twenty-two!* pupil of *thirty-four!* cruel witticism!

“2. That after the alliance of M. le Marquis de Sourdis and his brother, the cardinal had said that M. de Sourdis had done honor to his family.

“3. That having desired to be created duke and peer, M. le Cardinal had persuaded the king from it.

“4. That he had felt himself obliged to protect M. l’Archevêque de Bordeaux, whom he thought they desired to ruin.

“5. *That, speaking to him of the Princesse Marie, he said that his mother wished to marry him to her.* His Eminence said that his mother, Madame d’Effiat, *was mad, and that if the Princesse Marie entertained the idea, she was more mad still;* that having been proposed as the wife of Monsieur, he (Cinq-Mars) would be vain and presumptuous to pretend to her; that it would be ridiculous.

“6. That the cardinal had objected to the king admitting him to the council, and had him expelled from it.”





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