





THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

FREDERIC THOMAS BLANCHARD
ENDOWMENT FUND



J. R. Shatt.

Arroyo Park.

M E M O I R S

O F T H E

D U K E O F S U L L Y.

M E M O I R S

O F

MAXIMILIAN DE BETHUNE,

DUKE OF SULLY,

PRIME MINISTER TO

HENRY THE GREAT.

CONTAINING

The History of the LIFE and REIGN of that MONARCH,
And his own ADMINISTRATION under Him.

Translated from the FRENCH.

To which is added,

The Tryal of RAVAILLAC for the Murder of
HENRY the GREAT.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

THE THIRD EDITION.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N :

Printed for A. MILLAR, in the Strand ; R. and J. DODSLEY, in Pall-Mall ;
and W. SHROPSHIRE, in New-Bond-Street.

MDCCLXI.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF KING CHARLES THE FIRST

BY JOHN BURNET

IN TWO VOLUMES. THE SECOND VOLUME.

LONDON, Printed by J. Sturges, at the Black-Swan in St. Dunstons Church, in Fleet-Street, 1724.

1724

1724

1724

1724

1724

1724

To the High, Puissant, and Most Noble PRINCE

DC
1229
543E
1761
v.1

THOMAS HOLLES - PELHAM,

Duke of NEWCASTLE, Marquis and Earl of CLARE,

Viscount HAUGHTON, and Baron PELHAM of Laughton,

AND BARONET,

One of His Majesty's Privy-Council, Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum for the Counties of Middlesex, Westminster, and Nottingham; Steward, Keeper, and Guardian of the Forest of Sherwood, and Park of Folewood, in the County of Nottingham; One of the Governors of the Charter-House, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, First Lord Commissioner of His Majesty's Treasury, Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, LL. D. and F.R.S.

MY LORD,

AUTHORS are often unfortunate in the choice of their Patrons: and Works are devoted, with great solemnity, to the use of those who cannot use them, and the pleasure of those whom they cannot please.

THAT

DEDICATION.

THAT I have avoided this impropriety, in dedicating to your GRACE these MEMOIRS OF THE DUKE OF SULLY, a whole Nation, whose affairs you have so long and so happily directed, will bear me witness : But then, I can claim no praise from my own discernment ; because I only echo the Voice of the People, and address myself, where that leads me.

THOUGH my sex and manner of life makes me a stranger to public affairs ; I yet discover of myself, that the History I have translated, is not only interesting but important : and that the original author of it was not only well versed in all the prime operations of government, but that he saved a Nation, by bringing method and order into every branch of her revenues, and administering the whole with the most accurate economy.

A BOOK, thus filled with political wisdom, could be fitly offered only to Him, who lays out his whole time and attention, in labours of the same tendency ; and for the service of a more free, and therefore a nobler People.

THAT

DEDICATION.

THAT PROVIDENCE may co-operate with your endeavours; and that your GRACE may steer not only safely, but triumphantly, through every difficulty of the present conjuncture, are wishes so natural to all true Britons, that they cannot be thought improper even from a woman, and in this public manner. She is, with the profoundest Respect,

MY LORD,

Your GRACE'S most Obedient,

London, Sept. 5,
1755.

and most Humble Servant,

CHARLOTTE LENNOX.

P R E F A C E

T O T H E

F R E N C H E D I T I O N .

AS in the judgment of good critics and lovers of literature, *THE MEMOIRS OF SULLY* have been always ranked amongst our best books, I have no need to enter here into a disquisition which will be of little use to those who are acquainted with the work.

To give those an idea of this performance who have never read it, it will be sufficient to tell them, that it contains a history of whatever has passed from the peace in 1570, to the first year of Lewis XIII. during a space of forty years, which is a time that has supplied the most copious subjects to the historians of France; and that it treats of the reign, or, to speak more properly, almost of the whole life, of Henry the Great. They presuppose, indeed, some knowledge of the foregoing commotions, which are only occasionally mentioned; but it displays all the succeeding events with the utmost particularity. The events are equally numerous and diversified; wars, foreign and civil; interests of state and religion; master-strokes of policy; unexpected discoveries; struggles of ambition; stratagems

of policy ; embassies and negotiations ; are all to be found in this book ; and all this is far from the whole.

THE Memoirs of Sully take their value, perhaps their greatest value, from the innumerable recitals of a private kind, which scarcely belongs to the province of history ; this is the particular advantage of memoirs, they admit all subjects, however numerous, and all incidents however various, which one can desire to insert ; and they are not subject to the burthen imposed upon history, of continuing the narrative through dry generalities, with which even the writer finds himself disgusted.

To obtain a compleat knowledge of any prince, it is necessary that the picture of his private life be set to view, together with his public conduct ; he must be shown with his courtiers and domestics, in those moments when he is little observed : his character must be fixed by his letters and conversation ; the passions are better displayed by a single word, related as it was spoke, than by all the art which a historian can use. This idea of memoirs is quite answered by those of Sully ; so that no man, till he has perused them, can have a just conception of Henry IV. They represent to us that great prince, in his good as well as his bad fortune ; now as a private man, now as a king, as a warrior, or as a politician ; and to come still lower, as a husband, father, or friend ; and all told in so affecting a manner, that the reader cannot refrain from taking part in the most minute and indifferent incident of his life : at most, I can only except some military recitals, which occur perhaps too often at the beginning of the work, and a small number of other passages less pleasing ; though, on the

the other hand, these recitals are always connected with the public affairs, and diversified, like the rest, with the part which was borne in them by the duke of Sully.

HE is as the second actor, and this double action makes no breach in the unity of interest, because this minister says almost nothing of himself, which has not some relation to public affairs, or the person of his master. The reader will, doubtless, be pleased to know what judgment was formed of these Memoirs when they first appeared in the world, and I shall give him information from the author of an old discourse, to be found among the MSS. * of the king's library: "One of the most beautiful pictures of human
 " prudence and fidelity, says he, is to be found in the ac-
 " count left to the public, in two volumes, by the duke of
 " Sully, of the nature of the advice he had given, and the
 " services he had done, to his king and benefactor, as well
 " for his particular and personal honour, as for the prospere-
 " rity of his kingdom. And, in truth, the fortune of Henry
 " the Great, and the virtue of his prime minister, are two
 " things which appear alternately, or, more properly, go
 " hand in hand. The minister, in this work, serves and
 " obliges the king, in all the ways that a king can receive
 " service or obligation from a subject, with his hand, his
 " courage, his sword, and even with his blood, or actions
 " of bravery and adventure, but particularly in his council
 " and cabinet, with the greatest understanding, and most
 " quick-sighted policy, the most pure disinterestedness, and
 " untainted sincerity, that has ever been known to histo-
 " rians, either of our own or other countries."

* Vol. 9590.

It is natural, in the reign of a prince like Henry IV. to look for great generals, deep politicians, and skilful ministers; but we are surprized to find in one man, the warrior, the politician, the wise manager of business, the steady and unbending friend, as well as the close confidant and darling of his master. But what is yet more uncommon, is to see in a work where the actions of two such extraordinary persons are collected after their deaths, a great king forced to make a conquest of his own kingdom, engaged with a minister, in his way, not less great, in contriving means to make his undertakings successful; labouring afterwards, in concert with him, to make his kingdom not only peaceable but flourishing, regulating the revenue, laying the foundation of trade, methodizing the government, and, in short, recovering every part of the establishment from confusion.

IN this work therefore are comprized two lives united together, and illustrating and adorning one another, the lives of a king and a minister, his confidant nearly of the same age, carried on from the infancy of both to the death of the king, and to the retreat of the minister.

WE may add, that these Memoirs of Sully are yet further valuable, by maxims of excellent morality, by politics derived from truth; by an infinite number of views, schemes, and regulations, of almost every kind, with which they are filled. The duke of Sully is said, by one of his cotemporaries, to have been the only man that ever discovered the means of uniting two things, which our fathers not only could not join together, but considered in their
their

their own nature inconsistent, the increase of the king's revenue, and the relief of the people. He that would have an idea of a good subject and an incorruptible minister, must look for it in this picture, where he will see œconomy in its full lustre, and policy in all its practice; the art of using and of gaining power; the science of reigning as a man, and of reigning as a king; the finest instructions and most forceable examples of morality are here exhausted, and the whole supported and adorned by a knowledge of every thing, from the highest arts to the mechanic occupations.

HOWEVER high this praise may seem, I do not find that the severest critics depart much from it; one need only consult the abbot Le-Laboureur, in his additions to the Memoirs of Castelnau, vol. II. book ii. p. 687. father Le-Long, and a multitude of modern writers; for who is there that does not cite the Memoirs of Sully as the first political treatise that has shewn us the real power of this kingdom, and in which are contained the seeds of whatever has been done by Richelieu, Mazarine, and Colbert; and in which is opened the best school of the art of government?

I WILL now quit this consideration for another, which I neither can nor ought to conceal; the pleasure which so valuable a book affords, is attended with a degree of fatigue which makes this ornament of libraries useles to the greater part of readers.

THIS is to be imputed to want of method, and defects of style; the subjects lie here in great confusion; those who

who have ranged them propose to entertain us with particular recitals of military, political, and domestic affairs; but they neither know how to keep them apart, nor to join them properly: a fact is cleared up, or a narrative continued, at the distance, sometimes, of an hundred pages; from the beginning of the first volume, one must often jump to the end of the second: the letters of Henry, which ought to be regularly inserted in the story, are bundled up together and put by themselves, or introduced where they only break the thread of the discourse, to which very often they have no relation: the maxims of law and government are driven off to a distant part, where it is often difficult to meet with them; they have the appearance of an independent note, and one might have known, that the compilers were mere men of business, though they had not told it.

As to the diction, it is not going too far to say, that it has every fault which diction can admit; it is too much diffused, obscured frequently by the enormous protraction of the sentences, and frequently by the impropriety of the words, which are sometimes creeping and low, and sometimes swelled with ridiculous magnificence.

THESE two general reflections on the Memoirs of Sully, one should have imagined might have put it into the thoughts of some of our best writers, to make that book agreeable, which is so interesting and useful; the other, because what they have good arises from the subject, and what is wrong consists only in the form in which they are shewn. It is allowed on all hands, that this must be excepted from the number of those old books, which cannot
be

be altered without being spoiled ; but the danger of giving offence to the nicety of critics, has hitherto driven away all thoughts of such an undertaking : and I confess that I could never have engaged in it, had I not been urged on by that fondness for the original, which brings the passions as well as the genius into a work, and makes us blind to all the obstacles that may oppose us ; for, to accommodate such a work as this to the present taste, a man must preserve at once the fidelity of a translator, and the liberty of a composer : he must carefully preserve the sense of his author, tho' he must abridge, transpose, and methodise his work.

AN emendation, merely grammatical, which should reach no farther than to change those expressions, which are confessedly bad, and to retrench those that are apparently superfluous, would have been short of the reformation which the style requires ; and, if nothing had been attempted but to bring the scattered parts of the story together, and methodise those things that are out of order, to free the book from the inconvenience of confusion, even this must have ended in the destruction of the text. I have tried every method that I could invent to avoid the necessity of taking the work wholly to pieces, and moulding it anew : but I saw, at last, that no other way would answer my intention : I was convinced that a style so faulty as that of these Memoirs, was far from deserving to be treated with the same respect as that of Comines, Montagne, and Amyot : that the mere general alterations, which are confessedly necessary, would change it so much from its present state, that to make it yet more different, was no great matter : and that these alterations, producing a necessity
of

of connections and transitions which would naturally be of a different cast of language from the rest, many patches of new style appearing in these pages of antiquity, would have been a disagreeable and dissimular mixture: and that the original must not only be cleared from a great number of odd expressions, but of unnatural and unusual ideas, which appears in the ridiculous singularity in the very title, *Oeconomies Royales, & Servitudes Loyales*: that such liberties as I have taken was necessary, in order to arrive at a just chronology and arrangement of matter: and that this liberty was consistent enough with the obligation of preserving the sense of the original, and suffering the *Memoirs of Sully* to lose nothing by being put into a new language.

IN the first place, I found it indispensibly necessary to change this staid language of secretaries, who know nothing but to praise and flatter. What can be more tedious than to see them, at every line, addressing their master to put him in mind of something that has already happened, and to confess that he understands the business better than themselves? This perpetual address made the book little more than a long dedication; and yet this could not have been corrected without giving the work a new form.

I MUST add, that the historical narrative, which allows only the third person to be used, could not take place here, as I immediately found, when I endeavoured to apply it: for the *Memoirs of Sully*, as I have already said, instead of one principal actor, present us with two, whose parts constantly intermingled in the recital, or who almost always make their appearance together, either talking be-
tween

tween themselves or with other persons. The pronouns he and him, which in other histories supply so conveniently the place of proper names, must, in a book like this, have been applied sometimes to one, sometimes to another, which would have produced an obscurity not to have been avoided, but by repetitions and circumlocutions equally inconvenient. If to rid our hands of this difficulty, which will be generally perceived, this book had been entituled, *Memoirs to contribute to a History of Henry IV.* and the relation had been contracted to the actions of that prince, this had at once cut off half the *Memoirs*, and perhaps that half which can least be spared; for the life and actions of Henry the Great are every where to be found; but those of the duke of Sully can be read no where else: and it had been still less proper to have mentioned only the action of the minister.

THERE remained therefore only one scheme to pursue, that of making Sully tell his own story. I yielded with less reluctance to this necessity, as I found it likely to be the source of new pleasure; for nothing is more proper to throw over a work those interesting passages, which put the heart into emotion, than to introduce the principal actor in a complicated affair, entertaining you with an account of the part which he acted; and what an actor would he appear if one could attain to make him speak as such a minister, so favoured by his master, and so respected by all the ranks of the community, might be supposed to speak at the present time.

THIS single motive might prevail upon the public to grant me the indulgence which I require, for the only real

liberty I have taken, if it should be found that I have, in other respects, discharged the duty which this licence made indispensable; but, as I cannot assume so much to myself, I shall found my defence upon a matter of fact; which is, that, in reality, the duke of Sully himself is the true author of the Memoirs which bear his name; since the original pieces are his own, and his secretaries did nothing more than stitch them together. This is easily perceived in several places, where the pen of the minister being withheld, either by promise of secrecy or some consideration equally strong, you see the reader's expectation disappointed with regard to facts of which the secretaries themselves had apparently not the least knowledge. This is therefore no robbery, but an honest restitution, which I make to their master of his own works. In attestation of this, I can produce all our writers, who shew evidently when they quote the Memoirs of Sully, that they consider them as the work of that great man, and depend upon his authority. The single doubt of Vittorio Siri* is of no weight against so much evidence.

THIS critical disquisition I do not think of sufficient importance or amusement, to require that I should transcribe whole pages to establish this truth, by exhibiting the words of Henry, Sully, or the secretaries themselves: he that thinks it worth his while, may consult the places marked in the margin †. I shall here offer only a conjecture, which I submit to the discernment of my reader.

* Mem. Rec Vol. I. p. 29. † Epît. des 1, & 3 Tom. Tom. II. p. 407, 409, 410, 434, 435, 440, 448. Tom. III. p. 82, 83, 294, 385, &c. Tom. II. p. 440.

THE Memoirs of Sully were formed first upon the observations which M. de Rosny began, from his earliest youth, to make upon the events of his times, as well those that related to the public as those that affected his master and himself. To these were added, in the next place, the observations which he set down at the entreaty of his prince, who soon began to distinguish a man of his character. M. de Rosny had plainly no intention to write a connected narrative, much less a formal history, but only a collection of pieces upon several events of his time, which he improved with his own reflections on government *. The term Journal, which is sometimes used, is not to be taken in the strictest sense: accounts consisting of pieces thus independent, were not things absolutely new in his time. It is not unlikely that he considered himself as collecting materials for more regular memoirs, which he afterwards thought fit to communicate to the public, under the name of his secretaries, rather than his own.

THESE registers †, of which there has been already mention, were put into the hands of four of his secretaries, two of whom composed at first the two former volumes, such as they now appear, the two other secretaries, who were taken into the service of Sully at the time of his retreat, were busy, at the same time, upon the first of his two following volumes, which comprises a space of five years, from 1605 to the death of Henry IV. and imagining their labour incomplete, unless they should produce

* Tom. II. p. 448. Tom. III. p. 83, 385.

† Epit. Limin du Tom. III. Tom. II. p. 410.

two volumes as well as their fellows, they fell to tumbling over all their master's papers, and at last attained their purpose. But notice must be taken, that they are not to be believed too easily with respect to the place where these Memoirs are said to be printed; for they had an interest in imposing upon the public, by making it be believed that these Memoirs were not printed in France*. Guy-Patin, father Le-Long, the abbe Lenglet, and several others, are confident that the two first volumes were printed at the castle of Sully; and for the two last, it is a known fact that their first appearance was in an edition printed at Paris 1662, by the care of the abbe Le-Laboureur.

IN the Memoirs of Mademoiselle mention is made of letters, and a great number of other original pieces, which the count de Bethune kept with great care, and shewed as a curiosity to those that came to see him. Of these, part, at least, may be thought the minutes of the duke of Sully. But, since none of these pieces are found in the vast collection of manuscripts presented by the count de Bethune, in 1664, to the late king, we may conclude that, after the publication of these Memoirs, those minutes were destroyed as of no farther use: but, for my part, I make so little reckoning of the works of the compilers, that I could wish to have only the originals as they had them; for what they have given us of their own makes no essential addition, nor has any consequence but that of concealing the true work of Sully, which, in many places, cannot be distinguished or disentangled from theirs; for they did not content themselves with ranging their pieces according to

* Epit. Limin, ib.

the order of time, which was the best thing they were capable of doing.

I KNOW not whether there is not even room to suspect them of having suppressed some pieces of considerable importance. One may safely charge them, at least, with having destroyed *The Treatise of War*, *The Marechal de Camp*, *The Instructions Military and Political*, and some other works of the duke of Sully, which have certainly been once in existence. They have been sought to no purpose in the closet of the present duke of Sully*, notwithstanding the pains which he, who is so well known for his love of literature and antiquities, has taken to recover monuments which contribute so much to the honour of his family. He has little more than some accounts and memoirs relating to the different employments of Maximilian duke of Sully, of which the substance is found in this book. The only manuscripts that raise much curiosity, are the original copy of the first volume of the *Memoirs of Sully*, from which the impression was certainly taken; and the two last volumes of a kind of heroic romance, of which the two first have been lost. These adventures, or allegorical histories of that age, are entituled, *Gelastide, ou les Illustres princesses pucelles du puissant Empire de la grande Sclaramane Dolosophomorie, les Sclarazones diamantées, Percy de Rubicelle & Pyrope*; titles as singular as those of the *Memoirs of Sully*, and which shew that they are drawn up by the same hand.

It is possible that the loss of these originals is imputed to Sully himself, since his secretaries acted not only

* Louis-Pierre-Maximilian de Bethune.

under his orders, but under his own eyes *. In that case we shall be forced to confess, that a little vanity, from which this minister was not free, kept him from suffering his Memoirs to appear in his own name: he perceived that he could not forbear to give himself the honour of the brightest part of the reign of Henry IV. and, not caring either to praise himself or to lose the praise he had deserved, he determined to have that said by others which he could not modestly say himself.

He is charged with another fault proceeding equally from vanity, but which, if we examine it well, may appear very innocent; it is the freedom with which he acts and speaks. Let us hear, on this head, our ancient dissertator. "This stiff and haughty humour, says he, which so often obliges his prince to speak first, and to open himself to him, if it had been softened and made more easy, would have been perhaps more perfect, and more deserving of imitation; but, if the original was as it is represented, and nature had formed it of this cast, it ought not to be flattered or disguised: if this gravity and general circumspection, which his enemies mention as a reproach to his memory, was the very quality which gave so much value to his ministry and his credit, we ought not to regret it in him as a blot, or condemn it as a defect." And indeed, if a minister is of known honesty, and unsuspected of any bad design, why should he, in speaking to his master, or transacting with him, recede from the privilege of following the severe dictates of truth? Without this liberty the condition of private men would be much

* Tom. III. p. 83 and 294.

happier than that of princes; but we may sufficiently prove, that Sully deserves no reproach of this kind, by observing that he never received any from his master, who not only allowed, but loved and praised his freedom of speech. Whatever may be said, for instance, of the famous promise of marriage which Sully tore in pieces in the hands of Henry, I see nothing in that affair which does not deserve admiration, and there is no fear that it shall be drawn into precedent.

THE necessity of being beforehand with the reader, for my own sake, has given occasion to these two remarks. I have considered it as indecent in Sully to relate all that happened of this kind with Henry IV. and as to personal commendations, I cut off what was uttered by secretaries, and could never have been said by him, and keep all that he has said, or suffered others to say to him, that was for his own honour, or for that of the family of Bethune. In like manner I let all stand which the same vanity, joined with his religious prejudices, disposed him to advance with relation to the greatest families; such as the house of Austria, among others, or concerning private persons, to whom he has not always done justice; such as the dukes de Nevers and de Epernon, messieurs de Villeroi, Jeannin, and the cardinal de Ossat, and others, amongst the roman catholics; and the dukes de Rohan, de Bouillon, and de La-Trémouille, Du-Plessis Mornay; and, to conclude, with respect to a society deserving esteem, for purity of manners, and the service it has done the public, by the education of youth, and the advancement of polite literature.

IF I stop at this head, it is only to shew how much I detest every species of prejudice ; for otherwise I know well enough that I shall never be called to account about it: it was my duty to preserve the ground-work of the original inviolate ; and as the original, which I am far from supposing that my work will put out of the world, must always remain in its true state, it would appear against me, if I should dare to alter it, and furnish an accusation against me of dishonesty and flattery: all that I have been able to do, and I protest I have done it only out of regard to justice, is to shew my dislike by frequent corrections, from which alone the public is to judge of my real sentiments.

It appears indeed to me, that a single word is sufficient to put an end to the greatest part of the imputation thrown upon the jesuits and other good catholics by the duke of Sully: we must consider that they acted upon one principle, and he judged of their actions upon another. It may be added, that in the circumstances of those things, during the transaction, it was difficult to pass a right judgement upon the measures of the different parties: at present, since time has given new light to their causes, motives, and means, we, who are neither carried away by the heat of action, nor overpowered by fear, hope, or desire, have, with respect to the subject on which we are treating, two opinions almost opposite; we detest the league, and have great reason to detest it; but, on the other hand, we judge, and not without probability, that, if the league had not been, France was in danger of suffering the greatest of all evils, the loss of the true religion. If Villeroy,
D'Orlat,

D'Offat, and others, stand in need of defence, it is on this principle, That they must be defended.

A MOTIVE of the same kind determined me likewise to write notes upon passages where Sully speaks unfavourably of the Spaniards, the English, and other kingdoms in our neighbourhood. I am as far from applauding his prejudices as espousing his quarrels. To see nothing in other nations worthy of praise, is to be blind ; to see it, and not own it, is to be weak.

ANOTHER article, which appears to me of yet greater importance than all these, is, the liberty with which the author sometimes discovers his particular principles, with respect to the very substance of religion. It is natural to imagine, that a man full of knowledge, of reflection, and of good qualities, must have been very dangerous when he was led to speak of the reformed religion, which it is known that the duke of Sully always remained a firm adherent to. Such was my notion of the matter ; but the first perusal of his Memoirs altered my opinion. I will quote, upon this occasion, for the last time, the writer whose testimony I have so often made use of, to shew that these Memoirs cannot make, at this time, these impressions which they were unable to make when they were new. “ It is not, says
 “ the author, upon account of his religious opinions, that
 “ he is to be considered as a model, or as an original ; we
 “ are to look into these Memoirs for a general, a grand-
 “ master of the ordnance, a superintendant of the finan-
 “ ces, and a minister of an universal genius, concurring
 “ in all the schemes of his prince ; but you are not here to
 “ expect a picture of a christian, and much less of a ca-
 VOL. I. c “ tholic.”

“ tholic.---These books,” says the same writer, in another place, “ do not shew him properly pious or religious, “ because they do not shew him a catholic.”

THE author might have added another reason of yet greater force, which is, that when Sully represents himself either as a reformed, or catholic, that man, whose reasonings upon almost every other subject is solid and conclusive, appears so wretched as a divine, that the mere comparison of his writings with themselves is sufficient to confute him; besides, how many confessions are drawn from him by the force of truth? how much does he say against the mad determination of some protestant synods, against the intrigues and bad designs of the chief of that party; against the mutinous and seditious temper of the whole body? It is something so singular, to see the duke of Sully by turns a Calvinist, and an enemy to Calvinists, that I thought it necessary to preserve whatever he has said on the subject of religion, lest what I had suppressed had been thought of more importance than it really is. But I thought it necessary to be likewise liberal of my notes, in opposition to those passages, and perhaps under the notion, that I could never be careful enough of weak minds, I may, without thinking of it, have shewn some regard to my first scruples.

THE notes have been considerably multiplied by another consideration. As I was desirous to make this work more clear and compleat, I have shewn the same regard to things of mere entertainment as for those of necessity. I could not prevail upon myself to skip over a fact obscure or but slightly touched, without clearing it up and explaining it.

In one place, therefore, you will find a passage of pure amusement producing another of the same kind ; in another place, a person of note is mentioned only by his name, and I have thought it necessary to add his christian or surname, his dignities or employments, and sometimes the year of his birth or his death. There are notes likewise, in which I have endeavoured to rectify false calculations and mistaken dates, and to adjust the valuation of coins ; and on all these occasions, I have endeavoured to copy only from our best writers, and to draw immediately from the fountain-head ; thus the Memoirs of the League, d'Etoile and de Nevers ; les Chronologies Novenaire et Septenaire of Cayet, and the Mercure François ; messieurs de Thou, Péréfixe, Matthieu, Davila, Le-Grain, D'Aubigné ; the manuscripts of the king's library, the Letters of the cardinal D'Offat *, &c. are my vouchers for facts ; and for all the rest, my credit depends upon the books which have furnished the assistance that I happened to want. I have commonly contented myself with giving their words upon the subject before me, without entering into any disquisitions, except when contrariety of opinions seemed to require it. But notwithstanding this precaution, the margin of the five or six first books are somewhat crouded ; nor was it in my power to do otherwise, the first years of Henry IV. affording a prodigious number of facts of every sort, which Sully has only hinted at, or mentioned very slightly.

To these might very properly have been added, notes upon politics, war, the finances, government, and naval affairs ; and I could not, but in compliance with my inclina-

* For these letters I consulted the old folio edition, as also the old edition of L'Etoile's Memoirs.

tion, scatter a few upon the last books particularly, of which the subject made them often useful, and sometimes absolutely necessary.

As to maxims and reflections, the only use that could properly have been made of them, was to scatter them here and there in the places where they have relation. With respect to another part of this work, I have taken a contrary method; I have brought together all that was said in different places upon the great and famous design of Henry IV. which seems often to break the narration in an unpleasant manner; and finding no place where a recital of so many particulars could be inserted, I made a book of it by itself. I may be suspected, upon these last heads, of having made great additions to my original; but let the reader suspend his judgment till he has read it from beginning to end. I am well aware, that the necessity of arranging these materials in a different order, has given this work a kind of original air, which distinguishes it from common translations, without giving the rank of a work of invention. There are many other places where it will be seen, that if I had thought myself entitled to an absolute authority over my original, I should often have given it another cast. As to references, it was not possible to put them all in the margin, and they would have only tired the reader.

THE letters, which are scattered here and there, I could only have made useful, by casting them into a narrative, and joining them with the facts to which they relate: by this means, I have contrived to diversify my history, and have made the letters more useful than they were before.

It

It is common for those who write on things talked of by them before, to mention them imperfectly; these omissions I commonly supplied with a note, when the matter is such as can be discovered, or deserves explanation; for of this prodigious number of letters, either of the king's or Sully's, the greater part only contains particulars of small importance: all these I consider as uselefs, and retrench them either wholly or in part; and I take the same course with the recitals that are too long, with trifling remarks, with diffuse memorials and regulations of the finances, drawn out in particularities: but when I find letters, conversations, or other pieces, truly original, I copy them faithfully, except when I meet with a word that would offend the ear, I change it to another: this I intend for the gratification of those readers who would complain, if in these ancient Memoirs, the personages that are introduced should talk always like men of our own time, and judge of the pleasure they must receive from the singularity of the ancient language, by that which it gives to myself.

I HAVE followed the usual method, of dividing an historical work into books, rather than into chapters; there are here thirty books, reckoning the account of Henry's great project for one of them. Some were of opinion, that this project, having never been executed, might have been omitted; but it seemed to me to make so considerable a part of Sully's Memoirs, that the public were likely to be offended with its suppression.

I THOUGHT it not for my purpose to proceed farther than the retreat of Sully, in which I have ventured to differ from my original: but besides, that, according to my
scheme,

scheme, I saw no use to be made of the pieces which had no relation either to Sully or Henry IV. I thought, judging of these pieces critically, that they did not deserve much attention from mankind. I find nothing in the fourth volume which can truly be called the work of the duke of Sully, more than what he says of the new court, of the council, and of himself, to his departure from Paris; together with the regulations that he had formed for different purposes, and the evidence he gives of the great design of Henry IV. As to the furious invective against Villeroi, and the other pieces belonging to the reign of Lewis XIII. and, in a word, whatever is contained in the two hundred last pages of the fourth volume. the whole is apparently of another hand; so immethodical, so unconnected, and at the same time so trifling and so dull, that I could look upon it only as a thing compiled by one of his secretaries, without judgment, and for this only purpose, as themselves confess, that the last volume might be as large as the former*; all this is to be ranked with the panegyrics, sonnets, and other pieces, both in French and Latin; which the reader, if such things happen to please him, may look for in the original.

As we cannot learn from these Memoirs what became of the duke of Sully from his retreat to his death, and as the reader may be curious about him, I have given him a Supplement. Nothing of the lives of great men should be lost or neglected; this Supplement is more full and interesting than I at first could promise myself, by means of the information with which the duke of Sully has been pleased to supply me.

* Epit. Limin. du Tom-III.

I MAKE use, as I have already said, of the edition in folio; it is properly in four volumes, though in some libraries it is bound in two: the first and second of these volumes, printed at Amsterdam, that is to say, at Sully, without the date of the year or the printer, for that which appears at its head is counterfeit: this is commonly called the green-lettered edition, on account of its VVV, and its front-piece coloured with green. The third and fourth volumes, printed at Paris by permission, by Augustin Courbé, in 1662. this edition is incorrect, but some of the others are mutilated, which is worse. I shall here enumerate the subsequent editions; the two first volumes were reprinted at Rouen, 1649. in two volumes in folio; in a smaller letter, at Amsterdam, 1654, in four volumes 12°. At Paris, 1664, by Courbé, in two volumes in folio. The third and fourth volumes were reprinted at Paris, 1663, in eight volumes 12°; and at the same time at Rouen, in seven volumes, 12°. The last edition is that of Trevoux, in 1725, in twelve volumes 12°.

WHAT I have here to add is to assure the public, that I respect it too much to expose myself to its censure, by any faults that labour and attention could enable me to avoid; and as for any others, as they may serve, if not to correct my work, at least to mend my self for the future, I am so far from endeavouring to obviate them, that I entreat the world not to spare them; they shall never find me claiming the indulgence naturally due to the first attempt, nor do I plead my situation in excuse; though my situation was so little propitious to this kind of labour, that I should have seen myself obliged to throw it up, had I
not

not been assisted by persons whose generosity was equal to their zeal for the advancement of learning. This confession is due to truth. I should likewise be guilty of extreme ingratitude, if I omitted to make it known, that a man of character, who had been intimately acquainted with the two late dukes of Sully, not only gave me the first notion of this work, but assisted me likewise to form the plan, and promoted the execution by all the means which his friendship or generosity could dictate.

A

S U M M A R Y

O F T H E

BOOKS contained in the FIRST VOLUME.

SUMMARY OF THE FIRST BOOK.

MEMOIRS from the year 1570 to 1580. State of affairs in the council of France, and those of the calvinists, at the peace of 1570. Rosny's extraction, and anecdotes of the house of Bethune. Some account of the birth, education, and early years, of the prince of Navarre. Idea of the government under Henry II. Francis II. and during the first years of the reign of Charles IX. Artifice of queen Catherine of Medicis to ruin the huguenots. Rosny engages himself in the service of the king of Navarre, and follows him to Paris. Death of the queen of Navarre. The wounding of admiral Coligny, and other causes of suspicion, which the court gave to the protestants. Profound dissimulation of Charles IX. Massacre of St. Bartholomew; a particular relation of this event. Observations and reflections upon it. The conduct of Charles IX. and admiral Coligny. In what manner the king of Navarre and Rosny escaped being massacred. Education of Rosny. The calvinists resume courage, and retrieve their affairs. Flight of the prince of Condé. Imprisonment of the princes. The insurrection of Shrove Tuesday. Death of Charles IX. His character. Henry III. returns to France, and declares war against the huguenots. Flight of Monsieur and the king of Navarre. The queen-mother deceives them by the peace called the Peace of Monsieur. The war is renewed. Military rencounters, and taking of cities. Rosny's first exploits in arms.

Vol. I.

d

The

The peace of 1577. Conferences between the queen-mother and the king of Navarre. More military expeditions. Taking of Cahors, &c. Faults committed by Rosny.

SUMMARY OF THE SECOND BOOK.

MEMOIRS from the year 1580 to the year 1587. Affairs of Flanders. The United Provinces offer their crown to Monsieur: he goes to Holland; Rosny attends him. The taking of Château-Cambresis, &c. Monsieur surprises the citadel of Cambrai: he goes to England; returns to France; is hated by the Dutch and the protestants on account of the treachery attempted by him at Antwerp; disconcerted by the prince of Orange. Rosny dissatisfied with Monsieur, who, finding all his schemes blasted, returns to France. Rosny returns likewise, after having visited the city of Bethune. Spain makes offers to the king of Navarre. Rosny sent to the court of France by the king of Navarre: he visits Monsieur. Death of that prince. Rosny's second journey to Paris, and negotiation there: his marriage. Domestic employments. Origin, formation, and progress, of the League. Henry III. joins the League against the king of Navarre. Divisions in the calvinist party; the views of its chiefs. Rosny is again sent to Paris by the king of Navarre, to observe the motions of the League. An attempt upon Angers; fails. A dangerous journey taken by Rosny. The prince of Condé in extremum peril. The king of Navarre in great perplexities. Military expeditions. Rosny negotiates an alliance between the two kings. The taking of Talmont, Fontenay, &c. Rosny goes to visit and assist his wife during the calamity of the plague. Fruitless interviews between the queen-mother and the king of Navarre. A series of military expeditions. Rosny defeats one of the enemies squadrons. Other successes of the calvinists; a declared persecution against them. Madame de Rosny in great danger. Rosny's secret journey to Paris. The duke of Joyeuse leads an army into Poitou, and is beat by the king of Navarre at Coutras; a particular account of this battle.

SUMMARY OF THE THIRD BOOK.

MEMOIRS from the year 1587 to the year 1590. Errors committed by the king of Navarre and the protestants, after the battle of Coutras. Secret designs of the prince of Condé, the count of Soissons, and the viscount Turenne. Death of the prince of Condé; observations

observations upon his death. The battle of the Barricades, and the consequences; reflections upon this event. The duke and cardinal of Guise assassinated; reflections and observations on this occasion. Death of Catherine de Medicis. The pusillanimity of Henry III. with respect to the League. Rosny negotiates a treaty of alliance between the two kings; the disgust he receives upon this occasion. Interview of the two kings. The duke of Maïenne sits down before Tours; military exploits on both sides. Battle of Fosseuse, at which Rosny is present. Death of madame de Rosny. Military successes of the two kings. Siege of Paris. Death of Henry III. particulars of this assassination. Henry IV. asks counsel of Rosny; the perplexing situation of this prince. The dispositions of the several officers in the royalist army with respect to him. Rosny surprises Meulan. Military expeditions. A particular account of the battle of Arques, at which Rosny was present. Skirmishes at Pollet. Henry IV. often in danger. An attempt upon Paris. Rencontres and sieges of different places. Digressions upon those Memoirs. Siege of Meulan. A Spanish army in France. Rosny defends Passi. The battle of Ivry; particulars of this battle. Rosny often in great danger; is wounded in several places; he is carried by his own orders to Rosny: Henry IV's affectionate behaviour to him there.

SUMMARY OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

MEMOIRS from 1590 to 1592. A mutiny in Henry's army after the battle of Ivry; dissipations of the finances, and other causes of the little advantages he derived from it. Cities taken. Attempts on others; disappointed. The taking of the suburbs of Paris; the siege of this city; particulars relating to this siege; the causes which obliged Henry to raise it. The prince of Parma leads an army thither; his encampment, and other military details. An error committed by Henry: he obliges the Prince of Parma to retire. The siege of Chartres. An adventure wherein Rosny is in danger of being killed: he retires to Rosny in discontent. Success of Henry IV's arms. The taking of Corbie, Noyon, &c. An enterprize upon Mante. The duke of Montpensier's expeditions in Normandy. Preparations for the siege of Rouen; errors committed at this siege. Mutual animosities between the soldiers and officers of Henry's army. Attacks, assaults, and other particulars of this siege. The prince of Parma comes again with an army into France. The insolence of the council of sixteen. Henry advances to meet the prince of Parma. An enterprize boldly seconded by the duke of Nevers. The battle of

Aumale; particulars of this battle, and observations upon it. Henry raises the siege of Rouen: marches, encampments, rencounters, and battles, betwixt him and the prince of Parma, in the neighbourhood of Rouen. Observations upon these battles. A glorious exploit of the prince of Parma at the passage of the Seine. Henry's army refuses to pursue him; the causes of this refusal; and reflections upon it.

SUMMARY OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

MEMOIRS from 1592---1593. A succinct account of the state of affairs in the provinces of France during the years 1591 and 1592. Intrigues carried on by the count of Soissons: his character. An abridgment of the duke of Epernon's history: his disobedience; his character. Several parties formed in the southern provinces of France: a short account of what passed there. The siege of Villemur. The siege of Epernai, where marshal Biron is slain: his eulogium. Death of the prince of Parma. Rosny marries again, and retires in discontent. The cause of it. He intercepts the memoirs of the negotiations between Spain and the League. A detail and examen of those papers. A third party formed in France: the persons who compose it; and their views. Henry follows Rosny's advice. The wise and cautious conduct observed by them both. Conversations betwixt them, wherein Rosny prevails upon him to change his religion. Henry sounds the protestants upon this resolution. Rosny's conference with Bellozane, the two Durets, and Du-Perron. Conditions offered by the League to Henry; with what design; rejected. The meeting of the states of Paris. A project of the prince of Parma's badly executed. Disunion of the catholic chiefs in these states: their intrigues and artifices to supplant each other. The parliament of Paris publishes an arret. The zeal of its members for the honour of the crown. The truce. The great wisdom and ability of Henry in profiting of the dissensions among the chiefs of the League. Conduct of Villeroi and Jeannin. Rosny gives the king very prudent advice. The siege of Dreux; taken by Rosny's means. Henry removes all obstacles to his conversion. Particulars relating to his abjuration.

SUMMARY OF THE SIXTH BOOK.

MEMOIRS from 1592---1594. Conduct of Henry with regard to the Pope, Spain, the League, and the huguenots, after his abjuration. Another truce. Artifices of Spain. Barriere's attempt

tempt upon the life of Henry. The jesuits accused and cleared of this crime. Rosny begins a negotiation with admiral Villars, to disengage him from the party of the League. Fescamp surpris'd by a very extraordinary method. A dispute rais'd about this fort. Several cities surrender to Henry. Rosny's journey to Rouen: a detail of his negotiations with Villars. The character of that governor. Rosny is employed by Henry to effect a reconciliation betwixt the duke of Montpensier and the count of Soissons, and to break off the marriage of the latter with the princess Catherine. He visits the duchess of Aumale at Anet. A farther account of his negotiations with Villars, Médavy, and others. The treaty with Villars, after many obstacles, concluded. Henry is received into Paris. Circumstances relating to this reduction. Several instances of the generosity and clemency of this prince. An accommodation with Villeroi. Rosny's third journey to Rouen. Villars sends away the deputies of Spain and the League. The ceremony with which Rouen was surrendered to the king. The conditions upon which Rosny consents to receive any gratuities. Villars comes to court. An instance of Henry's generosity. Lyons submits to the king, notwithstanding the endeavours of the duke de Nemours to the contrary. Poitiers, Cambrai, and other cities do the same. The taking of La-Capelle by the Spaniards. The siege of Laon commences. The affairs which oblige Rosny to return to Paris: his conversation with the cardinal of Bourbon: he supports the jesuits in their process with the university and curates of Paris: he returns to the siege of Paris. A farther account of the siege. Henry's indefatigable labours there. A great convoy of Spaniards defeated by Biron. Rosny present at this rencounter. The king displeas'd with Biron. The Spaniards endeavour in vain to throw supplies into Laon.

SUMMARY OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

MEMOIRS from the year 1594 to the year 1596. Henry dissatisfis'd with the duke of Bouillon; and why. The motives for Rosny's journey to Sedan: his conversation with Bouillon: in which he penetrates into his designs, and discovers his real character. The taking of Laon. Military expeditions in different parts of the kingdom, betwixt the king's party and that of the League. Designs of the duke of Maienne upon Burgundy. Death of the cardinal of Bourbon. Death of the superintendant D'O: his character. Character of the duchess of Guise. The duke of Guise makes a treaty with the king. Rosny's apology for this treaty. Services performed by the duke
of

of Guise for his majesty. Character of Sancy. The story of Ali-bouft. Changes made in the council of the finances. Maxims and reflections relating to the finances. Henry declares war against Spain, contrary to Rosny's opinion : he is wounded by John Châtel : particulars of this horrid attempt ; and the banishment of the jesuits. The motives which determine Henry to march into Burgundy. Rosny quarrels with the council of the finances. Desertion of the count of Soissons. Rosny insulted by the count's officers. A campaign in Picardy. The French defeated at Dourlens. Death of admiral Villars. Campaign in Burgundy glorious for Henry IV. Battle of Fontaine-Françoise. Conditions upon which the Pope gives absolution to Henry. The conduct of Cardinal D'Osât examined. Henry goes to Picardy. Losses sustained there by France. The duke of Montpensier reveals to the king the plots of the chief noblemen of the kingdom. Bouillon is sent to London. Jealousy and hatred of the council of finances against Rosny.

SUMMARY OF THE EIGHTH BOOK.

MEMOIRS from the year 1596---1597. Siege of La-Fère. The king taken ill. Military enterprizes : some executed ; others blasted. Death of the duke of Nemours, and of the duke of Nevers. Embezzlement of the finances. Rosny goes to Henry at Amiens : his adventure with an astrologer. Madame de Liancourt in great danger. Rosny's journey to Rouen : he is deputed to the princess to prevail upon her to espouse the duke of Montpensier : the treatment he receives from her : in danger of being disgraced upon this occasion : recovers the favour of the princess. Success of the king's arms in different provinces. Opposition made by the financiers to Rosny's being appointed one of the council of finances. Henry's irresolution upon this head, who at last places him in the council. The duke of Maïenne concludes a treaty with the king, and comes to his majesty at Monceaux. Rosny goes to visit the generalities : calumnies of his enemies upon this occasion : his journey of great use to the king. Rosny's disputes with Sancy : he discovers the artifices and frauds of the council of finances. The assembly des notables held at Rouen. Reflections upon the states of the kingdom. Good counsel given by Sully to the king. The result of this assembly. The council of reason established, and afterwards suppressed. Rosny's labours in the finances.

SUMMARY OF THE NINTH BOOK.

MEMOIRS from the year 1597—1598. Diversions at court. The Spaniards surprize Amiens. Rosny contrives the means of retaking this place: he is put at the head of the council of finances in the king's absence: his labours in the finances, and disputes with the council. The siege of Amiens, all the necessaries for which are supplied by Rosny. The protestants mutiny again, during this siege: their designs. Death of St. Luc. Henry promises Rosny the post of grand-master of the ordnance; but gives it to D'Estrées. Rosny made governor of Mante. The Spaniards attempt in vain to succour Amiens. It is taken. An account of Henry's letters upon different subjects. Enterprises after the siege of Amiens: some fail, others are executed. Negotiations for a peace. Henry IV. goes into Brittany. Cabals of the calvinists to obtain a favourable edict. Henry gives audience to the English and Dutch ambassadors, who cannot prevail upon him to continue the war. Edict of Nantz. Henry's conversation with the duke of Bouillon. A singular conversation between Henry IV, and Rosny, upon the dissolution of his marriage, and his passion for the duchess of Beaufort. Henry returns to Paris: goes to Picardy. Conclusion and ceremonies of the peace of Vervins.

SUMMARY OF THE TENTH BOOK.

MEMOIRS from the year 1598---1599. Part of the troops disbanded. Ordinances upon grain; the wearing of swords; and other regulations upon the finances, the police, public works, &c. Question of the true or false Don Sebastian. Conferences held at Boulogne between Spain and England, but without effect. The duchess of Beaufort labours with her partizans to be declared queen. The firmness and resolution with which she is opposed by Rosny: he quarrels with her: they are reconciled by Henry. A conversation betwixt this prince and his mistress upon that subject. Henry's sickness. Reception of the legat at St. Germain. Labours of Rosny in the finances. Qualities necessary for a statesman. Rosny gives an account of his wealth; his character; his manner of living, &c. The deplorable condition to which France was reduced by the wars. Sums expended for the treaties made with the League. Arrests which were published. Rosny has a dispute with the duke of Epemon: labours with

with Henry to rectify the abuses in the finances. The abilities of this prince for government. Singular transactions. Exposition, examen, and artifice of the last will of Philip II. The archduchess comes to Marfeilles. Opposition of the clergy of France to the marriage of the princess Catherin: with the duke of Bar; cardinal D'Ossat's conduct upon this occasion: a conference held between the catholics and protestants for the conversion of this princess, but without success: Henry orders the marriage to be solemnized by the archbishop of Rouen: humorous conversation upon this subject. The clergy and parliament oppose the registration of the edict of Nantz; alterations made in it; assembly of the protestants; artifices of the duke of Bouillon upon this occasion: the edict registered. The affair of Martha Brosfier. Gratuities and employments given by Henry to Rosny. The strange deaths of the constable's wife, and of the duchess of Beaufort: Henry's grief for the loss of the duchess: Rosny comforts him.

M E M O I R S

O F

S U L L Y.

B O O K I.

THEY flattered themselves at the court of Charles IX. that the miseries which befel the protestants under the preceding reigns, would at last oblige them either to submit to the king's will, or to leave the kingdom. 1570.
The death of the prince of Condé*, their leader, the loss of two great battles, the utter dispersion of their soldiers, and the little probability of their being able to re-animate the feeble remainder of their troops, discouraged by a long train of misfortunes, all contributed to persuade them, that the moment of their ruin approached †. A courage superior to all events, supported them in

Jarnac and
Moncon-
tour.

* Lewis the first, prince of Condé, brother of Antony king of Navarre, and son of Charles of Bourbon, duke of Vendome. He was taken prisoner at the battle of Jarnac, in the year 1569, and murdered by a pistol-shot in the back part of his head, by the baron de Montelquieu. This gentleman being captain of the guards to the duke of Anjou, that prince was accused of having commanded him to assassinate the prince of Conde.

† The reader must not forget, that it is a protestant who speaks in these memoirs: the condition in which religion and politics are at present in France, leaves no room to apprehend any bad consequences to either from what Monsieur de Sully can say in favour of the pretended reformed religion. One may even, from the author's own words in several places, draw very strong arguments for the unity of religion in a kingdom, and

1570.

circumstances so distressful: they recalled their soldiers, who were scattered throughout the provinces; and who now began to draw together from Burgundy, Bourbon, and Berry. La Charité was named for the place of their general rendezvous; Vezelai, and some other towns, still holding out for them in that neighbourhood. They had even the boldness to promise themselves, they should spread the alarm as far as Paris, as soon as they were reinforced by some considerable supplies of horse and foot, that they expected from Germany.

THIS news gave great uneasiness to the queen-mother, Catherine de Medicis; but she flattered herself, that it would not be difficult to hinder their junction, and afterwards to disperse the troops, which she supposed would be by that means thrown into a consternation. For this purpose she ordered a powerful army to march. Strozzy*, La Chatre, Tavannes, La Valette, and all the general officers in France, were desirous of serving in it; and the marechal de Cossé†, who was to have the supreme command, suffered himself to be intoxicated with the glory he should acquire, by extirpating even the last huguenot soldier, and bringing the chiefs of the party bound hand and foot to the queen-mother: but he was soon undeceived: the protestant army received him with great intrepidity; they were always the first to offer battle; in the skirmishes, which were frequent, the advantage was wholly on their side; and they even carried away a kind of victory at the encounter of Arnai-le-duc‡. So much obstinacy convinced the queen-mother, that to

Artus de
Cossé lord
of Gonnor,
who died in
1582.

the advantage the catholic religion has over the protestant. See what is said on this subject in the preface to this work.

* Philip Strozzy, lord of Epernay, son of Peter Strozzy, marechal of France. Claude de la Chatre, afterwards marechal of France. John de Nogaret, father of the duke d'Epéron. Gaſpard de Saulx de Tavannes, who was also marechal of France; he had been page to Francis I. and was at that time one of the counsellors and confidants of Catherine de Medicis. His character may be known by the following traits, which I shall copy from the author of the Henriade in his notes, p. 34. "In the night of St. Bar-

tholomew," says he, "he ran through the streets of Paris, crying, Let blood, let blood; bleeding is as good in the month of August as in May. His son, who has written his memoirs, relates, that his father being upon his death-bed, made a general confession of the sins of his life; after which his confession saying to him, with an air of astonishment, Why! you speak not a word of St. Bartholomew. I look upon that, replied the marechal, as a meritorious action, which ought to atone for all the sins I have ever committed.

† It was expected from appearances, that the marechal de Cossé would beat the huguenot army, or at least prevent it from ruin

ruin the protestant party it would be necessary to have recourse to other measures than war. Treachery seemed to her the securest; and, in order to gain time to prepare for it, she listened so favourably to proposals for an accommodation, that a peace was concluded when it was least expected, and upon conditions very advantageous for the huguenots. This was the peace || of 1570. After which, during the space of two years, each party tasted the sweets of a repose, that had been equally desired by both.

1570.

My father † retired to his house at Rosny, and employed himself in settling his domestic affairs. As it is the history of my own life, jointly with that of the prince whom I served, that will make the subject of these memoirs, 'tis necessary that I should give some account of my family and person. By satisfying the curiosity of the public in these particulars, I must intreat, that neither vanity nor affectation be imputed to me, since a strict regard to truth is my only inducement for relating whatever may appear advantageous for me, either here, or in the succeeding parts of these Memoirs.

approaching Paris: neither the one nor the other he performed; on the contrary, he was obliged to retreat, after a very smart encounter, and from thenceforward contented himself with watching the motions of the enemy. In this engagement the calvinists were commanded by the prince of Navarre and the prince of Condé his cousin-german, the one sixteen, the other seventeen years of age, and by the admiral de Coligny. Peter Matthieu, the historian, relates these words of Henry IV. after he had ascended the throne: speaking of this encounter of Arnaï-le-duc, "My first exploits in arms, said this prince, were at Arnaï-le-duc, where the question was, whether I should fight or retire. I had no retreat nearer than forty miles from thence, and if I flaid, I must certainly lie at the mercy of the country people. By fighting, I ran the risk of being taken or slain, for I had no cannon, and the king's forces had; and a gentleman was killed not ten paces distant from me with a cannon shot: but recommending the success of this day to God, it pleased him to make it fa-

“vourable and happy.” Vol. I. book v. p. 327. In this same year the huguenots gained the battle of Luçon, and took Marennes, the isle of Oleron, Brouage, Xaintes, &c.

|| By this treaty of peace, many privileges, of which they had been deprived, were restored to them, the number of their churches were augmented, and four cities were given them for security, La Rochelle, Montauban, Cognac, and La Charite. This peace was signed the 11th of August, and was called the lame and ill-founded peace, because it was concluded in the name of the king by Biron, who was lame, and by N. de Mesmes, lord of Malaffize, which in French signifies ill founded.

† Francis de Bethune, Baron de Rosny, who died in the year 1575. His first wife was Charlotte Dauvet, daughter of Robert Dauvet, lord de Rieux, president of the chamber of accounts, and of Anne Briçonnet; by whom he had children, whose names will be mentioned hereafter. His second wife was Margaret de Louvigny, who brought him no issue.

1570.

MAXIMILIAN is my baptismal name, and Bethune that of my family*, which derives its origin, by the house of Coucy, from the ancient house of Austria: we must not, however, confound it with that which is at present in possession of the empire of Germany, and the two Spains. This last is descended only from the counts of Habsbourg and Quibourg †, private gentlemen, who three hundred years since were in the pay of the cities of Strasbourg, Basle, and Zurich, and who would have thought themselves highly honoured by being stewards of the household to such a prince as the king of France; since Raoul, chief of this second house of Austria, held a like employment under Ottocar king of Bohemia.

* These particulars relating to the house of Bethune, are drawn from the body of the ancient memoirs of Sully, and the pieces joined to them; but it will be safest to rely on the best modern genealogists, whose opinions we shall mention hereafter.

† It was long believed, that the house of Austria was descended from the counts of Habsbourg, or Thierstein. The writings of the abbey de Mure, or Muri, in Switzerland, carelessly consulted by Theodore Godefroy, and upon his word adopted by the best critics, and even by father Le Long, have given rise to this error; but by these writings better examined, by the charters of the monastery of St. Trupert, and other acts, it appears, that this house is originally from Brisgaw, that it is descended from the ancient counts of Alsace, and goes back, by Luitfrid, Rampert, Otpert, &c. counts of Habsbourg and landgraves of Alsace, not only to Gontran the rich, count of Altembourg, who lived in the beginning of the tenth century, but even to Adelic or Ethic the first, called duke of Germany, eighteenth ancestor of Raoul or Rodolph the first, to the middle of the seventh century. This seems to be sufficiently well established by the new work in Latin of father Marquard Hergott, a benedictin, printed at Vienna 1737, in three volumes, folio, entitled, The diplomatic genealogy of the august house of Habsbourg, &c. See also the learned

and judicious extract of this work, inserted in the Journal des Sçavans, March, April, and June, 1740. Besides this general error, our Memoirs seem to have fallen into two other particular ones. It is certain, we ought not to confound this second house of Austria with that which had the possession of Austria, &c. till the year 1248, that Frederick the last of it died, and which drew its origin from the ancient dukes of Suabia; but we want proofs of the house of Bethune's being allied to that of Suabia, or the first house of Austria, tho' it was to the second, by the house of Coucy. The duke of Sully probably gave credit to the ancient fable, that derives the house of Austria from Sigebert, son of Theodebert, king of Austrasia, and has applied it not to the second house of Austria, but to the first, although the one is no more true than the other. He has reason for saying afterwards, that Raoul or Rodolph, count of Habsbourg, and the first of this house that was emperor, had been steward of the household to Ottocar, king of Bohemia; and that Albert his son, elected emperor likewise, was the first of his house who took the title of duke of Austria, which happened in 1274, when Rodolph gained the dutchies of Austria, Stiria, Carniola, &c. from Ottocar his rival; but he ought at the same time to have done more justice than he has to the antiquity of this house.

It

It is from the son of this Raoul, that the new stock of Austria properly begins, for he took the name of Austria instead of his own.

1570.

THE house of Bethune (which has given its name to a city of Flanders, and from whence issued the counts that anciently governed that province) boasts of one Robert de Bethune *, protector of the church of Arras, whose father and grandfather, bearing also the name of Robert, were declared protectors of the province of Artois. One of these two Roberts de Bethune signalized himself in France, by the taking of La-Roche-vandais, a fortress upon the confines of Auvergne, where the rebel Emerigot Marcel had retired; and the other in the wars of Sicily, by killing with his own hand the tyrant Mainfroy, in the presence of two armies; a service which Charles of Anjou, the rival of Mainfroy, did not reward too highly, by giving him his daughter Catherine to wife. They mention a fourth, Robert de Bethune, who gained a naval battle over the infidels in the Mediterranean. In the church, a James de Bethune, bishop of Cambrai, at the time of the Croisade of the Albigeois; and a John de Bethune, abbot of Anchin near Valenciennes, who died in the year 1250, with the reputation of great sanctity, and whose bones are revered as those of a martyr. The history of the Croisades has not forgot those who distinguished themselves at the taking of Jerusalem, by being the first that mounted the breach. Antony and Coëne de Bethune †, emulating the glory of their ancestors, were also the first that fixed the standard upon the walls of Constantinople, when Baldwin, count of Flanders, won this capital from Alexis Comnenus; and Coëne obtained the government of it.

WHOEVER has such domestic examples as these, cannot recall them too often to his memory to animate himself to follow them.

* Du Chesne seems to be much of the same opinion. He proves, that Robert, called Faisseus, the head of the house of Bethune, who lived in the tenth century, descended from a younger branch of the ancient counts of Flanders, and had for his portion the lordship of the city of Bethune, first barony of the earldom of Artois. If this opinion be well grounded, 'tis certain, that it was the city of Bethune from which this branch took its name, and which was from that time borne by all the house of Bethune.

The title of patron of the church was then so noble, that many sovereigns thought it an honour to be distinguished by it.

† These are apparently the two brothers, sons of Robert the fifth, lord of Bethune, whom (according to William of Tyr) Philip of Alsace, count of Flanders, proposed to marry to the two daughters of Baldwin, king of Jerusalem. It is also certain, that after the death of Peter de Courtenay, emperor of Constantinople, this Coëne or Conon de Bethune was

Happy,

1570. Happy, if, during the course of my life, my conduct may be such, that so many illustrious men disdain not to acknowledge me, nor I have occasion to blush that I am descended from them.

AT length the house of Bethune, growing every day more illustrious, became allied * to almost all the sovereign houses in Europe; it entered into that of Austria †, and to conclude with what honoured it infinitely more, the august house of Bourbon || did not contemn its alliance.

BUT I must confess, that the branch from which I am descended, had then lost much of its first splendor. It was the issue of a younger brother †, and the poorest of all who have borne this name. The eldest branch having three times fallen into the female line, all the great estates it possessed in different parts of Europe did not go to the collateral branches, but went with the daughters to the royal houses they married into.

MY particular ancestors, by marrying advantageously, restored to their branch what it wanted to maintain the dignity of its name, but all these riches were almost entirely dissipated by the prodigality and

declared regent of the empire, during the minority of Philip de Courtenay his son.

* See in Du Chesne and father Anselm, all the alliances of the house of Bethune with different princes of France; with the emperors of Constantinople, the counts of Flanders, Hainault, Boulogne, the kings of Jerusalem, the dukes of Lorraine, the kings of Castile, Leon, Scotland, and England, the families of Courtenay, Chatillon, Montmorency, Melun, Horn, &c.

† By Jean de Coucy, who married John de Bethune. It must be observed, that as often as the house of Coucy is mentioned here, it is not in reality the house of Coucy but that of Guines that is meant. The eldest branch of this ancient house of Coucy was extinct in the person of Enguerrand the fourth of Coucy. Enguerrand de Guines, who married Alice de Coucy, the daughter of a younger branch, revived it, by taking the name

and the arms. The house of Guines was not less ancient and illustrious than that of Coucy.

|| By the houses of Chatillon, Neelle, Montmorency, Luxembourg, and lastly by the house of Melun.

Anne de Melun, lady of Rosny, who married John IV. de Bethune, reckoned in her family, says Du Chesne, as well on the side of her father, Hugo de Melun, viscount de Gand, as on that of Jean de Horn her mother, more than ten princes of the blood-royal of France, and all the sovereigns of Europe.

† John de Bethune, ancestor in the seventh degree of the duke of Sully, had two sons, Robert and John. Robert, by three marriages, left only daughters. John is the younger brother, of whom the author here speaks; he was lord of Locres and Autreche. Matthew de Bethune, another ancestor of the author's, had likewise three daughters, and no son.

bad

bad management of my grandfather *, who left nothing to his son my father, but the estate of Anne de Melun his wife, which it was not in his power to deprive him of.

1571.

As for what relates to me personally: at the time of which I have been speaking, I entered into my eleventh year, being born the 13th of December 1560. Although I was but the second † of four sons, yet the natural imperfections of my eldest brother ‡ made my father look upon me as the future head of his family; all the indications of a strong and vigorous constitution recommending me still more to his favour. My parents bred me in the opinions and doctrine of the reformed religion, and I have continued constant in the profession of it; neither threatenings, promises, variety of events, nor the change even of the king my protector, joined to his most tender solicitations, have ever been able to make me renounce it.

HENRY || king of Navarre, who will have the principal share in these memoirs, was seven years older than me, and when the peace of 1570 was concluded, entered into his eighteenth year †. A coun-

* John de Bethune, baron de Baye: he married Anne de Melun, daughter of Hugo de Melun, viscount de Gaud, and of Jean d'Horn; she was heiress of Rosny. After her death, he married Jean Du-Pre, a private gentlewoman. He sold the lordships of Hautbois, d'Avraincourt, Novion, Caumartin, Bave, Bannay, Taluz, Loches, Villerenard, Châtillon, Broucy, &c. Du Chesne, *ibid*.

† Francis de Pethune, baron de Rosny, &c. had six sons, but the author does not reckon John and Charles, who died young. The four others are, Lewis, Maximilian, Solomon, and Philip de Bethune. He mentions each of them in another place.

‡ Lewis drowned himself at twenty years of age.

|| "The house of Bourbon, from Lewis IX. to Henry IV. had been almost always neglected; and to such extreme poverty was it reduced, that the famous prince of Conde, brother to Antony king of Navarre, and uncle to Henry the great, had no more than

"six hundred livres a-year for his patrimony." *Essay on the civil wars*.

These words of the author of the *Henriade* might easily lead one into an error, if at the same time we were not warned of it by an historian better informed, who tells us, that the house of Bourbon was then in possession of a revenue of more than eight hundred thousand lives a-year in lands only, which was at that time thought a very considerable fortune. 'Tis certain, that this was all it possessed of the ancient estate of Bourbon, or even of the house of Moncade, the maternal stock; the estates of these two houses, which came by very rich and illustrious alliances, being alienated to purchase the viscounty of Narbonne. Peter Matthieu's history of Henry IV. vol. II. p. 1 and 2. For these alliances, and the genealogy of the house of Bourbon, consult also the *New chronology* of Peter Victor Cayet, vol. I. book i. p. 237. and our other historians.

‡ He was born at Pau in Bearn, December 13th, 1553. Mr. de Perefex relates some very curious particulars concerning tenance

1571.

tenance noble, open, and insinuating, free, easy, and lively manners, with an uncommon dexterity in performing all the exercises suitable to his age, drew the esteem and admiration of all that knew him. He began early to discover those great talents for war, which have so highly distinguished him among other princes. Vigorous and indefatigable by the education of his infancy *, he breathed nothing but

his birth. " Henry d'Albert, his grandfather, made his daughter promise to sing a song to him while she was in labour; in order, said he, that you may bring me a child, who will neither weep nor make wry faces. The princess had fortitude enough, in the midst of her pains, to keep her word, and sang a song in Bearnois, her own country language. As soon as Henry entered the chamber, the child came into the world without crying; his grandfather immediately carried him to his own apartment, and there rubbed his little lips with a clove of garlic, and made him suck some wine out of a gold cup, to make his constitution strong and vigorous." Perefixe's history of Henry the great, p. 1. Cayet, vol. I. book i. p. 241.

" This young prince, when he was only thirteen years of age, had judgment enough to observe faults in the conduct of the prince of Condé, and the admiral Coligny. It was his opinion, and a very judicious one, that at the great skirmish at Loudun, if the duke of Anjou had had troops in readiness to attack them, he would have done it: that he did not do it, but chose to retire, was a proof of his being in a weak condition, and therefore they ought to have attacked him; this they neglected, and by that means gave time for all his troops to join him. At the battle of Jarnac, he represented to them with equal strength of judgment, that they had not a favourable opportunity for fighting, because the forces of the princes were dispersed, and those of the duke of Anjou all joined: but they were too far engaged to retire. At the battle of Moncontour, when he was but

" sixteen years of age, he cried out, We lose our advantage, and consequently the battle." Perefixe, *ibid.*

* " He was brought up in the castle of Coarasse in Bearn, situated amidst rocks and mountains. Henry d'Albert, his grandfather, would have him clothed and fed like other children in that country. They even accustomed him to run up and down the rocks. It is said, that his ordinary food was brown bread, beef, cheese, and garlick; and that they often made him walk barefoot and bareheaded." Perefixe, *ibid.*

While he was in the cradle, he was called prince of Viane. A little time after, they gave him the title of duke of Beaumont, and after that prince of Navarre. The queen of Navarre his mother took great care of his education, and appointed La Gaucherie, a very learned man, but a strict Calvinist, for his preceptor.

" While he was yet a child, he was presented to Henry II. who asked him if he would be his son: He is my father, replied the little prince in Bearnois, pointing to the king of Navarre. Well, said the king, will you be my son-in-law then? Oh, with all my heart, answered the prince. From that time, his marriage with the princess Margaret was resolved upon. At Bayonne the duke of Medina, looking at him earnestly, said, This prince either will, or ought to be an emperor." Cayet, vol. I. b. i. p. 240.

In the Memoirs of Nevers we meet with some letters written in 1567, by the principal magistrates of Bourdeaux, that contain several very interesting particulars concerning the person and manners of young Henry. " We have here, says one,

labour,

1571.

labour, and seem'd to wait with impatience for occasions of acquiring glory. The crown of France not being yet the object of his aspiring wishes, he indulg'd himself in forming schemes for the recovering that of Navarre, which Spain had unjustly usurp'd from his family; and this he thought he might be enabled to perform, by maintaining a secret intelligence with the Moors in Spain *. The enmity he bore to this power, was open and declar'd; it was born with him, and he never condescended to conceal it. He felt his courage enflam'd at the relation of the † battle of Lepante, which was fought at that time; and a like opportunity of distinguishing himself against the infidels became one of his most ardent wishes. The vast and flattering expectations which the astrologers agreed in making him conceive, were almost always present to his mind. He saw the foundation of them in that affection which Charles IX. early entertain'd for him, and which considerably increas'd a short time before his death: but animat'd as he was with these happy presages, he labour'd to second them only in secret, and never disclos'd his thoughts to any person but a small number of his most intimate confidants.

IN order to form a just idea, either of the general state of affairs in the government of France, or of those of the young prince of Na-

“ the prince of Bearn; it must be confess'd, that he is a charming youth.
 “ At thirteen years of age, he has all the riper qualities of eighteen or nineteen: he is agreeable, polite, obliging, and behaves to every one with an air so easy and engaging, that wherever he is, there is always a crowd. He mixes in conversation like a wife and prudent man, speaks always to the purpose, and when it happens that the court is the subject of discourse, 'tis easy to see that he is perfectly well acquainted with it, and never says more nor less than he ought, in whatever place he is. I shall all my life hate the new religion for having robb'd us of so worthy a subject.” And in another, “ His hair is a little red, yet the ladies think him not less agreeable on that account: his face is finely shap'd, his nose neither too large nor too small, his eyes full of sweetness, his skin brown but clear, and his whole countenance animat'd

“ with an uncommon vivacity: with all these graces, if he is not well with the ladies, he is extremely unfortunate.” Again, “ He loves diversions and the pleasures of the table. When he wants money, he has the address to procure it in a manner quite new, and very agreeable to others as well as himself; to those, whether men or women, whom he thinks his friends, he sends a promissary note, written and sign'd by himself, and intreats them to send him back the note, or the sum mention'd in it. Judge, if there is a family that can refuse him: every one looks upon it as an honour to have a note from this prince,” &c. Vol. II. p. 586.

* My ewe, said Henry d'Albert, has brought forth a lion. And added from a secret presage, This child will revenge me on Spain for the injuries I have received from her. Peref. *ibid*.

† Gained this year against the Turks by Don John of Austria, natural son to

1571.

varre, and what he might have to hope or fear in the times of which we are speaking, 'tis necessary to give a summary relation of the different steps taken by the ministry, both before and after the death of the * king of Navarre his father, slain before Rouen. I shall go back, therefore, to the rupture that kindled the war between Henry II. and Philip II. of Spain. To which side soever it owed its rise, the event was not so favourable to France, as convenient for the views of the two men who advised it. These were the constable † de Montmorency, and the duke ‡ de Guise, who hoped these troubles would furnish them with the means of reciprocally supplanting each other. In this war there was sufficient employment for both. The duke of Guise, at the head of a powerful army, passed into Italy, where he performed nothing worthy his reputation. But the constable was still more unsuccessful: the most distinguishing post, which was the command of the army in Flanders, he reserved for himself, and lost St. Quentin, with the battle of that name, where he was taken prisoner. This defeat was followed by that of the marshal Thermes at Gravelins.

Paul de la Berts, lord of Thermes, marshal of France.

THE duke of Guise saw all his wishes completed by these unfortunate events. He was recalled from Italy, to be placed singly at the head of the council and armies, with which he acquired Calais to

Charles the fifth. He was generalissimo of the Spanish and Venetian troops.

* Antony de Bourbon, husband of Jane d'Albert queen of Navarre. He turned catholic. M. de Thou relates an anecdote of him, which we cannot do better than give in the words of the author of the *Henriade*. "Francis de Guise did design to assassinate him in the chamber of king Francis II. Antony de Navarre had a great deal of courage, though his judgment was weak; he was informed of the plot, yet went resolutely into the chamber where it was to be executed. If they murder me, said he to Reinsy, one of his gentlemen, take my bloody shirt, and carry it to my wife and son: that will teach them what they ought to do to revenge me. Francis the second durst not stain himself with this crime; and the duke of Guise at leaving his chamber, exclaimed, What a poor king have we!"

† Anne, constable of Montmorency.

He received a wound at the battle of St. Denis, October 10, 1567, of which he died.

‡ Claude de Lorraine, a stem of the house of Guise in France, had six sons, Francis, duke of Guise; Charles, archbishop of Rheims, called cardinal of Lorraine; Claude, duke of Aumale; Lewis, cardinal of Guise; Francis, grand prior; and René, marquis d'Elbeuf. Francis the eldest, is he whom the author here mentions. He married Anne d'Est, and was murdered in 1563, with three poisoned balls, by the hand of John Poltrot de Meri, a gentleman of Angoumois. Poltrot impeached the admiral, the count de la Rochefoucault, and Theodore de Beze, as accomplices in his crime; but afterwards varying in his accusations, the admiral was declared innocent. His titles were, duke of Guise and Aumale, prince of Joinville, knight of the order of the king, peer, grand master, grand chamberlain, and grand huntsman of France.

France.

France. The constable in his prison felt all the force of this blow ; and being resolved to go and defend his rights at any price, he treated of a peace with Spain. It was not indeed an honourable one for the king his master, but it released him from captivity. The death of king Henry II. entirely sunk his credit *. This prince was slain in the midst of the magnificent rejoicings on account of his daughter's marriage with the king of Spain, which was the seal of the peace. Francis II. who succeeded him, was young, weak and infirm : he had married the niece † of the duke of Guise, and that nobleman became in his turn the sole governor of the king and kingdom. The protestants could not have fallen into the hands of a more cruel enemy. He was busied in forming vast projects, and meditating the strangest catastrophes in France, when he himself experienced the vicissitudes of fortune. A sudden death, occasioned by a pain in his ear ‡, deprived him of Francis II. The reign of Charles IX. his brother, yet an infant, was singular in this, that the authority seemed to be equally divided amongst the queen-mother, the princes of the blood, the constable, and the duke of Guise. Each of them in secret supported a party of his own. The good destiny of the duke of Guise placed him a second time at the head of affairs, by the union that Catherine made with him. Upon this union she even founded the principal part of her politics ; and 'tis pretended, the hatred she began to shew towards the princes of Bourbon, had a great share in it : this aversion arose from her having taken it into her head, upon the faith of an astrologer, that none of the princes her sons should have issue, in which case the crown must pass to a branch of the house of Bourbon. She could not resolve to see it go out of her family, and therefore destined it to the posterity of her || daughter, who was married to the duke of Lorraine. Whatever there may be in this predilection of the queen-mother ** , it is certain, she gave birth to two parties

1571.

* Struck in the eye with a splinter of a lance in a tournament, where he ran against the count de Montgomery, July 10, 1559.

† Mary Stuart, queen of Scotland, daughter of James V. king of Scotland, and of Mary of Lorraine, of the house of Guise.

‡ The abscess that he had in this part turning to a mortification, he died the 5th of December, 1560. No more was needful to raise a suspicion of his being poisoned.

|| Claude of France, the second of three

daughters, which Catherine de Medicis had by her marriage with Henry II. She married the duke of Lorraine, and had children by him.

** M. L'Abbe le Laboureur, in his additions to the Memoirs of Castelnau, assigns another reason for queen Catherine's hatred to the king of Navarre: he declares he read in these memoirs, that this prince and the duke d'Alençon being prisoners together, they plotted to strangle the queen-mother with their own hands, when the

1571.

in politics as well as religion, which began from that moment to fill the kingdom with confusion, horror, and the most dreadful calamities.

THIS dreadful tempest seemed solely formed to burst upon the head of the young prince of Navarre. The * king of Navarre, his father, was just then dead: his death, indeed, left a prince and a king to be head of the reformed religion in France: but this prince was a child of seven years of age, and the mark at which all the blows of the new council were aimed, who acted in concert with the pope, the emperor, the king of Spain, and all the catholics of Europe. In effect, this party experienced the most cruel reverses of fortune; yet, by the wise conduct of its chiefs, and the early talents of young Henry, it supported itself with glory till the peace of 1570, at which period these Memoirs commence.

Gaspard de Coligny, lord of Châtillon-sur-Loing, admiral of France.

PRINCE Henry made use of the quiet that was given him, to visit his estates, and his government of Guyenne; after which he came and settled in Rochelle, with the queen of Navarre his mother, the admiral de Coligny, and the principal chiefs of the protestant party, to whom this important city, far distant from the court, seemed most advantageous for the interest of their religion. A very wise resolution, had they been capable of adhering to it constantly.

Philip Gourau de la Prôvitière.

QUEEN Catherine dissembled the trouble this conduct gave her, and during the whole year 1571, spoke only of faithfully observing the treaties, of entering into a closer correspondence with the protestants, and carefully preventing all occasions of rekindling the war. This was the pretence of the marechal de Cossé's deputation, whom she sent to Rochelle with Malasize and La Prôvitière, masters of requests, her creatures and confidants; but the true motive was to observe all the steps of the calvinists, to sound their inclinations, and draw them insensibly to an entire confidence in her, which was absolutely necessary to her designs; and she forgot nothing on her side that was capable of

came into their chamber. This design was not executed through the horror they themselves felt at the fact; and the king of Navarre afterwards but ill concealing the secret, Catherine de Medicis was to the last degree enraged against him.

* The author is mistaken in placing the death of Antony king of Navarre in 1560; it did not happen till 1562, by a wound he received at the siege of Rouen. See his character and eulogium in the Memoirs of Brantome, vol. III. p. 242.

inspiring

inspiring it. The marechal de Montmorency * was sent to Rouen with the president de Morfan, to do justice there for the outrages committed against the huguenots; any infringements of the treaty of peace were severely punished; and king Charles usually called it his treaty, and his peace. This prince would on all occasions artfully insinuate, that he consented to this peace, in order to support the princes of his blood against the too great authority of the Guises, whom he accused of conspiring with Spain to throw the kingdom into confusion †. These noblemen seemed daily to decrease in favour; and their complaints, whether true or false, gave all imaginable colour to this report. Charles did not even make the least difficulty of advancing as far as Blois and Bourgueil, to confer with the protestants, who for their deputies had named ‡ Téliigny, son-in-law to the admiral, Briquemaut, Beauvais-la-Noële, and Cavagne; and these four deputies, when they went afterwards to Paris, were loaded with presents and civilities.

1571.
Bernard
Prevot,
lord of
Morfan.

THE marechal de Cossé did not fail to give weight to these appearances of sincerity: having by that means insinuated himself, he began to confer in earnest with the queen of Navarre on the scheme of marrying the prince her son to the princess Margaret, sister to the king of France; and was commissioned by Charles to promise a portion of four hundred thousand crowns. For the || prince of Condé,

* Francis de Montmorency, eldest son of Anne, constable of Montmorency, died in 1579.

† Charles IX. had a natural aversion to the duke of Guise. He was so offended at his having demanded the princess Margaret his sister in marriage, that speaking on this subject one day to the grand prior of France, natural son of Henry II. he said, shewing him two swords, "Of these two swords that thou seest, there is one of them to kill thee, if to-morrow at the chase thou dost not kill the duke of Guise with the other." These words were repeated afterwards to the duke of Guise, who quitted his pursuit. F. Matthieu, book vi. p. 333. The same historian adds, that Charles IX. pursued the duke of Guise one day with a javelin in his hand, and struck it forcibly into a door, at

the same moment that the duke came out of it, for having, in playing, touched him with a file. *Ibid.* 376.

‡ Charles, lord of Téliigny in Rouergue, Montreuil, &c. married to Louisa de Coligny. He had something so sweet and amiable in his countenance, that at the massacre of St. Bartholomew, those persons who were first sent to assassinate him, stopped as in suspense, and had not resolution enough to strike the blow. Francis Briquemaut. John de Lafin, called Beauvais-la-Noële, to distinguish him from Philip de Lafin his eldest brother. The author wrote Tavannes, but we must read Cavagne. Arnaud de Cavagne was a counsellor of the parliament of Toulouse.

|| Henry the first, prince of Condé: Mary of Cleves, marchioness d'Isle, related to the Guises, and brought up in the court

he

1571.

he proposed the third heiress of Cleves, a very considerable match; and the * countess d'Entremont for the admiral de Coligny, whom he rightly judged would be more difficult than all the others to be persuaded: to this last article, therefore, he added a nuptial present of a hundred thousand crowns, which the king engaged to give the admiral, together with all the benefices his brother the cardinal had enjoyed †. The marechal de Biron was sent to confirm these shining offers, and entirely gained the queen of Navarre, by feigning to impart to her in confidence the suspicions which were entertained at court, that Philip II. king of Spain had poisoned the queen his wife, Elizabeth of France ‡, who had been falsely accused of an intrigue with the infant Don Carlos. At the same time he told her, under an injunction of secrecy, that the court being resolved to revenge this injury, would carry the war into Flanders and Artois, the restitution of which would be demanded from the king of Spain, as being ancient fiefs of the crown, like that of Navarre; and that they would commence hostilities by succouring Mons, which the prince of Orange had just taken from the Spaniards.

Armand de
Gontault de
Biron,
marechal of
France.

William of
Nassau,
prince of
Orange.

of the queen of Navarre. She had no children by her husband, who afterwards married Charlotte Catherine de la Trimouille.

* Jaqueline de Montbel, only daughter of Sebastian, count of Entremont, widow of Claud Batarnai, lord of Anton, who was killed at the battle of St. Denis. The duke of Savoy detained her some time in his dominions, but she escaped, and came to Rochelle to marry the admiral. His first wife was Charlotte de Laval.

† Odet de Châtillon, cardinal bishop of Beauvais, abbot of St. Benoit sur Loire, &c. He was made a cardinal at sixteen years of age; and although he was degraded from this dignity by pope Pius the fourth, he was publicly married in the habit of a cardinal to Elizabeth de Hauteville, a lady of Normandy, to whom he gave the title of countess of Beauvais, and as such she took rank at the public ceremonies. In 1564, he was accused of high treason before the parliament of Paris. He died in the beginning of the year 1571, at Southampton in England, whither he was

sent during the war, to support the interests of the calvinists with queen Elizabeth; and after the peace he was commissioned by the king to treat of a marriage between this princess and the duke of Alençon. 'Tis certain, though d'Aubigné takes no notice of it, that his valet de chambre poisoned him with an apple, as he was preparing to return to France, being recalled by the admiral his brother. Thuanus, lib. 50.

D'Aubigny adds, that the admiral in reality put in possession of great part of these benefices, and enjoyed them during the space of a year; and that Charles the ninth gave him also a hundred thousand francs, to purchase furniture for his house of Châtillon. D'Aubigny's history, vol. II. book i. chap. 1.

‡ Eldest daughter of Henry II. and Catherine de Medicis. Most of the French historians are of this opinion. The Spaniards attribute her death to bleeding, and medicines, that the physicians, not knowing that she was with child, made her take. She died a little time after, in 1568.

Don Carlos, prince of Spain, whom

To

To complete all he added, that the king had fixed upon the admiral to command his army, with the title of viceroy of the Low-Countries: and he was actually at that time permitted to nominate the general officers that were to serve under him, as a little while before he had done the commissioners of the peace. The report of this expedition into the Low-Countries spread so far, that it is certain the grand seignor offered the king of France his gallees and troops to make a diversion, and to facilitate the conquest. With regard to the queen of England, nothing was omitted that was necessary to be done on this occasion. Montmorency was sent ambassador thither, with instructions to use every method, by which he might gain the princess, and prevail upon her to chuse one of the king's brothers for a husband. A marriage, which, they said, would alike strengthen the union of the two religions, and the two powers.

1571.

THIS conduct, so full of seeming frankness, might have been suspected by its excess; yet it had the designed effect, and the discourse of the courtiers did not a little contribute towards it. The desire of breathing the air of a gay and magnificent court, and of enjoying the honours that were prepared for them, served more than any thing else to banish their scruples. * Beauvais, Boursault, and Francourt, were the first who suffered themselves to be persuaded, and they made a point of it afterwards to persuade others. Some hints for a journey to Paris had been already thrown out; these three persons strongly supported that design, and represented to the queen of Navarre, that if she refused to go upon this occasion, she would not only give offence to the king, but lose all the advantage of this favourable situation of her affairs. At first she doubted, and continued irresolute during some months, but yielding about the end of the year 1571, preparations for the journey were made the beginning of 1572, and the time of their departure fixed the month of May following.

THE huguenots, one would imagine, affected to close their eyes, that they might not see a thousand circumstances, sufficient to make the sincerity of such great promises suspected. The king and queen could not so well dissemble, but that they suffered their real sentiments to be sometimes guessed at. It was known, that Charles had one day said to Catherine, "Do I not play my part well?" To which she

Philip II. his father also put to a violent death.

of Navarre. Gervais Barbier, lord of Francourt, chancellor to the king of Navarre.

* — Beauvais, governor to the prince

answered,

1571.

Honorat, a
bastard of
Savoy, mar-
quis of Vil-
lars.

answered, "Very well, my son, but you must hold out to the end." Something also had taken air, relating to the result of the conferences held at Bayonne *, between the courts of France and Spain. The king of Navarre had been very ill received in his government of Guyenne: Bourdeaux had shut its gates against him; and the marquis de Villars, who commanded the royal army there, would neither draw off his troops, nor permit them to receive orders from the prince. In Rochelle, they were ignorant that the king had actually a naval force over all the coast, which they supposed had been destined for Holland. The citizens had moreover discovered the artifices which Strozzy †, La Garde, Lanfac, and Landereau, had made use of to gain the custody of their gates, and to seize their city. In fine, while they boasted of their exactness in maintaining the treaty of peace in its fullest extent, it was but too plain, that a great number of injuries were offered to the protestants, which the court either authorized, or dissembled the knowledge of. The chancellor de l'Hopital ‡ being inclined to punish the aggressors at Rouen, Dieppe, Orange, &c. this was the cause, together with his refusing to seal the revocation of an edict of pacification, that he was banished from court ||. Without all these instances of treachery, the huguenots, one would imagine, were sufficiently warned by the knowledge they had of Catherine's

* In 1564, the queen-mother, after having travelled through great part of the kingdom, advanced almost to Bayonne, where she had many private conferences with the duke d'Albe, who had attended the queen of Spain thither. There were appearances sufficient to make it probable, that the subject of these conferences was an alliance between the pope, France, and the house of Austria, and the means by which they should extirpate the protestant party: but there is no certainty, that the design of the massacre of Bartholomew, which was not executed till several years after, was formed there. Matthieu tells us, that the prince of Navarre being then a child, and almost continually with Catherine de Medici, heard something of the plot to exterminate all the heads of the protestant party: he gave notice of it to the queen his mother, and she to the prince of Condé and the admiral, and the rage this inspired them with, carried them

to the enterprize at Meaux. Hist. of France, vol. I. p. 283.

† Philip Strozzy: the baron de la Garde, called captain Polin: Lanfac the younger, brother of Lewis de Lufignan of St. Gelais, lord of Lanfac: and Charles Rouhault, lord of Landereau, who commanded this fleet.

‡ Michael de l'Hopital, chancellor of France. The seals were taken from him, and given to John de Morvilliers. He died in 1573.

|| I suppress two reasons drawn from the canons of the councils of Constance and Trent, from whence the author infers, that the pope, the bishops, &c. did not think themselves obliged to keep their word with heretics. M. Fleury, and our most learned ecclesiastical critics, have fully justified the conduct of the first of these councils, with regard to John Hus and Jerome of Prague; and the good faith of the second towards the protestants.

temper, as well as that of her son. Could they flatter themselves that this prince, naturally furious, and vindictive, would forget the attempt at Meaux *, the invasion of Orleans, Rouen, Bourges, Lyon, &c. Havre given up by the huguenots to the English, foreigners introduced into the heart of the kingdom, so many battles, so much blood shed? Reasons of state, that phrase so familiar with sovereigns, that under the disguise of policy they may satisfy their personal resentment, and other passions, will scarce permit them to suffer their subjects to engage in such enterprizes with impunity. Catherine, to that time, had always persisted to impute the death of her husband to them, which she could never pardon, no more than their having treated the whole family of Medicis like the enemies of Christ. Nor was there less imprudence in trusting the Parisians, whose animosity and fury against the huguenots had broke out again, in the affair of the cross of Gatine †. From all this, my father conceived such strong apprehensions, that when the report of the court of Navarre's journey to Paris first reached him, he could not give credit to it. Firmly persuaded, that the present calm would be of short continuance, he made haste to take advantage of it, in order to shut himself up immediately with all his effects in Rochelle, when every one else talked of nothing but leaving it. The queen of Navarre herself informed him more particularly of this design soon after, and requested him to join her in her way to Vendome. My

* In the year 1567, the prince of Condé, and the admiral de Coligny, formed the design of seizing Charles the IX. at Meaux, where he then was, and from whence the queen-mother made him set out precipitately at night, to return to Paris. This design would have been executed, but for the seasonable arrival of three thousand Swiss, who covered the king in his march, and the calvinists durst not attack him. See the historians.

† The following is the fact, as it is related by M. de Thou, book i. anno 1571. Philip Gatine, a rich merchant of St. Denis street, having some years before been convicted of lending his house to the huguenots, to serve them for a church, he was, by the parliament of Paris, condemned to be hanged or burnt the 30th of July. His house was demolished, and in its place a pillar was erected, in the form of a cross, which

was afterwards called the cross of Gatine. With the edict of pacification, passed in the year 1570, the calvinists obtained, that this cross should be thrown down, which after some delay was at last executed; but it occasioned such violent tumults amongst the populace, that the council was obliged to send some troops thither, under the command of the duke de Montmorency. Felibien, in the second volume of his History of the city of Paris, says, that this cross was replaced at the entry of the church-yard of the Innocents, after the iron plate, upon which the decree of the parliament was engraved, had been taken away; and it is still to be seen there. Sauval, vol. II. book viii. of the Antiquities of Paris, mentions the place where this house stood, in the street of St. Denis, over-against the street of the Lombards, where indeed there is a hollow in the ground, which possibly might be the foundation of Gatine's house.

1572. father prepared to go; and being desirous of taking me with him, he ordered me some days before his departure, to attend him in his chamber, and no one being present but la Durandiere, my preceptor, he thus spoke to me: "Maximilian, since custom does not permit me to make you the principal heir of my estates, to balance this disadvantage, I will endeavour to enrich you with virtues; by means of which, I hope, as hath been predicted to me, you will one day distinguish yourself. Prepare, therefore, to support with fortitude whatever difficulties you may meet with in the world, and by nobly surmounting them, procure the esteem of all good men, particularly that of the master to whom I am desirous of giving you, and in whose service I recommend to you to live and die. I am going to Vendome, to meet the queen of Navarre, and the prince her son; dispose yourself to accompany me, and when I present you to him offer him your service; and, that you may express yourself gracefully, study a little speech for that purpose." Accordingly I attended him to Vendome*. He found there a general security, and an air of satisfaction on every face, which in public he durst not object to; but whenever he had an opportunity of conversing in private, either with the queen, the prince, the admiral, the counts Ludovic † and Rochefoucault, and the other protestant lords, he very freely told them, he was surprized that they had so soon forgot the many occasions that had been given them for well-grounded apprehensions; that from a reconciled enemy, excessive promises and civilities were no less suspicious, and much more dangerous, than open menaces and declared hatred: that it was hazarding still more, to expose a young prince, too little guarded against the allurements of pleasure, to the attractions of the most voluptuous court in the world. He represented to them, that instead of dreaming of an alliance so unhappy as that must necessarily be, between this prince and a princess who professed a different religion, they ought rather to have endeavoured to marry him to the queen of England, who might have assisted him in his attempts to recover the crown of Navarre, and possibly, as occasions offered, that of France likewise. He had so strong a foreboding of the fatal consequences of this French match, that he often said, if the nuptials

* Francis de Bethune, the author's father, followed the prince of Condé to the battle of Jarnac, and was there taken prisoner. An indictment of high treason was made out against him, for having borne arms against his majesty, and his estates

were seized, but were restored to him at the peace. Du Chesne.

† Or Lewis of Nassau, brother to William prince of Orange. Francis, count of Rochefoucault, and prince of Marillac, slain in the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

were

were celebrated at Paris, the bridal favours would be crimson. This prudent advice was looked upon to be the effect of weakness and timidity. My father, not willing to appear wiser than so many persons of more distinguished understandings, suffered himself, contrary to his opinion, to be driven with the torrent, and only demanded time to put himself into a condition of appearing with that splendor his rank required, in a court where every thing was magnificent. For this purpose, he again took the road to Rosny; but before he went, he presented me to the prince of Navarre, in the presence of the queen his mother, and, in my name, gave him assurances of an inviolable attachment; which I confirmed with great boldness, putting one knee to the ground. The prince raised me immediately, and after twice embracing me, had the goodness to commend the zeal which my family had always discovered for him, and, with that engaging air so natural to him, promised me his protection; a promise I at that time regarded as a mere effect of his complaisance, but which I have since seen accomplished far beyond my hopes and merit. I did not return with my father to Rosny, but went to Paris in the queen of Navarre's train. As soon as I arrived, sensible of the necessity my youth had of instruction, I applied myself closely to my studies, without neglecting, however, to make my court to the prince my master. I lived with a governor and valet de chambre, at a distance from the court, in a quarter of Paris, where almost all the colleges stood, and continued there till the bloody catastrophe, which happened a short time after.

NOTHING could be more kind than the reception the queen of Navarre, her children, and principal servants met with from the king, and queen mother, nor more obliging than their treatment of them; Charles IX. continually praising the virtues and good qualities of the count de la Rochefoucault, de Têligny, Refnel *, Beau-difner, Piles, Pluviaut, Colombières, Grammont, Duras, Bouchavannes, Gamache, my father, and other protestant lords. The admiral he always called father, and took upon himself the care of reconciling him with the princes of the house of Guise. To him also he granted the pardon

* Antony de Clermont, marquis of Refnel; Galiot de Cruſol, lord of Beaudifner, brother to the duke d'Uzès; Armand de Clermont, baron of Piles, in Perigord; N— de Rochefort, lord of Pluviaut Claveau, a gentleman of Poitevin; Francis

de Brièquville de Colombières; Antony de Grammont, viscount d'Aster; John de Durefort, viscount Duras; Bayancort, lord of Bouchavannes; Nicholas Rouhaut, lord of Gamache.

1572.

of Villandry*, which he had denied to his own mother and his brothers, his crime being thought too great for forgiveness. When the admiral was wounded, the king, at the first news he heard of it, broke into oaths and threatenings; and declared, that the assassin † should be

* Villandry being one day at play with the king, was so rash as to commit some offence against majesty itself, for which he was sentenced to be put to death. Davila, book v. See d'Aubigné, who relates this fact more particularly, vol. II. book i. ch. 2.

† He was called Nicholas de Louviers, lord of Maurevert in Brie. "Must I," said Charles IX. throwing his racket at him in a rage, "be perpetually troubled with new broils? shall I never have any quiet?" Many persons have doubted, whether these threatenings of Charles, and his violent transports of rage, were not sincere; and whether this prince, who had at first entered into all the designs of the queen his mother, did not suffer himself at last to be gained by the admiral de Coligny, in those private conversations they had together, in which the admiral never ceased to represent to him the fatal consequences of this princess's bad government, and to exhort him to shake off his dependence on her. Villeroy's Memoirs of state, vol. II. p. 55, and 66, and many other writers of those times, produce such strong proofs of this fact, that it is very difficult to decide upon the question. If the Memoirs of Tavannes may be relied on, Charles IX. and his mother agreed so ill, that this princess saw no other means of preserving her authority, which she was upon the point of losing, than by causing the admiral to be assassinated; and this writer pretends, that Maurevert was furnished, unknown to the king, to strike the blow. On the other side, the historian Matthieu believes he has sufficient reason to maintain, vol. I. book vi. that Charles IX. deceived the admiral from first to last. He relates, that this prince observing the opposition some of his counsellors gave to the design of extirpating the huguenots, represented to them in a rage,

that the kingdom was lost if their plot was not executed that same night, for a longer delay would put it out of their power to prevent the schemes the huguenots were forming; who, he told them, were well acquainted with their design. He added, that those who did not approve of his resolution, would never be considered by him as his servants.

But this historian does not perceive that a few pages after, he himself lessens the weight of these proofs, by relating a conversation that passed between Henry III. and his physician Miron, in Poland; of which the following is an abridgment, for it is too long to be inserted here at length. Henry III. then duke of Anjou, going, some days before the massacre of St. Bartholomew, into the chamber of the king his brother, observed, that this prince looked upon him with eyes so full of rage, and such indications of fury in his air, that apprehending the consequence of these violent emotions, he softly regained the door, and hurried immediately to give the alarm to the queen-mother. She, from what had happened to herself, being but too much disposed to believe it, resolved to get rid of Coligny without further delay. Maurevert having partly failed in his attempt, since he only wounded the admiral in the arm, the queen-mother and the duke of Anjou, finding they could not hinder the king from visiting him, thought it necessary to accompany him, and, under pretence of sparing the admiral's strength, interrupted, as often as they could, the private conversation they held together. During this visit, Catherine, who was surrounded with calvinists, observed, that they frequently whispered to each other, and looked on her from time to time with very suspicious eyes. This adventure, she acknowledged, was the most dangerous of all she had

sought

fought for in the most secret recesses of the palaces of the Guises. He made all the court, after his example, visit the wounded person; and when the Guises came to intreat that he would condescend to hear their justification, he gave them a very unfavourable reception. The Spanish ambassador was on this occasion so ill treated, that he thought fit to withdraw: nor could pope Pius V. escape the resentment of Charles, he having refused to give the necessary dispensation for Henry's marriage with the princess Margaret, for which the most magnificent preparations were then making. The king carried his respect for this prince so far, as to dispense with his going into the church

1572.

ever been engaged in. As they returned, she pressed the king so vehemently to tell her the subject of his private discourse with the admiral, that this prince could not hinder himself from betraying it, by telling her, with his usual oath, that she spoiled all his affairs, or some words to that purpose. Catherine, now more alarmed than before, had recourse to an artifice that succeeded. She told her son, that he was ready to fall into the snare the admiral had prepared for him; that he was upon the point of being delivered up to the huguenots, combined with foreigners; and had nothing to hope for from his catholic subjects, who, through disgust at finding themselves betrayed, had chosen another leader. All the other counsellors, excepting only the marshal de Retz, seconded her arguments so strongly, that Charles himself being seized with fear, and passing from one extreme to the other, was the first to resolve, and even press, not only the murder of the admiral, but of all the huguenots; to the end, said he, that there may not one be left to reproach me. All the rest of that day, and the following night, they consulted upon the means of executing this design. At break of day, Charles, the queen-mother, and the duke of Anjou, went to the gate of the Louvre, and hearing a pistol go off, fear and remorse seized them. The king sent orders to the duke of Guise, to proceed no farther. To which the duke replied, his orders had come too late: and they recovering from

their consternation, joined in every thing that was afterwards performed.

'Tis possible, I think, to reconcile these different opinions, and preserve to the proofs alledged on each part all their force, by saying, that Charles IX. who certainly invited the admiral to Paris with no other view than to have him murdered with the rest of the huguenots, suffered himself to be shaken by his arguments; and that he embraced alternately propositions from each of the contending parties; and from their different reasons, was thrown into a state of irresolution, from whence he was only freed by the natural impetuosity of his disposition, which Catherine well knew how to take advantage of. Coligny's security proceeded from his not being able to doubt the efficacy of his arguments on the mind of this prince; otherwise, it would not have been possible for Charles to have so long imposed upon a man of the admiral's great prudence and sagacity. A young king of three and twenty years of age, who till then had been almost always governed by others, was not capable of that deep policy which they have had the complaisance to attribute to him: however, it must be confessed, that this young prince already carried dissimulation to its utmost height, of which his having never discovered the secrets of his council, or those of the admiral, to each other, although strongly pressed to it, is an incontestable proof.

1572.
Charles de
Bourbon,
cardinal,
uncle to
Henry IV.

of Notre-dame*, and even with observing any of the romish ceremonies. The cardinal de Bourbon making some remonstrances upon these tolerations, which to him seemed to exceed all bounds, was dismissed with a severe reprimand: and when the queen of Navarre died, the whole court appeared sensibly affected, and went into deep mourning. In a word, it is not passing too harsh a censure upon this conduct of Catherine and her son, to call it almost an incredible prodigy of dissimulation; since a man of the admiral de Coligny's great wisdom fell into the snare, notwithstanding a thousand circumstances concurred to make him apprehend the danger that was approaching: for it was loudly said, that Genlis and La Nouë †, who had been sent to the assistance of the prince of Orange, were defeated with the connivance of the French court; which, whilst uncertain of success in the principal object of its dissimulation, was not willing to hazard all the consequences which that dissimulation might produce.

Albert de
Gondy,
duke of
Retz, mar-
chal of
France.

THEY were also informed of the conferences which the queen-mother, and the principal ministers, held with cardinal Alexandrin, nephew of pope Pius V. and with the Guises; who were twice discovered conversing in masks with the king, the queen-mother, the duke de Retz, and the chancellor de Birague ‡: this was sufficient

* "The king, says le Grain, was resolved that the marriage should not be celebrated in a manner wholly conformable to neither religion. Not to the calvinist, because the vows were to be received by a priest, who was to be the cardinal of Bourbon; nor to the romish, because these vows were to be received without the sacramental ceremonies of the church.

"A great scaffold was erected in the court before the principal gate and entry of the church of Paris, on Monday August the 18th, 1572, upon which were betrothed and married on the same day, and by a single act, The most high, &c. This done, the bridegroom retired to meeting to hear a sermon, and the bride went into the church to hear mass, according to the articles of the treaty of marriage; after which, they both came to the entertainment prepared for them in the great hall of

"the palace," &c. B. le Grain, Dec. of Henry the great, book ii.

Charles the ninth gave his sister three hundred thousand crowns for a portion; and the queen of Navarre yielded the Upper and Low Counties of Armagnac, &c. to her son at his marriage. F. Matthieu, vol. I. book vi.

† John d'Angest d'Ivoy, of the ancient house of Genlis. Francis de la Nouë, a gentleman of the greatest reputation in the protestant party, and esteemed even by the catholics themselves. The admiral speaking of this misfortune to Charles the ninth, attributed it to the secret being but ill kept in the council. Charles demanded of the duke of Albe, by Claude Mondoucet his resident in the Low Countries, the French protestant gentlemen, who had been taken prisoners. De Thou, anno 1572, book li.

‡ René de Birague, a Milanese, bishop of Lavaur, afterwards cardinal. He

to

to shew what they ought to think of their pretended disgrace. In the death of the queen of Navarre *, they perceived plain indications of poison. It never was doubted, but that the wound the admiral received came from the house of Villemur, preceptor to the Guises; and the assassin was met in his flight, upon a horse belonging to the king's stable. Even the guards that Charles † (under pretence of securing the admiral's person from the like attempts) placed about him, were almost all his declared enemies; nor was it less certain, that all the citizens of Paris were furnished with arms, which by the king's order they kept in their houses.

1572.

was at that time only keeper of the seals, and was not made chancellor till the following year, after the death of the chancellor de l'Hôpital. See his elogium in the negotiations of Busboq. Aug. Gift. Busbequii Epif. 29. Of him it was said, that he was cardinal without a title, chancellor without seals, and priest without a benefice.

* Her lodgings were in the palace of Charles Gaillart, bishop of Chartres, a man violently suspected of calvinism. Soon after her return from Blois, whither she had followed the court, she was seized with a fever, and died on the fifth day of her illness. Many different opinions prevailed concerning the manner of her death. The Memoirs of l'Etoile, d'Aubigné, and all the calvinists, attribute it to poison, which they say was given her in a pair of gloves by a Florentine, named Rene, perfumer to the queen-mother. De Serres, in his Memoirs, gives us to understand, that the physicians who opened her body, had orders not to touch her brain, which was supposed to be affected by the poison: but they are all contradicted by le Grain, and several others, who maintain, that she died of a pleurisy, occasioned by her being over-heated in making preparations for the nuptials of her son: to which was added, the vexation she conceived at being obliged to kneel to the holy sacrament as it passed before her house, on Corpus Christi day. La Popeliniere, Perfixe, and De Thou, endeavour to remove all suspicions

of poison. The last mentioned assures us, that Charles IX. ordered the head of this princess to be opened, as well as the rest of her body; and if the physicians did not do it, it was because they found the true cause of her death in an abscess she had in her body. This is also the opinion of Matthieu the historian.

† This is all true, and proves that the queen-mother, and not the king, was the designer of this stratagem. 'Tis hard to say, what was her real intention by this stroke; whether she sought to get rid of a man who possessed too much power over the king's mind, and was capable of ruining her design of extirpating all the huguenots; or whether, if the admiral had died of this wound, she would have confined her vengeance to his single death; or lastly, whether she expected the noise of this assassination would excite the calvinists in Paris to revolt, and by that means furnish her with the occasion she wanted to fall upon them, for which her party was already prepared. In the council, many expedients to give a pretence for attacking them were proposed; amongst others, the assault of an artificial fort built in the Louvre, which would afford them an opportunity of turning the feigned slaughter into a real one against the huguenots; at last, they resolved to put them all to the sword in the night.

The admiral lodged in the street Betisy in an inn, which is called at present the Hozel S. Pierre. The chamber where he was murdered is still shewn there.

THE

1572.

THE most clear-sighted amongst the huguenots, yielding to proofs so convincing, quitted the court, and Paris itself, or at least lodged in the suburbs. Of this number were Mess. de Langoiran *, de Frontenay, the viscount de Chartres, de Loncaunay, de Rabodanges, du Breuil, de Segur, de Sey, du Touchet, des Hayes, de Saint Gelais, de Chouppes, de Beauvais, de Grandrie, de Saint Estienne, d'Arnes, de Boissic, and many other gentlemen of Normandy and Poitou. Happily my father was one of those, whose life was preserved by a wife and prudent distrust. When he was pressed to come nearer the court, he replied, that he found the air of the suburbs agreed better with his constitution, and that of the fields was still more advantageous for it. When they were informed that the bishop of Valence, in taking leave of the king for his embassy to Poland, had penetrated into the secret, and been indiscreet enough to reveal it to some of his friends, and that they had intercepted letters sent to Rome by the cardinal de Pellevé †, in which he unfolded the whole mystery to the cardinal de Lorraine; it was then that these gentlemen renewed their intreaties to the king of Navarre, that he would either leave Paris, or permit them to retire to their own houses. To this advice the prince opposed that which had been given him by a great many other persons, and some even of the protestant party; for where are not traitors to be found? They warned him to be cautious, they told him the names of all those who had been gained by the queen-mother to deceive him. He listened to nothing. The ad-

Jean de
Montluc,
bishop of
Valence.

* N— de Montferrant, baron of Langoiran. John de Rohan, lord of Frontenay. John de Ferrieres, viscount of Chartres. N— de Loncaunay, a gentleman of Normandy, slain at the battle of Yvry, at seventy years of age. N— de Rabodanges. In the manuscripts in the king's library, N° 8699. p. 31, may be seen the original of a letter of Charles the ninth to M. de Rabodanges, dated from St. Maur, May 6, 1566, which begins thus, " Monsieur de Rabodanges, I know with what fidelity you have acted on occasion of the commission which I delivered you some time ago, to punish the vagabonds and robbers of your country."

N— de Segur de Pardaillen. N— de Touchet, a gentleman of Normandy,

near Domfront. N— des Hayes Gafque. Guy de Lusignan of St. Gelais, son to Lewis lord of Lansac. Peter de Chouppes. John de la Fin, lord of Beauvais la Noelle. Peter de Grandrie, steward in ordinary of the king's household, &c. All these persons earnestly pressed the admiral to leave Paris: " By doing so," he replied, " I must shew either fear or distrust. My honour would be injured by the one, by the other the king. I should be again obliged to have recourse to a civil war; and I would rather die than see again the miseries I have seen, and suffer the distress I have already suffered." Matthieu, vol. I. book vi. p. 343.
† Nicolas de Pellevé, cardinal, archbishop of Rheims, passionately devoted to the league. Charles, cardinal of Lorraine.

miral

miral * appeared no less incredulous: his bad destiny began by blinding him to lead him to his ruin. It would have been happy, if he had acted with the same prudence that the marshal de Montmorency did; who could never be drawn from Chantilly, notwithstanding repeated invitations from the king, who prest him to come and partake his favour with the admiral, and be near his person, to assist him with his advice.

If I was inclined to increase the general horror, inspired by an action † so barbarous as that perpetrated on the 24th of August, 1572,

* It has been said, that all the great actions which the admiral Coligny performed in his life, were against his God, his religion, his country, and his king; how much is it to be lamented, that he did not employ his talents more usefully! All the historians agree in saying, he was the most consummate politician, and greatest warrior that ever appeared. 'Tis thought that it was in consequence of the advice he gave to the prince of Orange, that the Low Countries rebelled against Spain, maintained the war during ten years, and formed the plan of a republic, which in part has succeeded. It is also believed, and not without probability, that he would have made a like attempt in France. In Villeroy's Memoirs, vol. IV. p. 322, 340. he is accused with great violence, but he always steadily denied, particularly in his last will, his ever having any intention of attempting the person of the king. See his eulogium, and political designs in Brantome, vol. III. De Thou, and the other historians.

† What M. de Sully says of the massacre ought not to be thought too severe: "An execrable action, cries Perefice, that never had, and I trust God never will have, its like." Pope Pius V. was so much afflicted at it, that he shed tears; but Gregory XIII. who succeeded him, ordered a public thanksgiving to God for this massacre to be offered at Rome, and sent a legate to congratulate Charles IX. and to exhort him to continue it. The following is a short account of this mas-

sacre: All the necessary measures having been taken, the ringing of the bells of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, for matins, was the signal for beginning the slaughter. The admiral de Coligny was first murdered, in the midst of his servants, by Beimes, a French gentleman, and a domestic of the duke of Guise; the duke himself, and the chevalier de Guise staying below in the court. His body was thrown out of the window. They cut off his head, and carried it to the queen-mother, together with his box of papers; among which, 'tis said, they found the memoirs of his own times, composed by himself. After they had offered all sorts of indignities to the bleeding carcase, it was hung on the gibbet of Montfaucon, whence the marshal de Montmorency caused it to be taken down in the night, and buried at Chantilly. The whole house of Guise had been personally animated against the admiral, ever since the assassination of Claude duke of Guise, by Poltrot de Meré, whom they believed to have been incited to this crime by him; and 'tis certain, the admiral was never able to clear himself of this imputation. If this cruel slaughter (as many people are fully persuaded) was only an effect of the Guises' resentment, who advised the queen-mother to it with a view of revenging their own injuries; it must be confessed, that no particular person ever drew so severe a vengeance for an offence. All the domestics of the admiral were afterwards slain; and the slaughter was at the same time begun by the king's emissaries

1572.

and too well known by the name of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, I should in this piece enlarge upon the number, the quality, the virtues, and great talents of those who were inhumanly murdered on this horrible day, as well in Paris as in every part of the kingdom: I should mention at least the ignominious treatment, the fiendlike cruelty, and savage insults these miserable victims suffered from their butchers, and which in death were a thousand times more terrible than death itself. I have writings still in my hands, which would confirm the report of the court of France having made the most pressing instances to the neighbouring courts to follow its example with regard to the protestants, or at least to refuse an asylum to those unfortunate people; but I prefer the honour of the nation to the satisfying a malignant pleasure, which many persons would take in lengthening out a recital, wherein might be found the names of those who were so lost to humanity, as to dip their hands in the blood of their fellow-citizens, and even their own relations. I would, were it in my power, for ever obliterate the memory of a day that divine vengeance made France groan for, by a continued succession of miseries, blood, and horror, during six and twenty years; for it is not possible to judge otherwise, if one reflects on all that passed from that fatal moment till the peace of 1598. 'Tis with regret that I cannot omit what happened upon this occasion to the prince, who is the subject of these Memoirs, and to myself.

ries in all parts of the city. The most distinguished of the calvinists that perished, were Francis de la Rochefoucault, who having been at play part of the night with the king, and finding himself seized in bed by men in masques, thought it was the king and his courtiers, who came to divert themselves with him. Antony de Clermont, marquis de Resnel, was murdered by his own kinsman Lewis de Clermont, of Buffly d'Amboise, with whom he was then at law for the inarquisate of Clermont. Charles de Quellence, baron of Pont in Bretagne, whose dead body excited the curiosity of the ladies of the court, on account of a process carried on by his wife, Catherine de Parthenay, daughter and heiress of Jehu de Soubize. Francis Nonpar de Caumont, was murdered in his bed, betwixt his two sons; one of them was stabbed by his side, but the

other, by counterfeiting himself dead, and lying concealed under the bodies of his father and brother, escaped. Taligny, son-in-law to the admiral; Charles de Beaumanoir de Lavardin; Antony de Marasin, lord of Guerchy; Beaudissier, Pluviaux, Berny, du Briou, governor to the marquis of Conti; Beauvais, governor to the king of Navarre; Colombieres, Francourt, &c. The count of Montgomery was pursued by the duke of Guise as far as Montfort l'Amaury. The king pardoned the viscounts of Grammont and Duras, and Gamache and Bouchavannes: the three brothers of the marechal de Montmorency were also spared, through fear that he might hereafter revenge their death. See the historians and other writers, and that fine description of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, by M. de Voltaire in his *Henriade*, Canto second.

1572.

I WAS in bed, and awaked from sleep three hours after midnight, by the sound of all the bells, and the confused cries of the populace. My governor St. Julian, with my valet de chambre, went hastily out to know the cause; and I never afterwards heard more of these men, who without doubt were amongst the first that were sacrificed to the public fury. I continued alone in my chamber dressing myself, when in a few moments I saw my landlord enter, pale, and in the utmost consternation: he was of the reformed religion, and having learned what the matter was, had consented to go to mass, to save his life, and preserve his house from being pillaged. He came to persuade me to do the same, and to take me with him. I did not think proper to follow him, but resolved to try if I could gain the college of Burgundy, where I had studied: though the great distance between the house where I then was, and the college, made the attempt very dangerous. Having disguised myself in a scholar's gown, I put a large prayer-book under my arm, and went into the street. I was seized with horror inexpressible, at the sight of the furious murderers; who running from all parts, forced open the houses, and cried aloud, "Kill, kill, massacre the huguenots:" the blood which I saw shed before my eyes redoubled my terror. I fell into the midst of a body of guards; they stopped me, interrogated me, and were beginning to use me ill, when, happily for me, the book that I carried was perceived, and served me for a passport. Twice after this I fell into the same danger, from which I extricated myself with the same good fortune. At last I arrived at the college of Burgundy, where a danger still greater than any I had yet met with, waited me. The porter having twice refused me entrance, I continued standing in the midst of the street, at the mercy of the furious murderers, whose numbers increased every moment, and who were evidently seeking for their prey, when it came into my mind to ask for La Faye, the principal of this college, a good man, by whom I was tenderly beloved. The porter, prevailed upon by some small pieces of money which I put into his hand, admitted me; and my friend carried me to his apartment, where two inhuman priests, whom I heard mention Sicilian vespers, wanted to force me from him, that they might cut me in pieces, saying the order was, not to spare even infants at the breast. All the good man could do, was to conduct me privately to a distant chamber, where he locked me up. Here I was confined three days, uncertain of my destiny; and saw no one but a servant of my friend's, who came from time to time to bring me provisions.

1572.

AT the end of these three days, the prohibition for murdering, and pillaging any more of the protestants, being published, I was suffered to leave my cell; and immediately after I saw Ferriere and la Vieville, two soldiers of the guard, who were my father's creatures, enter the college. They were armed, and came, without doubt, to rescue me by force wherever they should find me. They gave my father a relation of what had happened to me; and eight days afterwards I received a letter from him, in which he expressed the fears he had suffered on my account, and advised me to continue in Paris, since the prince I served was not at liberty to quit it. He added, that to avoid exposing myself to an evident danger, it was necessary I should resolve to follow that prince's example, and to go to mass. In effect, the king of Navarre had found no other means of saving his life. He was awaked, with the prince of Condé, two hours before day, by a great number of soldiers, who rushed boldly into a chamber, in the Louvre, where they lay, and insolently commanded them to dress themselves, and attend the king. They would not suffer the two princes to take their swords with them; who, as they passed, beheld several of their gentlemen * massacred before their eyes. The king waited for them, and received them with a countenance and eyes in which fury was visibly painted: he ordered them, with oaths and blasphemies, which were familiar with him, to quit a religion that had been only taken up, he said, to serve them for a cloak to their rebellion. The condition to which these princes † were reduced, could not hinder them from discovering that they should obey him with grief. The king, transported with anger, told them, in a fierce and haughty tone, " That he would no longer be contradicted in his opinions by his subjects; that they, by their example, should teach others to revere him as the image of God,

* James de Segur, baron of Pardaillan, a Gascon; Armand de Clermont, baron of Piles, a Perigordin, &c. Gaston de Levis, lord of Leyran, took refuge under the queen of Navarre's bed, who saved his life. Some persons were sent to Châtillon, to seize Francis de Châtillon the admiral's son, and Guy d'Andelot's son, but they both escaped, and fled to Geneva. Armand de Gontault de Biron was saved by fortifying himself in the arsenal.

† As Henry went to the king, Cath-

rine gave orders that they should lead him under the vaults, and make him pass through the guards drawn up in files on each side, in menacing postures. He trembled and recoiled two or three steps back, when immediately Nançai-la-Chartre, captain of the guards, endeavoured to remove his apprehensions, by swearing they should do him no hurt. Henry, tho' he gave but little credit to his words, was obliged to go on amidst the carabines and halberts. Prefixe's history of Henry the great.

“ and

“and cease to be enemies to the images of his mother.” He ended by declaring, that if they did not go to mass, he would treat them as criminals guilty of treason against human and divine majesty. The manner in which these words were pronounced, not suffering the princes to doubt if they were sincere, they yielded to necessity, and performed what was required of them. Henry was obliged even to send an edict into his dominions, by which the exercise of any other religion but the romish was forbid. Tho’ this submission preserved his life, yet in other things he was not better treated; and he suffered a thousand capricious insults from the court: free by intervals, but more often closely confined, and treated as a criminal, his domestics sometimes permitted to attend him, then all on a sudden not suffered to appear.

1572.

As for me, I employed this leisure in the most advantageous manner I was able. I had it no longer in my choice to prosecute my study of the learned languages, nor of whatever is called learning: this application, which my father had strongly recommended to me, became impracticable from the moment I lived in the court. It was with regret that I parted with an excellent preceptor, to whose care he had intrusted my education; he himself perceiving he could be no longer useful to me, asked leave to retire. From his hands I passed into those of a man named Chrétien, whom the king of Navarre kept in his train, and who was ordered by him to teach me mathematics and history; two sciences that soon consoled me for those I renounced, because I felt an inclination for them, which I have ever since preserved: the rest of my time was employed in learning to write and read well, and in performing all those exercises that give ease and gracefulness to the person. It was in these principles, to which a still greater attention to form the manners was joined, that that method of educating youth consisted, which was known to be peculiar to the king of Navarre, for he himself had been brought up in that manner. I continued to follow it till I was sixteen years of age, when the situation of affairs throwing both him and me into the tumults of arms, from which we had no hope of being freed, to these exercises those only that related to war succeeded; which I began by learning to shoot, and renounced all others. In such circumstances all that a young man can do, is to improve his morals, if he cannot his genius; for even the hurry and confusion of arms offer excellent schools of virtue and politeness to him that is desirous of profiting by them: but miserable, and that during his whole life, is he, who engages in a profession so fatal to youth, without having strength or inclination to resist bad examples:

though

1572.

though he should have the good fortune to preserve himself from being tainted with any shameful vice, how will he be able to instruct and fortify his heart in these principles, which wisdom dictates as well to a private man as a prince, but by making virtue habitual by practice? so that any good action may never become painful, and that, if reduced to a necessity of saving all by a crime, or losing all by a virtuous action, he may find his duty and inclination the same.

IT was not long before Charles felt the most violent remorse for the barbarous action to which they had forced him to give the sanction of his name and authority. From the evening of the 24th of August, he was observed to groan involuntarily at the recital of a thousand strokes of cruelty, which every one boasted of in his presence. Of all those who were about the person of this prince, none possessed so great a share of his confidence, as Ambrose Paré, his surgeon. This man, though a huguenot, lived with him in so great a degree of familiarity, that, on the day of the massacre, Charles telling him, the time was now come when the whole kingdom would be catholics; he replied, without being alarmed, "By the light of God, sire, I cannot believe that you have forgot your promise never to command me to do four things, namely, to enter into my mother's womb, to be present in the day of battle, to quit your service, or to go to mass." The king soon after took him aside, and disclosed to him freely the trouble of his soul: "Ambrose, said he, I know not what has happened to me these two or three days past, but I feel my mind and body as much at enmity with each other, as if I was seized with a fever: sleeping, or waking, the murdered huguenots seem ever present to my eyes, with ghastly faces, and weltering in blood. I wish the innocent and helpless had been spared." The order which was published the following day, forbidding the continuance of the massacre, was in consequence of this conversation.

THE king hoped to retrieve his honour, by publicly disavowing all that had been done. In the letters patent which he sent into the provinces, he threw all upon the Guises, and would have had the massacre pass for an effect of their hatred to the admiral. The private letters he wrote on this subject to England, Germany, Switzerland, and other neighbouring states, were all conceived in the same terms.

IT is not to be doubted, but the queen-mother, and her council, made the king comprehend the bad consequence of so formal a disavowal;

vowal; for, at the end of eight days, his sentiments and language were so much changed, that he went to hold his bed of justice in the parliament, and ordered other letters patent to be registered, which declared, that nothing was acted on the 24th of August but by his express commands *, and to punish the huguenots; to each of the principals of which party a capital crime was imputed, in order, if possible, to give the name and colour of a just execution to that detestable butchery. These letters were addressed to the governors of provinces, with orders to publish them, and pursue the rest of the pretended guilty. I ought here to make honourable mention of the counts de Tende †, and de Charny; of messieurs de Mandelot, de Gordes, de Saint Heran, and de Carouge, who boldly refused to execute such orders in their governments. The viscount d'Ortez, governor of Baïonne, had resolution enough to answer Charles IX. who wrote to him with his own hand, "That on this point he must not expect any obedience from him."

1572.

The number of protestants massacred, during eight days, over all the kingdom, amounted to seventy thousand. This cruel blow struck the party with such terror, that believing itself wholly extinct, nothing was

* Nothing is more certain, than that he was seen with a carabine in his hand during the massacre, which, 'tis said, he fired upon the calvinists that were flying. The last marechal de Tessé, in his youth, was acquainted with an old man of ninety years of age, who had been page to Charles IX. and often told him, that he himself had loaded that carabine. 'Tis also true, that this prince went with his court to view the body of the admiral, which hung by the feet with a chain of iron to the gallows of Montfaucon; and one of his courtiers observing it smelt ill, Charles replied, as Vitellius had done before him, "The body of a dead enemy always smells well." These two anecdotes I relate after the author of the *Henriade*, in his notes, p. 32 and 37.

† Claude de Savoy, count of Tende, saved the lives of all the protestants in Dauphiny. When he received the king's letter, by which he was directed to destroy them, he said, That could not be his majesty's order. Eleonor de Chabot, count of Charny, lieutenant general in Bur-

gundy: there was only one calvinist murdered at Dijon. Francis de Mandelot, governor of Lyon: he was resolved to save the protestants, nevertheless they were all massacred in the prisons where he had put them for security. He is said, by M. de Thou, to have only feigned ignorance of this barbarity. Bertrand de Simiane, lord of Gordes, a man in great esteem. N— de S. Heran de Montmorin, governor of Auvergne: he positively refused to obey, unless the king was present in person. Tanneguy le Veneur, governor of Normandy, an honest humane man; he did all that lay in his power to preserve the protestants at Rouen, but he was not master of it. N— viscount d'Ortez, governor of all that frontier. See his answer to the king. "Sire, I have communicated your majesty's order to your faithful inhabitants, and to the troops in the garrison; I found there good citizens, and brave soldiers, but not one executioner." &c. De Thou, book lii. and liii. D'Aubigné, vol. II. book i. &c.

talked

1572.

Blaife de
Muntluc,
marchal of
France.

talked of but submitting, or flying into foreign countries. A bold and vigorous stroke for once broke this resolution. * Renier, a gentleman of the reformed religion, having by a kind of miracle escaped out of the hands of the lord de Vezins, his most cruel enemy, saved himself, with the viscount de Gourdon, and about eighty horse, and came to Montauban. He found this city under such a consternation, and so little in a condition to defend itself against the troops of Montluc, who were approaching, that, having ventured to advise the inhabitants to hold out, he himself had like to have been delivered up to Montluc; which obliging him to leave Montauban precipitately, his little troop fell in with a squadron of 450 horse, belonging to the army of Montluc; and, being desirous of dying nobly, performed such wonderful acts of valour, that they were all cut in pieces. Renier returned to Montauban with this good news; he was now obeyed, and they shut the gates upon Montluc. This resistance, and the resolution of Montauban spreading about, thirty towns followed its example, and behaving in a manner the protestants had not dared to hope for, obliged the catholics to keep themselves upon the defensive.

THE catholics immediately turned all their forces against Rochelle and Sancerre, which, taking advantage of the general fear, they had invested. These enterprizes did not succeed: Sancerre, after having suffered all the horrors of a famine, of which no history can furnish us with examples, at last concluded a sort of treaty with the besiegers; but Rochelle held out, and baffled all the duke of Anjou's efforts †, who had in person come to besiege it. The election for the throne of Poland happened very opportunely to save the honour of this prince; and by a treaty, in which Nîmes and Montauban were comprehended, Rochelle preserved all its privileges: and these were the only cities which kept entire all the advantages of the last edicts.

* Here is an error in the Memoirs of Sully: it was Vezins himself, a man of great honesty, but of harsh manners, that saved the life of Renier, whose enemy he had a long time been, and still continued to be, notwithstanding this action. See this remarkable history in M. de Thou, book lii.

† The marchal de Montluc, in his Commentaries, finds great fault with the conduct of this siege, that they did not send troops enough, carried on the assaults im-

properly, hazarded too much, and suffered victuals to be brought into the place by sea; however, he says, it would have been taken at last. He advised the queen-mother, from the time she went to Baïonne, to take possession of this city: it would have saved France both men and money had this advice been followed. See a relation of the sieges of Rochelle, and Sancerre, in d'Aubigné, vol. II. book i. La Popeliniere, book xxxiii. and Matthieu, vol. I. p. 340. and other historians.

TIME

TIME also produced other favourable conjunctures for the calvinists. The queen mother, of all her children, felt only a true affection for the duke of Anjou. The departure of this prince for Poland gave her as much grief as it occasioned joy to his two brothers, king Charles and the duke of Alençon; the last of whom, by his brother's removal, becoming duke of Anjou, began to entertain great hopes of the crown of France, when he reflected that Charles had no children, and that his weak state of health was changed into a mortal disease. The opposition he thought there was reason to apprehend the queen-mother would give to his design, wholly alienated his affections from her. This princess, by bestowing her confidence on a small number of foreigners of mean birth, who governed her finances, had made the greatest part of the nobility almost as discontented as the duke of Alençon: He privately fomented this revolt, and persuaded them to apply to the protestants for assistance, in whose disgrace they partook. To ward off this blow, and at once to gratify the duke of Anjou, and her tenderness for the king of Poland, she began from that moment to think in earnest of marrying the first of these princes to the queen of England, and of procuring for him the sovereignty of the Low Countries: but his discontent had already produced its effect.

CHARLES, through another motive, joined in his brother's resentment against the queen their mother. The disease with which he found himself attacked, began at Vitry, whither he had accompanied the king of Poland, in appearance to do him honour, but in reality to have the pleasure of seeing him leave his kingdom. The condition to which he soon saw himself reduced, gave birth to a thousand suspicions against Catherine in his mind; so that, uniting his interest with that of the protestants, he began to shew them a great deal of favour. This principally appeared in his permitting them, notwithstanding the opposition made by the queen-mother, to send deputies to court, to declare their grievances, and propose their demands. These deputies meeting with others, who came from the catholic provinces, who had been prevailed upon by the discontented lords to demand the suppression of certain new taxes, and a diminution during ten years of the old, they joined each other. The memorial indeed which contained their demands was signed only by four or five gentlemen, but the terms in which it was conceived shewed the most immovable steadiness in a party that seemed to derive new strength even from its losses. The queen-mother was violently enraged at it; but the king not suffering her to exert any authority upon this occasion, all she

1572.

1573.

1574.

Gabriel,
count of
Montgo-
mery, the
same that
wounded
Henry II.

could do was to make use of delays till the death of this prince, which she foresaw was not far distant. The protestants penetrated into her designs; and, that they might not be prevented, appeared suddenly in arms. This was called the rebellion of Shrove Tuesday, because they possessed themselves of several towns on that day *. Montgomery returned from England to Normandy, where he fortified himself. The queen-mother, and the whole court, was then at St. Germain-en-Laye. She was resolved, at least, to take such measures, that the princes should not escape; but the attempts that were every day made to get them out of her power, did not a little embarrass her. Guiry † and Buhy came one day to St. Germain to carry them away by force; the alarm was very great, but the conspirators not having sufficiently secured the success of their design, Catherine had time to fly with the princes to Paris; where she beheaded Coconnas ‡ and la Mole, the contrivers of the plot, and imprisoned the marshals de Montmorency and de Cossé. She afterwards placed guards about the king of Navarre and the duke of Anjou, and sent soldiers to Amiens to arrest the prince of Condé, who was there strictly watched, and bring him to Paris. The prince was informed of it, and disguising himself, deluded his spies, and the third time happily escaped to Germany; where, upon his arrival, he was declared generalissimo of the protestant troops in France.

THE queen-mother took a resolution to send all her forces against the huguenots immediately. They were divided into three armies: Matignon || led the first into Normandy, where Montgomery, having only two or three ** inconsiderable forts in his possession, was soon

* Fontenay, Lusignan, Melle, Pons, Tonnay-Charente, Talmont, Rochefort, Oriol, Livron, Orange, and other places in Poitou, Languedoc, Dauphiny, &c.

† John de Chaumont, marquis of Quiry or Guiry: Peter de Mornay, lord of Buhy, brother of Du-Plessis-Mornay. See an account of this enterprize in the life of Du-Plessis-Mornay, book i. p. 26.

‡ Joseph Boniface de-la-Mole; Hanibal, count of Coconnas, a Piedmontese. "La Mole and Coconnas were beloved by two great princeesses, [the queen of Navarre and the duchess of Nevers] love and jealousy brought them both to destruction." *Memoirs of Nevers*, vol. I. p. 75.

|| James de Matignon, marshal of France: he died in the year 1597. This nobleman, for his great qualities, deserves all the praises that M. de Thou has given him, particularly for his inviolable attachment to the person of his king; a virtue in those times very uncommon. De Thou, book lxi.

** These were Carentan, Valogne, Saint Lo, and Donfront. In this last he was taken fighting like a man in despair. D'Aubigné, who was himself a zealous protestant, cannot certainly be suspected of partiality upon this question relating to the promise given to the count by the marshal. "The place, says he, was taken, and defeated,

defeated, and obliged to deliver himself up to this marechal, who carried him to Paris, where he was beheaded. The second, commanded by the duke de Montpensier *, went to invest Fontenay, and afterwards Lufignan, which he took, notwithstanding the bravery with which the viscount de Rohan defended it. The prince † Dauphin, who commanded the third, took likewise some small places in Dauphiny; but having sat down before Livron, shamefully raised the siege. All was suspended on account of the king's death, which happened this year on Pentecost day. This prince died at the castle of Vincennes, in the most exquisite torments, and bathed in his own blood. The cruel massacre on St. Bartholomew's day was always in his mind; and he continued to the last, by his tears and agonies, to shew the grief and remorse he felt for it ‡. The cardinal of Lorraine || died also on the 23d of December, this year, in the pope's territories; a day made remarkable by the most terrible storm that ever was known.

THE king of Poland was informed of his brother's death in thirteen days, and the night after the news was brought him, he stole out of the

“ life was promised to all but the count,
 “ to whom artful assurances were given,
 “ that he should not be delivered into any
 “ other hands than the king's. This I
 “ am convinced of, notwithstanding the
 “ contrary has been written. France is
 “ guilty of but too many perjuries, there
 “ is no occasion to invent any to charge
 “ her with,” &c. vol. II. book ii. chap. vii.
 Montgomery submitted to his fate like a
 hero. De Thou, Brantome, &c.

* Francis of Bourbon. This branch of Montpensier descended from a Lewis of Bourbon, second son of John II. of Bourbon.

† Francis of Bourbon, son to the duke of Montpensier, bore this title. Memoirs of Brantome, vol. III. p. 301.

‡ He sent for the king of Navarre, in whom only he acknowledged to have found faith and honour, and most affectionately recommended to him his wife and daughter. Perefex. A little before he expired he said, he was glad he had left no children, who would have been too young to govern the state in such difficult times. Montluc, De Thou, and almost all the historians agree in saying, that if he had lived he would have been a very great

prince. He possessed, and in a great degree, courage, prudence, eloquence, œconomy, and sobriety: he loved polite literature and learned men; but he was choleric and a great swearer. He was but twenty-five years of age when he died. Many contusions were found in his body. De Thou. However, there were no proofs found of his being poisoned, as the author of the Legend of Claude duke of Guise says he was. His death proceeded from violent exercises, to which he was very much addicted, and a great quantity of bile, that often made his eyes look quite yellow. His stature was tall, but he was not strait, his shoulders were bent, his legs thin and weak, his complexion pale, his eyes ghastly, and his countenance fierce. See F. Matthieu, vol. I. book vi. and the life of this prince written in Latin by Papire Masson.

|| Charles, cardinal of Lorraine, archbishop of Rheims. See his character in the third book of Brantome's Memoirs. He died, says he, at Avignon by poison, if we may give credit to the Legend of St. Nicaise, p. 138. and most piously, according to Matthieu, who wrote his eulogium, vol. I. book vii. p. 407.

1574.

court and fled. In his journey he visited the emperor Maximilian, and Charles duke of Savoy, and took his route thro' Venice *. In all these places, they gave him advice equally wise and conformable to his interests, which was, to grant the protestants peace, and the free exercise of their religion; but, instead of complying with it, he immediately upon his arrival in France broke the truce that had been granted to them for three months, and changed it, at the solicitations of the queen-mother, into a declaration of war against the whole party; to which a great number of catholics had lately joined themselves, out of affection to the marshal de Damville †, who had been distinguished by the imprisonment of his brother.

THE king went in person to lay siege a second time to Livron, which he was likewise obliged to raise; and brought nothing away with him, but the shame of finding himself insulted from the top of the walls by the women, and even children, and hearing the most satirical and cutting reflections on the queen his mother. From this time he always appeared so different from what he had been when duke of Anjou, that it may be said with reason, his shameful flight to Avignon was at once the era of his ignominy, his kingdom's misfortunes, and his own. In his journey to Rheims, whither he went immediately after to be consecrated, he conceived a passion for one of the daughters of the count de Vaudemont ‡, and married her.

1575.

It was fortunate for him, that the duke of Anjou was all this time closely confined; but after Henry's coronation, this prince, who again quitted his title to take that of Monsieur, enjoyed, as well as the king of Navarre, a little more liberty, which was increased or lessened according to the reports that were brought of their correspondence with the enemies of the queen-mother ||. One of Catherine's other

* The reader may consult Matthieu, vol. I. upon the departure of Henry III. of Poland, and the particulars of his journey.

† Henry de Montmorency, duke of Damville, second son of the constable Anne de Montmorency.

‡ Louisa of Lorraine, daughter of Nicolas, duke of Mercœur, count of Vaudemont, and Margaret of Egmond, his first wife. Matthieu gives this princess great praises for her virtue and affection to her husband. Vol. II. book iii. p. 438.

|| Henry III. hated Monsieur, on account of his having, as he supposed, attempted to poison him. He endeavoured to persuade the king of Navarre to kill this prince, but was refused with horror. Henry III. being ill with a disorder in his ear, the king of Navarre one day said to the duke of Guise, whom he loved, "Our man is very ill." The duke answered the first time, "It will be nothing." The second, "We must think of it." And the third he said to him, "I under-
cares

cares was to disunite these two princes; which she effected, by promising each of them separately the post of lieutenant-general of the French armies, and by making use of such means as seldom fail to succeed, intrigues of gallantry, and competitions in love. Notwithstanding all her arts, Monsieur escaped at last: he deceived his guards, and fled in disguise on the evening of the 17th of September. He no sooner gained Dreux, than he saw himself attended by a numerous court, and at the head of a powerful party.

1576.

THE prince of Condé had laboured so effectually in Germany, that prince Casimir was soon in a condition to enter France with a strong army.

CATHERINE had now recourse to other stratagems; she endeavoured to regain Monsieur by the most specious offers, and pursued him from city to city, always attended by a train of young and beautiful ladies, on whom she relied still more. In a word *, she succeeded so well, that he fell at last into the snare she laid for him.

THE king of Navarre, who had given credit to her promise of making him lieutenant-general, thought himself now secure of it, and rejoiced at first that he had got rid of Monsieur, whom he always looked upon as his rival; but the ladies de Carnavelet and de Sauves drew him out of his mistake. They made him comprehend, that if one of them could pretend to this great employment, it would be Monsieur, of whose reconciliation it would be made the price; but that in reality Catherine deceived them both, and that he in particular had nothing to expect but a more rigorous captivity. This opened the prince's eyes, and he now wholly applied himself to the recovery of his liberty. The means were offered him one day in the month of February, when he was hunting near Senlis †: his guards being dispersed, he instantly passed the Seine at Poissy, gained Chateau-Neuf in Timerais, which belonged to him, where he took up some money of his farmers, and, followed only by thirty horse, arrived at Alençon, which the lord de Hertray had seized in his name. There he had a conference with Monsieur and the prince of Condé, and they agreed to

* stand you, Sir;" and striking the hilt of his sword, "This, added he, is at your service." Matthieu, vol. I. book vii. p. 418.

† They conferred together at Champigny-fur-Vade, a house belonging to the

duke of Montpensier, upon the confines of Touraine.

‡ See an account of this in d'Aubigné, vol. II. chap. xviii. Matthieu, vol. I. book vii. p. 420, &c.

1576.

unite all their forces. From Alençon the king of Navarre went to Tours; where he no sooner arrived, than he publicly resumed the exercise of the protestant religion. I was one of those who accompanied this prince in his flight, and during his whole journey. He sent me from Tours with Fervaques*, to demand the princess his sister of the court. She was delivered to us, and the second day after, she also resuming her religion, heard sermon in the calvinist church at Chateaudun, and joined the king, who waited for her at Parthenay.

According
to others,
30,000
only.

THE three princes, after uniting their troops, found themselves at the head of fifty thousand effective men, and made even Catherine tremble. A bloody war was now expected. I threw myself into the infantry, in the character of a volunteer, till an employment more suitable was given me. I made my first essay in arms in the neighbourhood of Tours, where several skirmishes happened between detachments from the different parties. The king of Navarre hearing that my behaviour had more of rashness than courage in it, ordered me to be called, and said to me, "Rofny, it is not here that I would have you hazard your life; I admire your valour, but I desire you should employ it on a better occasion." This occasion was not so near as we believed, for Catherine finding herself deficient in strength, had recourse to her usual artifices. She talked of peace; she offered more than we thought we could demand; promises cost this artful princess nothing. In a word, she had address enough to make the princes lay down their arms, and peace was concluded upon, and signed three months after. This was called Monsieur's peace †, for, besides that Catherine's principal view in making it was to gain this prince, he was so much the dupe of her artifices, that at last he wished for it, and solicited it more warmly than any other person. It must be confessed, it was a very advantageous one; however, the princes never committed a fault more irreparable than when they signed it.

* William de Hautemer, count of Grancey, lord of Fervaques, &c. marshal of France, and lieutenant-general in Normandy. He died in the year 1613, aged seventy-five years. Madame Catherine of Bourbon, afterwards duchess of Bar.

† By the edict of sixty-three articles, passed at the convent of Beaulieu near Loches in Touraine between the queen-

mother and the princes, the memory of the admiral de Coligny and the other protestant chiefs was restored, chambers of justice, composed equally of protestants and catholics, were granted in the principal parliaments, and several cities given for security. Monsieur procured also a large appennage for himself, and a considerable sum in money and jewels for prince Casimir. De Thou, d'Aubigné, &c.

To this Monsieur added a second error as considerable against his own interest; he separated from the protestants *, and by that means lost opportunities both in France and England, of becoming one of the most powerful princes perhaps in Europe. Thus all things fell out agreeable to the queen-mother's wishes, who, in making this peace, had nothing in view but the disunion of her enemies.

1576.

HENRY, upon the conclusion of the peace, retired to Rochelle, where the inhabitants, except that they offered him no canopy, paid him all the honours they could have done to the king. The catholics in this prince's train did not meet with so favourable a reception. Caumont, afterwards duke of Epemon †, was not suffered to enter the city, nor any other whom they could prove had embued his sword in the bloody slaughter of the 24th of August.

THE king of Navarre staid but a short time in this city. As soon as he demanded the accomplishment of the treaty, he became sensible of the great fault he had committed: the queen-mother denied she had promised any thing to the protestants, who were obliged to take up arms again before the expiration of the year.

I NOW quitted my first post; M. de Lavardin, my kinsman, who had a great affection for me, presented me with a pair of colours in the company he commanded. I was appointed to defend Périgueux, and afterwards Villeneuve, in Agenois, which was threatened with a siege. The king of Navarre had a design to undertake some considerable enterprizes, but the opportunity for them was lost: the greatest part of the troops upon which he relied, disappointed him, and the rest were in so bad a condition, that it was with difficulty he made two attempts, the one upon Réole, the other on St. Macary; in the last of which he failed. Favas, who conducted that of Réole, put me at the head of fifty soldiers, who entered it with very little danger. I demanded a like commission of Langoiran, to whom the assault of St. Macary was entrusted; he granted it, and joined my cousin Bethune with me: but Favas retained us in the second troop.

John de Beaumanoir de Lavardin or Lave din, marechal of France.

John Favas, called captain Favas.

* In reality Monsieur, on this occasion, sacrificed the king of Navarre and the huguenots to his interests, or his politics. In the memoirs of Nevers, vol. I. p. 90. and following, may be seen all the steps

taken by each party on occasion of this treaty.

† John Lewis de Nogaret de la Valette, duke of Epemon. He will be mentioned hereafter.

This

1576.

This I mention as an instance of the first good fortune I met with in war, for the inhabitants of St. Macary, having had notice of our design, received us so well, that not a man of the first troop, who had courage to enter, ever returned.

At the siege of Ville-Franche, in Périgord, which was afterwards carried on by Lavardin, I was exposed to a danger more considerable. During the assault, having mounted the walls with my colours, I was overthrown by the pikes and halberts into the ditch, where I lay sunk in the mud, and so entangled with my colours, that had it not been for the assistance of la Trape, my valet de chambre, and some soldiers, who helped me to get up, I must infallibly have perished. The city being forced while they were parlying on the walls, it was given up to pillage. I gained a purse of a thousand crowns in gold for my share, which an old man, who was pursued by five or six soldiers, gave me to save his life. The name of Ville-Franche recalls to my memory a very singular adventure that happened some time after. The inhabitants of this town having formed the design of seizing upon Montpazier, another little neighbouring town, by surprize, they chose for the execution of it the very same night which the citizens of Montpazier had, without knowing any thing of the matter, pitched upon to make themselves masters of Ville-Franche. Chance ordered it so, that the parties taking different ways, did not meet; all was executed with so much the less difficulty, as the walls of both towns were wholly without defence. They pillaged, they glutted themselves with booty, each thought himself happy till day appeared, and discovered the mistake. They then came to a composition, every thing was restored to its right owner, and they returned to their respective habitations. Such was the manner of making war in those times; it consisted of seizing by artifice the towns and castles of the enemy, though often those attempts produced very bloody engagements.

A town in Périgord, upon the confines of Quercy.

It must be confessed, however, that the king of Navarre was very indifferently served: his army was almost equally composed of protestants and catholics, and he often said, that his obligations were greatest to the last, for they served him disinterestedly, and through pure attachment to his person: but it was this medley of catholics and protestants that ruined his affairs. Messieurs de Turenne, de Montgomery, de Guitry, de Lésignon, de Favas, de Pardaillan, and other principal protestants, had an invincible aversion to messieurs de Lavardin, de Miossens, de Grammont, de Duras, de Saint Colombe, de Roquelaure, de Bogole, de Podins,

Lewis de Lésignon, of S. Gelais. Henry d'Albret, baron of Miossens.

de Podins, and other catholic officers. This appeared, amongst other occasions, in an affair where I was concerned: an officer named Frontenac, having treated me contemptuously on account of my youth, added, that the milk was not out of my nose. I replied, that I found myself strong enough to draw blood from his with my sword. This quarrel made a noise; and what was very extraordinary, tho' my antagonist was a catholic, and myself a protestant, yet the viscount de Turenne promised him his assistance, and that of his protestant friends against me; which M. de Lavardin being informed of, he and his catholics offered their services to me. The viscount's hatred to me, proceeded from my having taken Langoiran's part (to whom I was obliged) in a quarrel he had with that nobleman. M. de Turenne expected, that wherever he and Langoiran were together, the latter should receive orders from him as his general. Langoiran, who thought his birth equal to Turenne's, made a jest of his pretensions; and adding some strokes of raillery, spoke of Turenne as a bigot, who came over to the reformed, only because Buffy * had supplanted him in Monsieur's favour. When the quarrel was composed, I was advised to seek the friendship of Turenne. I complied, but he answered my first advances so ill, that I drew back, and we continued at a greater distance than ever.

1576.
Antony de
Buade de
Frontenac.

Henry de la
Tour, vis-
count de
Turenne,
afterwards
duke of
Bouillon.

THIS animosity between the parties gave rise to an opposition in the king of Navarre's councils, which blasted many of his designs, and in particular that upon Marmande. Lavardin having attacked it, contrary to the advice of la Nouë, and even of the king of Navarre himself, he caused several bodies, of a hundred arquebusers each, to advance, with orders to possess themselves of the hollows and other advantageous parts near the walls of this city. The command of one of these bodies was given to me; and scarce had I posted myself at about two hundred paces distant from the city, when I was attacked by a detachment of the besieged three times superior to mine in number: I entrenched my men, and being favoured by some houses, we defended ourselves a long time. The king of Navarre, who saw the danger to which we were exposed, ran to us, covered only with a cuirass, fought the whole day, and gave us time to seize the destined posts; but they were of little use to us, as we had not men enough to surround the city on all sides; and the king of Navarre would have had the mortifi-

In Agenois,
upon the
Garonne.

* Lewis de Clermont de Buffy d'Amboise, celebrated for his valour and personal accomplishments. In an assignation

he had some time after with the lady de Montfoucau, he was killed by her husband and his domestics.

1576.

cation of not being able to approach it, and of being under a necessity of shamefully raising the siege, had not the arrival of the marechal de Biron, with proposals for an accommodation, furnished him with an honourable pretence for withdrawing his troops.

A TRUCE only could be agreed upon, during which the king of Navarre went to Bearn, to visit the princess his sister, or rather the young Tignonville *, with whom he was in love. I was permitted to accompany him; and giving back my ensign's commission to M. de Lavardin, who bestowed it upon young Bethune, my cousin, I quitted my equipage of war, and took one more suitable to the character I was now to appear in. My œconomy during three or four years, joined to my military profits, made my finances so considerable, that I saw myself now in a condition to entertain several gentlemen in my pay, with whom I attached myself solely to the person of the king. As I had no inclination to descend from this station, I regulated my domestic affairs in such a manner, that the king of Navarre, who was always attentive to the conduct of his officers, confessed to me afterwards, that I owed the greatest part of that esteem with which he honoured me, to the prudent œconomy he observed in this disposition of my affairs. It was my youth only that made this conduct appear extraordinary, for I began early to be sensible of what advantage it is, to preserve an exact regularity in domestic concerns. Such a propensity, in my opinion, is a very happy presage, either for a soldier or a statesman.

DURING our stay at Bearn, nothing was thought of but diversions and gallantry. The taste which Madame, the king's sister, had for amusements, proved an inexhaustible source of them to us. Of this princess I learned the trade of a courtier, which I was yet unacquainted with. She had the goodness to make me one in all her parties; and I remember, she would teach me herself the steps of a dance in a ballet that was performed with the greatest magnificence.

THE truce was now almost expired, and the king of Navarre, who had been informed that the city Eauze, excited by the mutineers, had refused to give entrance to a garrison he sent thither, ordered us to

A city of
Aimagnac.

* This young lady was daughter to madame de Tignonville, governess to madame the king of Navarre's sister, who in the court of Navarre was generally called

mademoiselle Navarre. Mademoiselle Tignonville was afterwards married to the baron of Pangeas.

come,

1576.

come, with our arms concealed under our hunting-habits, to a certain part of the country, where he himself waited for us. He arrived at the gates of this city before they could be advertised of his march, and entered it, without meeting with any resistance, at the head of fifteen or sixteen of his men, who had followed him closer than the rest of the troop. As soon as the mutineers perceived this, they called out to have the draw-bridge instantly let down; which was accordingly done, and fell almost upon the buttocks of my horse and Bethune's, so that we were separated from the body, which remained without the city. The rebels at the same time rung the alarm-bell, and arming hastily, a band of fifty soldiers came thundering upon us: among these we distinguished three or four voices, which cried, "Fire upon that scarlet cloak, and white plume, for it is the king of Navarre." "My friends, my companions," said this prince, turning towards us, "it is here that you must shew courage and resolution, for our safety depends upon what we now act; follow me then, and do as I do, without firing your pistols." As he ended these words, he marched fiercely up to the mutineers with his pistol in his hand: they could not sustain the shock, and were soon dispersed; three or four small bodies of men presented themselves afterwards, and these also we drove before us; but the enemies drawing together, to the number of two hundred, and our forces being greatly diminished, the danger became inevitable. The king retired to the gate, which facilitated his defence, and there he kept firm. He had the presence of mind to order two of us to climb up upon the belfrey, and make a sign to our companions, who continued in the field, to advance and force the gate. This they performed with the more ease, as very fortunately the bridge had not been drawn up.

THOSE of the citizens who were well affected to the king, but had been forced by the seditious into their measures, perceiving the soldiers upon the point of entering the city, attacked the rebels behind. These last defended themselves till the gate being forced, the city was filled with our troops. All would have been put to the sword, and even the city abandoned to pillage, had not the principal inhabitants, with their consuls at their head, thrown themselves at the king's feet, and implored his pardon. He granted it, and contented himself with punishing only those four persons who had fired upon the white plume.

1576.

A city in
the county
of Armag-
nac.

THE king of Navarre leaving * Bethune governor in Eaufe, advanced hastily towards Mirande, upon advice, that St. Criq, a catholic gentleman of his party, had possessed himself of the city; but not having men enough to keep it, had been obliged to throw himself, with his troops, into the tower, where he was besieged, and hard pressed by the citizens and garrison of the place. Notwithstanding the king marched with all possible diligence, he could not prevent the unhappy fate of this officer, who had just been taken, and burnt with all his men, when Henry appeared before the walls of Mirande. The inhabitants, who thought to draw him into their power, artfully concealed what had happened, and made the trumpets sound, as if St. Criq was rejoicing for the assistance they brought him; when a huguenot soldier in the city, perceiving the danger into which the king of Navarre was going to precipitate himself, together with all his men, who must infallibly have perished, through the great superiority of the enemies numbers, came over the wall, to inform him of the snare that was laid for him. The king now thought of nothing but retreating; but as he was very far advanced, the inhabitants of Mirande soon perceived that their design was prevented, and sallying out, attacked him in his retreat. Myself and young Bethune having engaged too far amidst the enemy, were surrounded on all sides: despair added to our strength, and we fought like men who were resolved to sell their lives dear; but we should certainly have been overpowered, extreme weariness making it hardly possible for us to use our arms any longer, when happily for us Léfignan, and the elder Bethune, whom the king of Navarre had sent to our assistance, charged the enemy so fiercely, that they gave back, and afforded us the means of retreating. The sieur d'Yvetot, a gentleman of Normandy, and la Trape, my valet de chambre, did me great service upon this occasion.

THE king of Navarre, seeing night approach, gave orders to cease fighting, and retired to Jegun; where two or three days after, the royal troops, with the marechal de Villars at their head, appeared in arms, drawn thither by the report of the attempt upon Mirande. It would have been rashness to attempt them, therefore we kept firmly intrenched, and fought only to engage them to force us; but this they durst not attempt. The two armies continued in view of each other till night: a combat of six against six was proposed by Lavardin and la Devèse; but we not being able to agree amongst ourselves

* See all these little military expeditions in d'Aubigné, book ii.

about the choice of the combatants, the king and the marquis de Villars both drew off their respective troops the beginning of the night.

1576.

SOME time after the king of Navarre going from Leictoure to Montauban, commanded the count de Meilles and me with five and twenty horse, to fall upon a body of musqueteers, which the inhabitants of Beaumont had posted in the vineyards and hollow places in our passage. We engaged, and drove them almost to the city gates, from whence about an hundred soldiers came out to their assistance; part of these we left dead upon the place, and the rest were drowned in the ditches. The king, who saw the rampart begin to be crowded with soldiers, did not think proper to pursue this advantage, and continued his rout.

Frederick de
Foix de
Candalle.
Beaumont
of Lomagne
in Armag-
nac.

AT his return, he endeavoured to avoid passing under the walls of this city, and took a lower road, by a place, which, if I remember right, was called *St. Nicholas, near Mas de Verdun. Scarce had we marched a league, when we heard the beating of drums, and discovered a party of three hundred musqueteers, marching in very indifferant order, under five ensigns. A council was immediately held; some were of opinion that we should attack the enemy, notwithstanding the superiority of their numbers; others disapproved this. The king of Navarre, who wanted only to try them, ordered fifty horse to advance, and in the mean time we drew up in a line, with our domestics behind us, and presented a front to the enemy, which concealed the smallness of our numbers. The shining of our armour contributed to deceive them: they fled across the woods, whither we pursued them; till meeting with a church, they entered it, and barricaded themselves within.

THIS church was very large, strong, and well furnished with provisions, being the accustomed retreat of the peasants; a great number of them were then shut up in it. The king of Navarre undertook to force it, and sent to Montauban, Leictoure, and other neighbouring towns, for workmen and soldiers for that purpose; not doubting but Beaumont, Mirande, and other towns of the catholic party, would send powerful succours to the besieged, if they were not prevented. In the mean time we endeavoured, with the assistance of our servants, to undermine the church. The choir was al-

* St. Nicolas de la Grave. Mas de Verdun, or Mas Garnier, a city of Armagnac.

1577.

lotted to me; and in the space of twelve hours I made an opening in it, though the wall was of a great thickness, and built of a very hard stone: afterwards by means of a scaffold raised over this gap, I threw a great quantity of grenades into the body of the church. The besieged had no water, and were obliged to temper their meal with wine; and what incommoded them still more, they had neither surgeons, linen, nor salves for the wounds that were given them by the grenades. A powerful reinforcement being sent from Montauban to the king of Navarre, they capitulated, and this prince contented himself with only ordering seven or eight of the most mutinous to be hanged; but he was obliged to abandon them all to the fury of the inhabitants of Montauban, who forced them out of our hand, and butchered them without mercy. We learned the cause of that rage which animated them against these wretches, in the reproaches they made them, of having carried away six women, whom, after they had ravished, they put to death, by filling them with gunpowder, and setting fire to it. A horrid excess of the most savage cruelty!

THE states, which were then held at Blois, named the archbishop of Vienne *, and the duke of Montpensier and Richelieu, for deputies to the king of Navarre. This prince sent Bethune and me as far as Bergerac, to receive them. They were commissioned to exhort the king of Navarre to embrace the catholic religion, which the states had declared should be maintained throughout the kingdom. This interview, which had produced a suspension of arms, having had no other effect, the deputies returned, and hostilities began again.

Castel Jaloux, or Castel Geloux, near Auch. In Guyenne, the capital of the duchy of Albret.

SOME attempts were made upon Castel Jaloux and Nerac, by the admiral de Villars †; but the king of Navarre was present every where, and disconcerted all his designs. He exposed himself to equal dangers with the meanest soldier, and gave a striking proof of the greatness of his courage at Nerac; when being surrounded by a body

* The three deputies whom the states sent to the king of Navarre, were Peter de Villars, archbishop of Vienne, for the clergy; Andrew of Bourbon, lord of Rubenpre, for the nobility; and Menager, general of the finances of Touraine, for the third state. Here therefore is a fault in these Memoirs: consult de Thou, d'Aubigné, &c. See also an account of the

session of the states of Blois, in Matthieu, vol. I. book vii. p. 438, and in the Memoirs of Nevers, vol. I. p. 166, and following.

† Honorat of Savoy, marquis of Villars. Although he was made admiral by the king during the admiral de Coligny's life, he did not in reality exercise that employment till after the death of that nobleman.

of horse, detached on purpose to surprize him, he repulsed them almost by his single valour. It was not in our power, by the most earnest intreaties, to make him take more care of his life; and his example animating us in our turn, twelve or fifteen of us were bold enough to advance within pistol-shot of the whole catholic army. The king of Navarre, who observed us, said to Bethune, "Go to your cousin, the baron of Rosny; he is rash and heedless to the last degree; bring him and his companions off; for the enemy seeing us retire, will no doubt charge us so fiercely, that they will be all either taken or killed." I obeyed this order, and the prince perceiving my horse wounded in the shoulder, reproached me for my temerity, in a manner, however, wholly obliging. He proposed this day a combat of four against four; but it did not take place, the admiral having given the signal for retreating.

1577.

It was of the last importance to the king of Navarre to hinder the taking of Brouage, then besieged by the duke * of Maienne. Accordingly he hastened thither, leaving the viscount of Turenne to bring his troops after him; but beside that this nobleman did not arrive soon enough to succour the city, the interview between the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé at Pons so exasperated them against each other, that the prince of Condé wanted to fight with the viscount de Turenne, whom he accused of being the author of their misunderstanding, and soon after openly separated from the king of Navarre.

A city and port in Sain-tonge.

In Sain-tonge.

THE peace which succeeded accidents so unfavourable to the reformed, was the sole work of Henry III. who was desirous of giving this mortification to the Guisès. War was no longer agreeable, either to his inclinations, which led him to a strange kind of life, divided between devotion and sensuality †, nor to his designs, that tended only to the crushing of the princes of Lorraine, now grown too powerful by the league. But although this peace ‡ was less advanta-

* Charles de Lorraine, duke of Maienne, second son of Francis of Lorraine, duke of Guisè. He was general of the league.

† There is nothing, said Sixtus V. to cardinal de Joyeuse, which your king has not done, and does, to be a monk; nor nothing which I have not done to avoid being one. He had no less than a hundred and fifty valets de chambre, *ministres cubicularios*, says Busbeq, Ep. 31.

‡ By the treaty that was concluded at Bergerac, between the king of Navarre and the marechal de Biron, and the edict that followed in the latter end of September, the number of churches was diminished, the exercise of the pretended reformed religion was prohibited ten leagues round Paris, the burying-places of the calvinists in this city taken away, the liberty of marriages revoked, the chambers of

geous

1577.
Villeneuve
in Agenois,
upon the
Lot.

geous to the huguenots than that of Monsieur, yet they observed the articles of it with more fidelity than the catholics; who while it still subsisted, possessed themselves of Agen, and Villeneuve, for which it was impossible to make them give satisfaction. The consequence of a peace so very ill observed, was an inactivity full of distrust; which rather resembled a long suspension of arms, than a real peace. In this manner passed the remainder of this year, and part of the following.

Fleix in
Perigord.

WHETHER it was, that the queen-mother was desirous of labouring effectually to compose the troubles of the state, or that she had secret designs, which obliged her to gain, if possible, the king of Navarre, she quitted Paris with all her court, and making the tour of the provinces, had a conference with this prince at Réole and Auch. She even staid with him a long while, at different times, either at Nerac*, Coutras, Fleix, or other places; for the year 1578, and part of 1579, were wholly consumed in journeys from one place to another, and reciprocal complaints of the bad execution of treaties, which indeed both parties did not scruple to infringe.

1578.

THE mixture of two courts equally remarkable for gallantry, produced such an effect as might have been expected. Nothing was seen but balls, festivals, and polite entertainments: but while love became the serious business of the courtiers, Catherine was wholly absorbed in politics: for once, however, she did not succeed. She, indeed, reconciled the king of Navarre to his wife, then greatly disgusted with the proceedings of her brother Henry III. towards her; but she could never draw this prince again to Paris, nor prevail upon him to resign to her those places of security, to obtain which had been her principal view.

I SHOULD swell these Memoirs too much, were I to enter into a detail of this medley of politics and gallantry; and, to confess the truth, my youth and other affairs, more suitable to my inclinations,

justice composed of half catholics and half protestants suppressed in Paris, Rouen, Dijon, and Rennes, &c. King Henry III. called this his treaty. Neither party observed it faithfully: the catholics complained that several articles were infringed by the calvinists. Memoirs of Nevers.

* At Nerac, says le Grain, the queen-

mother had several conferences with the king of Navarre, her son-in-law, in which some articles were explained, but not all; for the good lady would always keep her Spanish gennet by the bridle as much as she was able. It was here that Henry IV. fell in love with the two ladies, d'Agellé and Toulcuse.

did

did not permit me to engage in the first; as for gallantry, besides that I have lost the remembrance of it, a trifling detail of intrigues would, in my opinion, make a very indifferent figure here. 'Tis sufficient to say, that all was reduced to a desire of pleasing, and supplanting each other: I shall not, however, omit some adventures relating to the war.

1578.

THE queen-mother and the king of Navarre, could only agree upon a truce, which was to be in force over the whole kingdom, till the prince and she separated: but, whether she thought war would afford her a more favourable opportunity of seizing several towns by surprize and artifice, or that this method was more likely to accomplish her views, she was not sorry that both parties seemed to forget they were in peace, and treated each other as enemies. It was now resolved, that there should only be a truce where the court was, and not to extend beyond a league and a half, or two leagues, from the place where the queen and the princes resided. This gave rise to a contrast altogether new: here they loaded each other with civilities, and conversed with the greatest familiarity; there they fought with the utmost fury and animosity. The two courts being at Auch, upon a ball night, news was brought to the king of Navarre, that the governor of Réole, who was an old man, and a zealous protestant, having conceived a violent passion for one of the queen-mother's maids of honour, had been prevailed upon to violate his duty, and deliver up the town to the catholics. The king of Navarre, who would not long defer his revenge, privately ordered me, and three or four others, to withdraw, and with our arms, concealed under our hunting-habits, join him in the fields. We got together as many of our people as we could; and taking care that the entertainment should suffer no interruption, left the hall, and joined the king, with whom we marched all night; and arriving early in the morning at Fleurence, the gates of which were open, seized it without opposition. The queen-mother, who could have sworn that the king of Navarre had lain at Auch, was greatly surprized next morning with the news of this expedition; however, she was the first to laugh at it: "I see, said she, this is in revenge for Réole: the king of Navarre was resolved to have nut for nut, but mine has the better kernel."

AN adventure of the same kind happened a short time after. When the court was at Coutras, the king of Navarre having resolved to seize St. Emilion, he sent us over-night to St. Foi, which was not comprehended in the truce, from whence we marched to St. Emilion, with

In Guienne
near Li-
bourne.
Upon the
Dordogne
in Agenois.

1579.

a petard, which we fastened by two port-holes to a great tower. The bursting of this machine made a noise that was heard even at Coutras. A breach was made in the tower wide enough to admit two men a-breast, and by this means the town was taken. The queen-mother was enraged, and said openly, that she looked upon this action as a premeditated insult, St. Emilion being within the bounds of the truce. 'Tis certain, that the distance between Coutras and this town was such as rendered the case a little doubtful; but the king of Navarre, who knew that a few days before, the citizens of St. Emilion had pillaged a protestant merchant, which the queen-mother maintained to be a lawful prize, justified what he had done by this fact, and all was passed over.

It often happened, that the two courts separated from each other, when any thing fell out to give either of them disgust; but the desire of pleasure, which languished while they were divided, soon brought them together again. The queen-mother's court was carried by the king of Navarre to Foix; where, among other diversions, he was resolved to give them that of bear-hunting. The ladies were frighted; this entertainment did not suit with their delicacy. Some of these animals tore the horses to pieces; others overthrew ten Swifs, and as many fusileers; and one of them, who had been wounded in several places, mounting upon a rock, threw himself down headlong, with seven or eight hunters whom he held fast in his paws, and crushed them to pieces.

At last the queen-mother left the king of Navarre, and continued her rout through Languedoc, Provence, and Dauphiny, where she had an interview with the duke of Savoy, and returned to Paris, leaving all things in the same state in which she found them; that is, in a peace which only increased the doubts and suspicions of each party: however, she did not forget to seduce part of the king of Navarre's catholic officers; among whom were Lavardin, Grammont*, and Duras. Another effect of her presence was, to embroil so perfectly the prince with the viscount of Turenne, that he challenged him to a single duel. Turenne went indeed to the place of combat, but it was only to make those submissions which he owed to the high quality of his antagonist. This duel produced nothing fatal, but the viscount received several wounds in a second, to which he was challenged by Duras
and

* Philibert de Grammont. John de Durfort.

and Roſan *. It was ſaid at that time, that the advantage they had over Turenne, upon this occaſion, was owing to an artifice ſcarcely allowable.

1580.

AFTER the queen-mother's departure, the court of Navarre went to Montauban, and from thence to Nerac, where they continued ſome time, uncertain whether it would not be proper to renew the war. This court being no leſs voluptuous than that of France, nothing was thought of but pleaſures and gallantry.

THE news of the catholics having taken the city of Figeac by ſurprize, and holding the caſtle beſieged, determined them to take arms immediately. The king of Navarre ſent the viſcount Turenne to raiſe the ſiege; who at parting ſaid to me, "Well, Sir, will you be of our party?" "Yes, Sir, I replied, I ſhall be always of your party, provided it is for the ſervice of the king my maſter, and yours at all times, when you favour me with your friendſhip."

A city of Quercy, upon the confines of Auvergne.

THE catholics, ſurprized at our diligence, abandoned Figeac; and the war being now begun by the huguenots, they made above forty attempts on different places, of which three only ſucceeded †. Theſe were Fere in Picardy, Montagu in Poitou, and Cahors. At this laſt I was preſent, for which reaſon, as well as that of all the towns attacked by petard and undermining, this was the moſt remarkable, I ſhall give ſome account of it.

* The two brothers, Durfort de Duras, and Durfort de Roſan, fought with the viſcount de Turenne, and John de Gontaſt de Biron, baron of Salignac, his ſecond. Although the brothers were armed with coats of mail, yet the diſadvantage was wholly on their ſide. The viſcount permitted Roſan to riſe, and Salignac allowed Duras to change his ſword; at the ſame moment nine or ten armed men fell upon the viſcount, and left him upon the place pierced with two and twenty wounds, none of which, however, proved mortal. He recovered, and generouſly intreated the queen-mother to pardon Duras. The marechal de Damville, called by the death of his brother, marechal de Mont-

morency, coming thither about that time, was conſulted on this action; and it was his opinion, as well as that of many others, that the viſcount de Turenne was at liberty to ſatiſfy his revenge by any means whatever, without expoſing his own life. Memoirs of the duke de Bouillon. His life by Marfolier. De Thou. Brantome in the tenth volume of his Memoirs, ſpeaking of duels, ſeems to doubt whether this duel was conducted in the manner it was reported, conſidering the reputation the two brothers were in for courage and honour.

† See all theſe expeditions particularly related in d'Aubigné, vol. II. book iv.

1580.
 The river of
 Lot washes
 its walls.

Towns in
 Quercy.

—de Ter-
 ride, viscount
 of Gourdon.

Charles le
 Clerc de St.
 Martin. He
 was slain
 there.
 Antony de
 Roquelaure.

CAHORS is a large and populous city, surrounded on three sides by water. * Vefins, who was governor of it, had above two thousand men, besides a hundred horse, under his command; and he obliged the citizens also to take arms. He kept himself upon his guard like a man who expected to be attacked; which we discovered by a paper found in his cabinet, on which he had wrote these few words with his own hand, “ A fig for the huguenots.” The king of Navarre, whose little army was weakened by the absence of Chouppes, and who saw no means of opening himself a passage but by petard and undermining, did not, however, despair of taking the city. He reinforced his troops with all the soldiers he could find in Montauban, Négrepelisse, St. Antonin, Cajare, and Senevieres; but the whole did not amount to more than fifteen hundred men, with whom he left Montauban, and arrived about midnight within a quarter of a league of Cahors. It was in the month of June, the weather extremely hot, with violent thunder, but no rain. He ordered us to halt in a plantation of walnut trees, where a fountain of running-water afforded us some refreshment. Here he settled the order of his march, and of the whole attack. Two petardeers belonging to the viscount Gourdon, the chief contriver of this enterprize, followed by ten of the bravest soldiers in the king’s guards, marched before us, to open a passage into the city. They were sustained by twenty others, and thirty horse of the king’s guards likewise, under the conduct of St. Martin, their captain; forty gentlemen, commanded by Roquelaure, and sixty soldiers of the guard composed another body, in which I was, and marched afterwards. The king of Navarre, at the head of two hundred men, divided into four bands, came next; the remainder of his little army, which made a body of about one thousand or twelve hundred arquebusiers, in six platoons, closed the march.

WE had three gates to force; these we made haste to throw down with the petard, after which we made use of hatchets. The breaches were so low, that the first who entered were obliged to creep through upon their hands and feet. At the noise of the petard, forty men armed, and about two hundred arquebusiers, ran almost naked to dispute our entry; mean time the bells rung the alarm, to warn every body to stand to their defence. In a moment the houses were covered with

* The same who is mentioned in the beginning of this book. It is thought, that if he had not been slain in the attack, at the head of his people, the king of Navarre would not have made himself master of the place.

soldiers,

soldiers, who threw large pieces of wood, tiles, and stones upon us, with repeated cries of "Charge, kill them." We soon found, that they were resolved to receive us boldly; it was necessary, therefore, at first, to sustain an encounter, which lasted above a quarter of an hour, and was very terrible. I was cast to the ground by a large stone that was thrown out of a window; but by the assistance of the sieur de la Bertichere, and la Trape, my valet de chambre, I recovered, and resumed my post. All this time we advanced very little, for fresh platoons immediately succeeded those that fled before us; so that before we gained the great square, we had endured more than twelve battles. My cuisses being loosened, I was wounded in the left thigh. At last we got to the square, which we found barricaded, and with infinite labour we demolished those works, being all the time exposed to the continual discharge of the artillery, which the enemy had formed into a battery.

1580.

THE king of Navarre continued at the head of his troops during all these attacks; he had two pikes broke, and his armour was battered in several places by the fire and blows of the enemy. We had already performed enough to have gained a great victory; but so much remained to do, that the battle seemed only to be just begun; the city being of large extent, and filled with so great a number of soldiers, that we in comparison of them were but a handful. At every cross-way we had a new combat to sustain, and every stone house we were obliged to storm; each inch of ground was so well defended, that the king of Navarre had occasion for all his men, and we had not a moment's leisure to take breath.

It is hardly credible that we could endure this violent exercise for five whole days and nights; during which time, not one of us durst quit his post for a single moment, take any nourishment, but with his arms in his hand; or sleep, except for a few moments leaning against the shops. Fatigue, faintness, the weight of our arms, and the excessive heat, joined to the pain of our wounds, deprived us of the little remainder of our strength; our feet scorched with heat, and bleeding in many places, gave us agonies impossible to be expressed.

THE citizens, who suffered none of these inconveniencies, and who became every minute more sensible of the smallness of our numbers, far from surrendering, thought of nothing but protracting the
fight

1580.

fight till the arrival of some succours, which they said were very near: they sent forth great cries, and animated each other by our obstinacy. Though their defence was weak, yet they did enough to oblige us to keep upon our guard, which completed our misfortunes. In this extremity, the principal officers went to the king, and advised him to assemble as many men as he could about his person, and open himself a retreat. They redoubled their instances at the report which was spread, and which they found to be true, that the succours expected by the enemy were arrived at the bar, and would be so soon in the city, that he would have but just time to force the wall, and secure himself a passage. But this brave prince, whose courage nothing was ever able to suppress, turning towards them with a smiling countenance, and air so intrepid, as might have inspired courage into the most pusillanimous heart: " 'Tis heaven, said he, which dictates what I ought to do upon this occasion; remember then, that my retreat out of this city, without having secured one also to my party, shall be the retreat of my soul from my body. My honour requires this of me; speak therefore to me of nothing but fighting, conquest, or death."

Peter de
Chouppes.

ANIMATED by these words, and the example of so brave a leader, we began to make new efforts; but in all probability, we should at last have been wholly defeated, but for the arrival of Chouppes, whom the king had the precaution to send for before the attack: he, having understood the danger Henry was in, opened himself a passage into the city, with five or six hundred foot, and a hundred horse, trampling over the enemy as he passed, who gathered in crowds to obstruct his way. As soon as he joined us, we marched together to the bar, where the enemies succours were endeavouring to enter. All this quarter we forced, and when we had made ourselves masters of the parapets and towers, it was not difficult to oblige the enemies without to abandon their enterprize and retreat; after which, the inhabitants finding themselves no longer able to resist, laid down their arms, and the city was given up to plunder. My good fortune threw a small iron chest in my way, in which I found about four thousand crowns. In the relation of an action so hot, so long, and so glorious for the young * prince that conducted it, I am obliged to suppress many circumstances, and many particular exploits, performed by the king and his officers, which would have the appearance of being fabulous.

* Other historians agree, that this attack lasted five whole days, and that Henry IV. had a great many soldiers wounded there, and only seventy slain.

M. de Thou's relation of this action is a little different, but our Memoirs deserve most credit.

THE king of Navarre having left Cabrieres * governor in Cahors, returned to Montauban. He defeated likewise two or three squadrons belonging to the marechal de Biron's army, who was under a necessity of shutting himself up in Marmande. The king, for the greater convenience of taking this city, came to Tonneins; which produced a great many little attacks, the marechal de Biron's soldiers making inroads every day into the enemy's country. Henry one day ordered Lésignan, at the head of five and twenty gentlemen well mounted, of which number I was one, to advance even to the gates of Marmande, as if to defy them: which was often done. We were followed by a hundred foot, who lay down on the shore of a rivulet not far from us; and the king, with three hundred horse, and two companies of his guards, concealed himself in a wood at a small distance. Our orders were to fire our pistols only, and to endeavour to take any of the soldiers whom we should find without the walls, and retire towards the little body of foot when they began to pursue us. Accordingly, as soon as we saw ourselves ready to be attacked by a hundred horse, who came out of the city, we marched off, though they insultingly called out to us to stay. An officer of our troop, named Quafy, hearing himself defied by name, could not restrain his indignation, but turned his horse's bridle, and shot his challenger dead: he lost his horse, however, and regained his brigade on foot. Upon seeing him attacked by the enemy's party, who were enraged at the death of their comrade, we marched immediately to his assistance: and now so fierce a combat ensued, that one of our valets, seized with terror, fled, and carried the alarm to the king of Navarre; telling him, that we, and the whole party of foot were put to the sword. This he said without the least foundation; for the enemy, on the contrary, seeing the body of foot, who came out of their ambuscade to second us, fearing some stratagem, and supposing that the whole army would fall upon them, retreated precipitately into the city.

1580.
In Agenois
upon the
Garonne.

It was with great difficulty, that they could restrain the ardent Henry from rushing upon the enemy's army to revenge us, and perishing gloriously; but they made him such pressing instances to retire, that he consented to it at last, though with infinite regret. His astonishment was extremely great when he saw us, and his grief still greater for having yielded to counsellors too timid; especially when he saw Lésignan, who complained bitterly that he had been abandoned upon

* Consult d'Aubigné upon these expeditions, vol. II. book iv.

1580.

this occasion. As for me, I lost an horse in the action, which was killed under me.

Towns in
Languedoc.

THE king of Navarre's discontent was greatly increased by the bad news that was brought him. The prince of Condé, not satisfied with having corrupted some of his troops, and openly separating from his party, had drawn several towns of Dauphiny and Languedoc into his interest, and took them from Henry to compose a sovereignty for himself. Aiguemortes and Pecais, he had engaged to prince Casimir as securities for the forces this prince had promised: and very lately, he had possessed himself of Fere * in Picardy; the loss of which sensibly affected the king of Navarre. His army, already much inferior to that of the catholics, he was now obliged to dismember, and sent Turenne against the prince of Condé, who soon disconcerted all his projects: as for himself, being no longer able to keep the field before the marechal Biron, he shut himself up in Nerac; in which the ladies and court of Navarre then were, and as brilliant as ever, notwithstanding the bad condition of the king's affairs.

THIS retreat gave a new face to the war; it could neither be called a campaign nor a siege, but it was both together. Biron, judging the siege of this place to be an enterprize for which he had not sufficient strength, fought only to keep us in continual alarm, by surrounding it with all his troops; and the king of Navarre, though blocked up in the city, did not however fail to shew himself often in the field. The gates of the city were kept shut by his orders, his cavalry therefore was of no use to him; and our only resource was to assemble in small parties, and sally out by the private doors, to attack the separate detachments of the royal army, and sometimes we would advance to the very front of the whole army. I resumed my former condition of a private soldier, and mixing with the officers, performed many of those rash actions, in which there is neither fame nor advantage to be gained; and were likewise severely condemned by the king of Navarre. When he was informed one day that I was wounded and taken by a party of the enemy, notwithstanding his anger, he sent Des-Champs and Dominge to rescue me if possible; and at my return calling me rash and presumptuous, he expressly forbid me ever to leave the city with-

* It was re-taken immediately by the marechal de Matignon. In the Memoirs of the league there is a letter from queen

Catherine to the prince of Condé, in which she thanks him for having taken arms against the court.

out his orders. I confess; I but too justly merited these reproofs; for it is great folly and extravagance to precipitate one's self into inevitable dangers, from whence nothing less than a miracle can extricate one. The marechal de Biron made shew of besieging Nerac; but all ended in a few slight skirmishes, which the ladies beheld from behind the ramparts. The enemy's general had so little respect for them, that he ordered five or six discharges of cannon * to be made, tho' he expected no advantage from it.

1580.

THE king of Navarre did not, however, neglect to make himself master of Montégur. Milon, one of his captains, enclosed five hundred weight of powder in a saucisse, which he found means to introduce into a common shore, which ran into a ditch between the two principal gates; the end of the saucisse, to which the fire was to be applied, was concealed amongst the grass. When every thing was ready for the playing off this machine, the king permitted us to go and see the effect, which indeed was wonderful. One of the two gates was thrown into the midst of the city, and the other fifty paces forwards into the field. The vaults were all ruined, and a breach being made in the wall, wide enough to admit three men a-breast, the city was taken. The enemy seeming determined to recover it, the king commanded me to shut myself up in it with forty gentlemen. We applied ourselves to the fortifying the place well with palisades and intrenchments, in the place of those the powder had destroyed; and this we performed without interruption, notwithstanding we were all afflicted with a kind of epidemical distemper †, and myself more than any other. At length we put the place into such a condition, that we had nothing to apprehend from the enemy; after which I returned to the king of Navarre, who by the caresses with which he loaded me on this occasion, was desirous of teaching me to make a just distinction between military exploits that are authorized by duty, and those which a rash and misguided courage suggests.

In the country of Foix.

IT was with pleasure that I saw this prince's favour towards me increase every day, and to find that he gave to inclination what he be-

* Some cannon was discharged against a gate of the city, behind which was the queen of Navarre. At the peace, she procured the government of Guienne to be taken from this marechal.

† This distemper seized them in the

reins, the head, and particularly in the neck. Bleeding and purging were mortal in it. De Thou observes also, that this disease was the fore-runner of a plague that carried off forty thousand people in Paris. Book lxxiii.

1580.

lieved he had granted only to his mother's recommendation; who, when dying, pressed him to take care of my fortune. Some slight services I did him this year, he rewarded by the post of counsellor of Navarre, and chamberlain in ordinary, with a pension of two thousand livres, which at that time was thought very considerable. I was then but nineteen years of age, and the fire of youth drew me into a fault which had like to have made me lose for ever the favour of this prince.

I WAS at supper one night with Beauvais, the son of the king of Navarre's governor, and an officer named Uffeau, who happening to quarrel, resolved to fight, and intreated me to provide them with the means. Instead of immediately acquainting the king of Navarre with their design, that prince being very solicitous to prevent these sort of combats, which a false sense of honour made very frequent at that time, I was imprudent enough to promise to comply; and after having in vain endeavoured to reconcile them, conducted them myself to the meadow where they fought, and each received a very dangerous wound. The king of Navarre, who loved Beauvais, was extremely offended with me for the part I had acted in this affair. He ordered me to be sent for, and told me in a rage, that I insulted the authority of the sovereign, even in his own court, and that, were strict justice to be done on me, I should lose my head. Instead of repairing my fault by an ingenuous confession of it, I added another still greater: Piqued at this prince's threatening, I answered haughtily, That I was neither his subject nor vassal; and threatened him, in my turn, with quitting his service. The king discovered no other resentment for this insolence, than a contemptuous silence. I went out of his presence, with an intention to leave this good prince, and perhaps for ever, had not the princesses undertaken to make my peace with the king, who listening only to the dictates of his friendship for me, contented himself with punishing me no otherwise for my fault, than by treating me, during some time, with great coldness: at length, when he was convinced of the sincerity of my repentance, he resumed his former sentiments. This instance of his goodness made me know in what manner so worthy a prince ought to be served. I attached myself to him more strongly than before, resolving, from that moment, never to have any other master: but I saw myself removed from him for some time, by an imprudent promise which I had made to the duke of Alençon.

M E M M O I R S

O F

S U L L Y.

B O O K II.

THE queen-mother, whose fertile imagination was ever producing schemes for the grandeur of her house *, and still more employed for her own particular designs, having no longer any hope of marrying her youngest son to the queen of England, turned all her views upon Flanders, of which she undertook to make him sovereign. She had at first made several ineffectual attempts upon the Dutch; who, thinking they should appease the resentment of Spain † by chusing a master out of the house of Austria, decreed that honour to the archduke Matthias, notwithstanding the power-

1580.

* M. de Thou, treating of this subject, says, book xcvi. that before the crown of Poland was offered to the duke of Anjou, Catherine, who was resolved to make him a sovereign one way or other, had sent Francis de Noailles to Selim, then grand seignior, to ask the kingdom of Algiers for this prince; Sardinia was to be added to it, which had been obtained from Spain, in exchange for the kingdom of Navarre, which they had promised him the posses-

sion of; and as an equivalent for the claim the king of Navarre had to this kingdom, other estates in France were to be given him.

† The revolt of the United Provinces from Spain, an account of which will be seen in the following part of these Memoirs, began by an insurrection, and a confederacy formed in the year 1566, the design of which was to hinder the establishment of the inquisition in those countries. Manuscripts in the king's library, marked 9981.

1580.

William of
Nassau,
prince of
Orange.

ful intrigues of Catherine. The archduke was a weak prince, absolutely destitute of the qualities necessary for a sovereign; upon this occasion especially, where valour was so necessary, he behaved in such a manner, as to inspire the nobility with the utmost contempt for him; and by preferring the prince of Orange openly to all the other lords, and declaring him lieutenant-general of his forces, rendered himself completely hateful to them. The Dutch, disgusted with this new master, thought of nothing but freeing themselves from his power, and cast their eyes upon Monsieur, brother to the king of France; whom they considered as a prince capable of defending them in his own person, and procuring them the powerful protection of his country.

HE was at Contras when the deputies from the United Provinces came to make him this offer: he accepted it joyfully, and deferred his journey to the Low Countries no longer than till he could appear there with a train suitable to the dignity of his birth. For this purpose, he earnestly solicited the most distinguished amongst the lords and gentlemen of the king of Navarre's party to follow him. The greatest part of the catholics attached themselves to him, and the hopes of a solid and lasting peace with which the queen-mother took care to amuse the protestants, was the cause that many of those also promised to attend him.

Antony de
Silly, lord of
Rocheport.

FERVAQUES and Rocheport, two of my kinsmen, engaged themselves in his party; and, to prevail upon me to follow their example, represented to me, that after the loss I had lately suffered by the death of my father, I should take care to recover the succession to the viscount de Gand's * estate, who had disinherited me on account of my religion, and endeavour to get possession of several other estates in Flanders, to which my family was entitled, and which only the protection of a new sovereign could procure me. To these reasons they added, in the name of Monsieur, a promise of twelve thousand crowns, to furnish me with an equipage. I yielded to their solicitations, and gave my word to go with them. Our expedition was protracted a considerable time, on account of several different affairs; at length all obstacles † being removed, and the Dutch repeating their intreaties,

* Hugh de Melun, viscount de Gand, grandfather by the mother's side to M. de Sully.

† By the peace concluded at Fleix, a castle upon the Dordogne, between the king of Navarre and the duke of Anjou.

Monsieur

Monſieur reminding us of our engagement, ſent us orders to join him. When I went to take leave of the king of Navarre, I had a long converſation with him on my departure, and the occaſion of it; which I have never reflected on ſince without the deepeſt gratitude for that generous affection he diſcovered for me, nor without admiration of his penetrating wit, and the juſtneſs of his conjectures. When I mentioned leaving him, “ ’Tis by this ſtroke, ſaid he, that we ſhall loſe you; all is over, you will become a Dutchman and a paſſit.” I aſſured him that I would be neither; but that I ſhould have cauſe to reproach myſelf eternally, if by neglecting to cultivate the favour of my relations, and for the ſake of avoiding a little trouble, I ſhould ſee myſelf deprived of thoſe large eſtates that might revert to me from the houſes of Bethune, Melun, and Horn*. I added, that it was this conſideration alone which induced me to join Monſieur, and that only for a little time, after which nothing ſhould be able to prevent my following my inclinations, which were to attach myſelf ſolely to him; and that whenever he had the ſmalleſt occaſion for my ſervice, I ſhould leave Flanders at his firſt order. The king then entertained me with the predictions that had been made him, that he ſhould one day be king of France; and I, in my turn, informed him, that a great fortune had been foretold me. An early prepoſſeſſion in favour of theſe pretended prophecies had made me weak enough to give credit to them; but as for the king of Navarre, who was of opinion that religion ought to inſpire a contempt for thoſe evil prophets, as he called them, he had within his own mind an oracle more certain, which was a perfect knowledge of the perſon and character of Monſieur, and a ſagacity that opened almoſt futurity to him. “ He will deceive me,” ſaid he, if he ever fulfils the expectations that are conceived of him: “ he has ſo little courage, a heart ſo malignant and deceitful, a body ſo ill made, ſo few graces in his converſation, ſuch want of dexterity in every kind of exerciſe, that I cannot perſuade myſelf he will ever perform any thing that is great.” The king of Navarre had leiſure to ſtudy this prince thoroughly, during the time that they were kept priſoners together. His memory at this inſtant furniſhed him with an

1580.

The proteſtants, to whom the laſt war had not been very favourable, conſented to it without any difficulty. The duke of Anjou deſired it with great ardour, in order to proſecute his deſigns upon the Low Countries; it was ſigned in the month of November. The articles were not made

known, but were believed to be of little importance. The cities given for ſecurity, were to be kept by the calviſtiſts fix years longer.

* Anne de Melun, the author's mother, was the daughter of Hugo, viſcount of Gand, and of Jane d'Horn.

infinite

1580.

infinite number of particulars, that gave him room to believe, Monsieur would infallibly fail in an enterprize so noble and hazardous as that he had undertaken. Amongst others he told me, that Monsieur flung himself against a pillar in running at the ring, and managed his horse with so little skill, that he would have been thrown to the ground, had not his equery with great haste and subtilty cut the reins of his horse, and spared him the shame of so aukward a fall. That he succeeded no better in dancing, hunting, or any other exercise; and far from feeling a just consciousness of these natural defects, or of repairing them in some degree by an ingenuous modesty, he secretly hated all who were more favoured by nature than himself; particularly the king of Navarre, who, on account of the preference the ladies gave him to Monsieur, tho' the brother of their king, and his having rivalled this prince in the favour of madam de Sauves*, and other court-quarrels of the same nature, became the object of his jealousy and hate.

THESE little anecdotes with which he entertained me, tho' inconsiderable in themselves, yet ceased to appear so, when the event fully justified the conclusions he drew from them. He concluded with telling me, that he plainly perceived Catherine had formed a design to exterminate the protestant party; and that he should soon have occasion for his faithful servants: then embracing me, he wished me a happier journey than our leader's was likely to be. I threw myself at his feet, and kissing his hand, protested that I would ever be ready to shed the last drop of my blood in his service. I quitted his presence, to go and pay my respects to the queens; after which I took post for Rosny.

FROM hence I sent Maignan, my equery, to Paris, to buy me some horses. I have never since had any that equalled two which he

* — de Beaune of Samblançay, married to Simon de Fizes, baron of Sauves, counsellor, and first secretary of state, who died November the 27th, 1579. She made this name well known by her gallantries. Her second husband was the marquis of Noirmoutier. "One night, says Matthieu the historian, when the duke of Alençon was with her, the king of Navarre laid a snare for him, so that as he came out, he fell against something in his way, and hurt one of his eyes. The next day the king of Na-

varre meeting him, exclaimed, Heavens! what is the matter with your eye? what accident has happened to it? The duke answered rudely, It is nothing, a small matter surprizes you. The other continuing to bemoan him, the duke being offended, advanced, and feigning to jest, whispered in his ear, Whoever shall say I have got it where you imagine, I will make him a liar. Souvray and Du Guast hindered them from fighting." Vol. I. book vii. page 403.

brought

brought me. One of them was a Spanish horse; he was quite black, except a white spot on his right buttock. The other was a Sardinian horse, to whom nature had given an instructive quality of defending his rider; for he would roll his eyes furiously, and spring upon the enemy with his mouth open, never quitting him till he had thrown him to the earth.

1580.

PART of the lands belonging to Monsieur extending to the neighbourhood of Rosny, I took occasion from thence to draw some advantage from his offer, and asked for the remainder of a wood, to be applied to my use; which was granted; and it produced me the sum of forty thousand franks. With this money, in fifteen days, I fitted out my whole troop, which was composed of eighty gentlemen; some of whom followed me disinterestedly, and others received only two hundred livres at most. With this train I went to join Monsieur, who waited for us in his castle of La-Fere, in Tartenois; from whence, after some time spent in deer-hunting, we marched to Saint Quentin, where all his troops were assembled.

THE prince of Parma surrounded Cambray with his whole army, and kept it blocked up. This afforded an occasion for the bravest amongst us to signalize themselves, and each one was desirous of commanding the first party that should be sent to reconnoitre. This honour fell to me, by the disposition into which Fervaques, the quartermaster general, who was my relation and friend, had put the army: it procured me, however, no advantage, for I returned without having taken one prisoner, the besiegers keeping all close behind their lines, although I passed near enough to sustain several discharges. The viscount Turenne secretly rejoiced at my disappointment, because I had refused the offer he made to join me, if I would wait till the next day. He chose out one hundred gentlemen, with whom he advanced towards Cambray, flattering himself that he should perform no inconsiderable exploit. The event did not answer his expectations; this fine troop had the misfortune to be defeated by fourscore or a hundred men belonging to the regiment of M. de Roubais*, of the house of

1581.

Alexander
Farnese,
duke of
Parma.William de
Hautefier
de Ferva-
ques.

* Robert de Melun, marquis of Roubais. The viscount Turenne's design was to throw himself into Cambray. See his Memoirs, page 311, and following. It is observed there, that he chose rather to be prisoner to the prince de Robecque, general of the Spanish cavalry, than to the

king of Spain: which was the cause that he was detained two years and ten months; for Spain feared, that after Robecque had received the money for the viscount's ransom, which was fifty-three thousand crowns, he would quit its service.

1581. Melun, who served in the enemy's army. Ten or twelve of our party were made prisoners, amongst whom were Ventadour*, and the viscount Turenne himself.

MEAN time Monsieur advanced, with an intention to give battle to the enemy's general; but he posted himself so advantageously, that we durst not attempt to force him, and the following night he raised the blockade, and retired towards Valenciennes, without the loss of one soldier, leaving the pass also so securely guarded, that he was under no apprehension of being overtaken. Monsieur now entered Cambray, and was received with great magnificence by the governor, whose name was d'Inchy. Chateau Cambresis refusing to surrender, was taken by assault. Monsieur, willing at first to discover a gentleness that might conciliate the people's affections towards him, forbid, upon pain of severe punishments, any violence against the women, who are generally the miserable victims of war; but fearing that these orders would not be sufficient to restrain the soldiers' brutality, any more than the plague with which the fort was infected, he gave them the churches for asylums, and placed guards about them. A very beautiful young girl threw herself into my arms as I was walking in the streets, and holding me fast, conjured me to guard her from some soldiers, who, she said, concealed themselves as soon as they saw me. I endeavoured to calm her fears, and offered to conduct her to the next church; but she told me she had been there, and asked for admittance, which they refused, because they knew she had the plague. My blood froze in my veins at this declaration, and anger renewing my strength, I thrust this girl from my arms, who exposed me to death, to save her, when she carried, in my opinion, her security about her; and flying away as fast as I was able, expected every moment to be seized with the plague.

MONSIEUR having attacked the passages of Arleux, and l'Ecluse, I took some prisoners there, whom I sent back without ransom, as soon as I was informed that they belonged to the marquis de Roubaix, my cousin. Roubaix, who was not ignorant of my just pretensions to the estates of the viscount de Gand, which he had usurped, received this generosity very ill. "By heaven, said he, these civili-

* Anne de Levis, afterwards duke of Ventadour, knight of the king's orders, governor of Limosin, and lieutenant-general in Languedoc. He died in 1622.

“ ties are very fine ; but if he is taken, he brings his ransom along with him.” I had reason to be apprehensive of this misfortune, and it would actually have happened to me two days after, at the attack of a wall, if Sesseval, by a very seasonable charge, had not extricated me from the danger. 1581.

THE prince of Parma having divided his army in the Low Countries, Monsieur returned to Cambray, where he was guilty of an artifice towards d’Inchy, very unworthy of a great prince, whose word ought always to be so inviolable, that no person should have a thought of suspecting his integrity. He had invited himself to dinner with this governor, who was at an excessive expence to receive him in the citadel, in a manner suitable to his high rank. D’Inchy invited above sixty of us to attend this prince, and treated us all with equal greatness and magnificence. During the repast, he was told that Monsieur’s guards presented themselves at the gates ; d’Inchy, thinking he should fail in the most essential part of his reception of Monsieur, it he sent them back, gave orders for their admittance, and every one else that come in that prince’s name, who, he said, was sole master in the castle. He spoke indeed prophetically, tho’ he did not think so at the time ; for so many made use of this privilege, that our party became at last the strongest, and Monsieur’s guards disarming those of M. d’Inchy, seized upon the castle. This exploit was wholly the contrivance of Monsieur, who relied on that sincerity in the governor, which he himself was not possessed of. As soon as d’Inchy was sensible of his misfortune, he complained bitterly of it to Monsieur, who answered him only with an insulting smile upon the accent of his country, which was Picardy ; and obliging him to quit the castle, which he gave to Balagny*, thought he made d’Inchy sufficient amends by the gift of the town and duchy of Chateau-Thierry ; but that gentleman, who perceived the difference between what was given him, and what he had been deprived of, resigned himself up to despair, and seeking death found it soon after in a skirmish.

AFTER this Monsieur returned to France, notwithstanding the intreaties of the inhabitants of the Low Countries to the contrary, who assured him, that after five or six fortresses more were taken, the only important ones that remained, all Flanders would submit to him. His

* John de Montluc, natural son of John de Montluc, bishop of Valence ; he is mentioned hereafter.

design in going to France was to make preparations for his voyage to England, whither he went a little time after. The reception he met with from queen Elizabeth*, and the engagement he contracted with her, having been mentioned by all the historians, I shall take no notice of them here, though I attended him in this voyage. From England Monsieur again returned to Zealand; flattered with a thousand agreeable hopes. He came to Lillo, and afterwards to Antwerp, where he was crowned duke of Brabant by the prince of Orange, assisted by the prince Dauphin, and all the nobility of the Low Countries, who expressed their joy on this occasion, a thousand different ways. This affection of the Dutch towards Monsieur had but a short duration. The prince of Orange, who only was more beloved by the people than him, was wounded in his chamber by a pistol shot †. The populace, who thought none but the French could be guilty of this action, mutinied, and would have fallen upon them; and Monsieur could find security no where but in the house of the wounded person, whither he fled for refuge. When the true author of this intended assassination ‡ was discovered, there was no sort of excuses or atonement which the burgeses did not offer Monsieur for the injustice of their suspicions, and the revolt they had occasioned; but this outrage made a deep impression on his heart, and he resolved within himself to take a signal revenge for it. The prince of Orange was not a man that could be easily deceived; he began from that moment to be upon his guard; for he perceived the resentment with which he was fired, and the rooted hatred he bore to protestants in general.

1582.
A fort upon
the Scheld.
Francis of
Bourbon,
son to the
duke of
Montpensier

As for me, I had already received personal proofs of it; which, added to other causes of complaint that were given me by Monsieur, absolutely disgusted me with his service. At first I attached myself solely to his person, and to please him spared neither labour nor expence;

* It is well known that the queen of England allowed several of the princes of Europe to flatter themselves in this manner with hopes of marrying her; and whether policy, or reasons purely natural, was the cause that she never came to any conclusion, is a question not easy to decide. Monsieur went to England in the winter of 1581, and returned to Flanders the spring following. See an account of this voyage, and of all the negotiations concerning this marriage at length, in the *Memoirs of Nevers*, vol. I. page 474, 603.

† The 18th of March 1582, by John de Jaureguy. The ball went quite through

his jaw. The assassin was taken by the soldiers of the prince of Orange, who rushed in at the noise, just as he was drawing his poignard to dispatch him. *Chron. Pisicki*.

‡ By the papers that were found in his pocket, he was known to be a Spaniard; this it was that appeased the people, who were ready to put all the French to the sword. *Mém. d'Aubery du Maurier*. The people ran about the street, crying, *Be-hold, this is the marriage of Paris, let us kill these murderers*. *Matthieu*, vol. I. book vii. to the end.

I thought therefore that I might solicit his interest with regard to my pretensions to the estate of the viscount de Gand, which reverted to me. He received my request very coldly, put me off with delays, and at last, when I prest him one day on the subject, he told me very cavalierly, that he could not gratify two persons at the same time; and that my cousin * the prince of Epinoy had obtained, without any trouble, what I had laboured for with so much assiduity. There was something in this answer more disobliging than the refusal itself; I was sensibly affected with it, and a few days after had a convincing proof of the little share myself, and the other protestant officers had in his favour, when I heard him say publicly, that he had just banished d'Avantigny from his council, the last of the protestants to whom he confided his secrets, and he was now perfectly easy. From that time I resolved to quit this ungrateful prince; and while I waited for an opportunity to return into France, applied myself to gain the favour of the prince of Orange, in whom I found all those qualities in which Monsieur was deficient. I remember, a few days before the treacherous attempt upon Antwerp, that I was at this prince's palace with Sainte Aldegonde, and a minister named Villiers; when, speaking of Monsieur and the catholics, by whom he was governed, he said, "These men have designs pernicious both for themselves and us, in which, it is my opinion, they will not find their account; and I intreat you, sir, added he, turning to me, not to go far from my lodgings." He thought very justly; and his diligence finishing what his foresight had begun, Monsieur suffered the double reproach of unsuccessful treachery †.

Philip Mar-
nix, lord of
Sainte Alde-
gonde.

HAVING assembled his army in the plain, under pretence of reviewing it, he went out of Antwerp one day in February, and ordered his soldiers to enter the city again by those gates that were at his disposal, and to make themselves masters of it by force. Accordingly his men threw themselves into Antwerp, as into a city taken by assault, crying out, "Kill, kill, the city is ours; mass for ever." But their triumph lasted not long: the prince of Orange, who carefully observed every step of Monsieur's, gave such good orders every where, or rather caused those he had long before given, to be so well

* Robert de Melun prince of Epinoy, son to the marquis of Richebourg.

† About that time the same attempt was made, by Monsieur's orders, on the principal cities of Flanders; the plot succeeded upon Dunkirk, Dixmude, and Dender-

monde, but failed upon Bruges, Ostend, Nieuport, &c. De Thou, book lxxvii. The duke of Montpensier, and the marshal Biron endeavoured in vain to dissuade Monsieur from this enterprize. Mathieu, *ibid.*

1583.

executed, that Monsieur's foldiers were all either repulſed, cut in pieces, or forced to throw themſelves off the walls; for their terror was ſo great, that thoſe who could not get at the gates, becauſe of the great number of carcaſes that obſtructed their way, had recourſe to that dreadful expedient. I had mounted my horſe two hours after noon, to go and join Monsieur in the field; but before I got out of the city, the loud ſhouts of the aſſailants ſtruck my ears, and in the ſame moment I met the prince of Orange, who deſired me and ſome other French gentlemen of the reformed religion, who were with me, to retire to his lodgings. As Frenchmen we could not expect to be ſafe at that time in the city, and, as huguenots, we had every thing to fear from the French army, who had taken poſſeſſion of it. We followed his advice, therefore, and he returned to us as ſoon as he had reſtored quiet to the city. The care he took to pacify the Dutch, and prevail upon them to forget a behaviour ſo inexcusable, is a proof that he bore with regret, and only in his own defence, an action which no Frenchman diſapproved of. It was not his fault that the proteſtant party in Flanders was not reconciled to Monsieur; and as for us, as ſoon as he knew we intended to join this prince, he put us into a condition to do it without danger.

WE found ourſelves greatly perplexed in the neighbourhood of Mechlin, whoſe inhabitants, by opening their ſluices, had formed a large marſh. Four or five thouſand foot, and as many horſe of Monsieur's army, periſhed there by cold and hunger, in a moſt rigorous ſeaſon. Monsieur, however, ſtaid five or ſix months in Flanders after this fatal enterprize: but his army had been ſo conſiderably leſſened, and the remainder ſo broken with fatigue, the cities ſo well guarded, and, to compleat his miſfortunes, the prince of Parma returned with an army ſo vaſtly ſuperior to his, that he was at laſt obliged to go back to France with the duke de Montpenſier, and the marechal de Biron, leaving nothing behind him in the Low Countries but the remembrance of a name juſtly deteſtable.

A PRINCE who has not prudence enough to conceal his hatred of perſons whoſe ſervices become neceſſary to him, muſt be unhappy; but this muſt be owned, to the advantage of virtue, that it ſecures, by the moſt infallible means, the ſucceſs of all great enterprizes. Wiſdom, equity, diſcipline, order, courage, good fortune; qualities which ſucceed each other in the order they are mentioned, form the chain of action in truly great men. The proceedings of thoſe who unjuſtly

arro-

arrogate to themselves that title, offer, on the contrary, nothing but rashness and obstinacy, the companions of blind ambition. A vain confidence in their talents, presumptuous dependence on their good fortune; all consequences of flattery, which generally enslaves no persons so much, as those false heroes who think themselves born to subject the whole world.

1583.

I COULD not resolve to leave Flanders without viewing those places where my ancestors were born; and having procured a passport from the count of Barlaymont, I went to Bassée, to visit madam de Mastin, my aunt. She received me as a nephew whom she had disinherited, because he neither believed in God nor his saints, and worshipped the devil. This notion father Silvester, a cordelier, a famous preacher, and this lady's director, had thought proper to give her of all protestants; and she took it upon his word. She carried me with her to see an abbey she had founded; and as she was shewing me some fine tombs of my ancestors, which she had caused to be erected there, took occasion to speak to me on the subject of my faith. If I was astonished to hear her utter these extravagant whims that father Silvester had put into her head, she was no less surprized to hear me repeat the creed, and all those prayers which we use in common with the roman catholics. With her reason, nature was also awakened; her great simplicity was the cause of the little tenderness she had shewn me. She embraced me with tears in her eyes, and promised me not only the certain succession to her estates, but also engaged to get those of the viscount de Gand restored to me. This at the time was her sincere intention; but father Silvester, no doubt, found better reasons to prevent the effect of those good designs, for none of them were ever executed.

Claude de
Barlaymont,
lord of Hau-
tepenne.

I HAD an earnest desire to see the city of Bethune, the country, and ancient inheritance of my ancestors, who for a long time were in possession of very considerable estates there. The treachery Monsieur had used towards the city of Antwerp, rendered all the other cities of the Low Countries suspicious; they would not suffer me to enter Bethune till I had shewn my passport, declared my name, and convinced them I came from madam de Mastin; which produced an effect I little expected: I had taken the road to an inn, whose sign was the coronet of the family of Bethune, when I saw a platoon of foot approach, that gave me some apprehensions. It was, however, the burgeses of the city, who full of respect for the blood of their ancient lords, no
sooner

1583. sooner heard my name, than they resolved to pay me all possible honours, and brought me a present of wine, and other refectiōns. Before I left this city, I visited and examined with great exactness, and a secret pleasure, all the public and private monuments which preserved to posterity the remembrance of the benefits my ancestors conferred on this city, and its gratitude for them.

HAVING nothing more to detain me in Flanders, I returned to France, and took the direct road to Rosny, which I left immediately, and went to Guyenne, full of joy to meet again the king of Navarre after so long an absence. This prince's reception of me was such as left me no room to doubt that my return was very acceptable to him. He obliged me to relate all my adventures, and those of Monsieur, and when I had finished, "Well, said he to me, is not this the accomplishment of all I predicted of this prince, in my conversation with you at Coutras; but the viscount de Turenne, whom I dissuaded as much as possible from following him, has succeeded much worse than you."

MONSIEUR's expedition into the Low Countries had enraged the king of Spain to such a degree, as to make him endeavour to gain the king of Navarre's friendship, and offer him supplies for renewing the war with the royalists of France. This proposition he received at Hagemaui, whither he went to visit the countess of Guiche*; for his passion for this lady was then at its height. The distrust Henry always entertained of Spain, and his natural antipathy to that court, prevented his giving any credit to it. I will not take upon me to answer for the sincerity of the Spaniards in these offers, which were made him at different times by Bernardin de Mandoce, the chevalier Moreau, and Calderon; however, I believe there were some intervals, in which the king of Spain dealt faithfully with the king of Navarre †. But be that as it will, the king of Navarre gave no answer to this proposition, and made no other use of it than to convince the king

* Diana, or Corisande Dandoins, viscountess of Louigny, &c. wife, and afterwards widow of Philibert count of Grammont. In the observations upon the amours of Alcxander the great, this lady is said to have sent Henry IV. three or four and twenty thousand Gascons levied at her own expence. It is also mentioned there, that she had a son named Antony,

whom that prince offered to acknowledge for his own; but the young man replied, that he chose rather to be considered as a gentleman, than the bastard of a king. Journal of Henry the third's reign, p. 270.

† That which induced him to believe this, was, that to this letter of the king of Spain's, presented to the king of Navarre
and

and queen-mother of the justice of his designs. He sent me therefore to Paris, to inform them of the step which Spain had taken.

1583.

THERE WAS no longer any access to be had to the king; he had retired to Vincennes, where he saw none but his favourites, and the ministers of his pleasures. I expected to have been introduced to him by the queen of Navarre; for this princess, whose temper could not agree with that of the king her husband, had * left him to return to the court of France: but I learnt from madam de Bethune, that she was on no better terms with the queen her mother, and the king her brother. I then had recourse to madam de Sauves, who procured me an audience of Catherine. The affair seemed to her to be important, she mentioned it to the king, and a negotiation was begun there. I even obtained from his majesty a credential letter to the king of Navarre; but what reliance ought one to have on the determinations of a court, that, as it should seem, never formed a good design that was not immediately repented of? The queen-mother thought fit to make no other use of the king of Navarre's confidence, than to enter into a stricter union with Spain: which came to Henry's knowledge by the reproaches the king of Spain made him, for having betrayed his secret.

THE bad reception Monsieur met with at his return from Flanders, was one effect of this reconciliation with Spain. This prince retired to Chateau-Thierry, oppressed with grief. After my deputation was finished, being at home, and engaged in no employment, curiosity led me to visit Monsieur at Chateau-Thierry. I imagined his bad fortune would have made him wiser; but it had only abated his pride. He received me with a kindness that I was far from thinking disinterested, and from which I immediately concluded, he had some great designs in his head. The advantageous offers made me in his name by Aurilly, who had procured me the honour of kissing his hand,

by the chevalier Moreau, or the commandeur Morée, as Davila calls him, book ii. was added an offer of fifty thousand crowns, made by the same chevalier to the viscount de Chaux, on the frontier of Bearn, to maintain the king of Navarre's army; provided he would turn his arms against France. Mem. of the league, Vol. V.

* From that time they always lived se-

parate, notwithstanding the reproaches which Henry III. often made the king of Navarre on that occasion, and some others that are mentioned by l'Etoile. One day, when the latter received some very sharp letters from Henry III. "The king, said he, in all his letters, honours me greatly; for by the first he calls me C—, and by the last the son of P—.

convinced

1583.

convinced me I was not mistaken; but, amidst the great projects* with which Monsieur was intoxicated, I discovered a melancholy and secret discontent that preyed upon his heart, and which nothing could remove. From hence proceeded that languishing disorder, which some time after put an end to all his ambitious designs by death †.

AT my return to Paris, I received an order from the king of Navarre to come to him upon some very important affairs. He was endeavouring to disconcert, if possible, all the enterprizes of the league; a design, which this wise prince had always in view. He had occasion for a person, on whose probity he could rely, to reside at the court of France, and study all its motions; and it was to charge me with this commission, that he had commanded my attendance. He communicated his reflections to me, gave me all the necessary instructions, and when I took leave of him, embraced me several times, saying, “My friend, remember, that the first quality in a man of true courage and worth, is to keep his word inviolably; that which I have given to you, I will never fail in.” There was no necessity for racking my invention, to furnish me with a pretence for this second journey to Paris. The favour in which I had left my two younger brothers ‡ at that court, afforded me a very plausible one. They had begun to create jealousy in the favourites, for the king already made them his companions in his parties of devotion, which was a step that was likely to lead them to the greatest familiarity; however, on my arrival, I learned that they were disgraced; the reason of which I did not know till a long time after, and it is of the number of

* Monsieur took the titles of son of France, by the grace of God, duke of Lauthier, of Brabant, Luxembourg, Guelderland, Alençon, Anjou, Tourain, Berry, Evreux, and Chateau-Thierry, count of Flanders, of Holland, Zealand, Zulphen, Maine, Perche, Mante, Meulan, and Beaufort, marquis of the holy Roman empire, lord of Friesland, and Mechlin, defender of the Belgic liberty. Hercules was the name that was given him at his baptism, but when he was confirmed, it was changed to Francis.

† There is not any historian who doubts that he died by poison. His blood ran

through all his pores, as if every vein had been burst. De Thou, book lxxviii.

“This happened, says the Memoirs of Nevers, by his having lain with La — who made him smell a poisoned rose-gay.” Ibid. p. 163. Busbeq. Ep. 33, 35.

‡ Solomon and Philip de Bethune. The first as eldest, was called baron of Rosny, and was governor of Mante. The second has formed the branch of the counts of Selles and Charost. By attaching themselves to the person and party of the king of France, they both abjured the protestant religion, in which they had been educated.

those things * that ought to be buried in oblivion. This accident did not hinder me from entering upon my new employment at Paris, and the court. I gave the king of Navarre exact intelligence of all that passed, that he might take such measures as were most suitable to the state of his affairs.

1583.

ENGAGED in this new kind of life, which obliged me by the nature of the employment I had undertaken, to frequent the court, to mix in the politeſt company of the city, to ſhare in their amusements, their pleasures, and even to be infected with their idleness; and being besides in the prime and strength of my age, it is not strange that I should pay the accustomed tribute to love. I became violently enamoured of the daughter of the president de St. Mesmin, one of the most beautiful ladies in France.

AT first, I wholly abandoned myself to a passion, which, in the beginning, is so delightful, that when I would have stifled it afterwards, upon reflecting that this alliance was not convenient for me, I found that consideration too weak, when opposed to the friendship this whole family expressed for me, the esteem of a father truly respectable, and the charms of a mistress worthy my tenderest affection. My own endeavours alone would not have been sufficient to have broken this chain. La Fond †, to divert the course of my thoughts, proposed to me to visit mademoiselle de Courtenay ‡, whom he earnestly wished I would make my addressee to, as a person who, in all respects, was much more suitable to me. I saw her, and approved this choice; but mademoiselle de St. Mesmin soon destroyed all these wise reflections.

BEING one day at Nogent upon the Seine, attended by this La Fond, and some other persons, I went to lodge at an inn, whither chance had conducted both mademoiselle de St. Mesmin, and mademoiselle de Courtenay, which I learnt the moment I entered the inn. This was one of the most delicate conjunctures imaginable, and I judged it would be impossible to leave the place without breaking for ever with that lady of the two, to whom I should neglect

* Those who are curious to know it, need only consult the seventh chapter of the Confession of Sancy.

† La Fond was his valet de chambre. He is mentioned in another place.

‡ Anne de Courtenay, youngest daughter of Francis de Courtenay, lord of Bontin.

1583. to pay my first visit and affiduities. In a case of this nature, no artifice, no address can satisfy two women at the same time.

MADemoiselle de St. Mesmin's youngest sister coming down stairs at that moment, found me absorbed in reflection, like a man that was labouring to reconcile his reason with his love. She perceived it, and my confusion affording her a fine opportunity to display the vivacity of her wit, she endeavoured to draw me to her sister's feet; when la Fond approaching me, whisper'd in my ear, "Turn to the right, monsieur: there you will find a large estate, a royal extraction, and equal beauty, when it shall have attained to the age of perfection." These few words, so seasonably uttered, recalled my scattered reason, and fixed my wavering purpose. I was convinced the advice la Fond gave me was good, and that the only difference between the beauty of mademoiselle de Courtenay and her rival, was, that the one was already in the possession of charms, which a year or two more promised the other. I sent an excuse for not attending mademoiselle de St. Mesmin, which drew upon me great reproaches; but I courageously sustained the assault, and went immediately after to visit mademoiselle de Courtenay, who valued this sacrifice at its full price. She was pleased with the preference; and I applauded myself for it, when I considered my new mistress with more attention, and that a few visits more had given me a perfect knowledge of her character. My addresses were favourably received, and a short time after this adventure, we were married*.

THE tenderness and assiduity due to an amiable bride, detained me in Rosny this whole year, amidst rural employments, exercises, and diversions; another kind of life not less new to me than the former. The country, to those whose time has been divided between the court and the field, is generally an occasion of double expence; but it affords many resources to a man, who knows that good œconomy supplies the place of great riches. My turn for fine horses, which I had cultivated merely for my pleasure, did not make up a useless part of this domestic œconomy. I kept jockeys in my service, whom I sent to buy horses in foreign countries, where they were cheap, and sold them in Gascony, at the king of Navarre's court, where I never failed to draw large sums for them. I remember to have sold, amongst

* Guy de Bethune, son of Alpin de Rosny, had married one Frances de Courtenay Bontin.

others,

others, a silver roan-horse to the viscount de Chartres, for six hundred crowns, which cost me but forty. The tapestry that adorns the hall of Sully, in which are delineated the labours of Hercules, came from M. de Nemours de la Garnache, who paid me with that for a fine Spanish horse that I had sold to him at the rate of twelve hundred crowns.

1584.

TOWARDS the end of this year *, a letter from the king of Navarre drew me from a life so inactive: he informed me, that the time in which he had foreseen that the assistance of his faithful servants would be necessary, was now come: that the state and our religion were threatened with the severest misfortunes, if immediate endeavours were not used to prevent them; and that he should soon have a cruel war to sustain. I instantly disposed myself to attend this prince, taking with me, as well for his occasions, as my own, forty-eight thousand francs, which I raised by the sale of a wood of high trees, that was cut down for that purpose.

IN effect, the bold enterprizes of the league † broke out this year. One cannot reflect without horror, that in less than four years, ten

1585.

* The peace continuing in force till the following year, the Memoirs of this and the preceding contain little concerning the king of Navarre. Le Grain relates the adventure that happened to him with captain Michau, who pretended to have quitted the service of Spain for that of this prince, in order to find some opportunity of murdering him treacherously. "One day, says he, when the king of Navarre was hunting in the forests of Aillas, he perceived Michau just behind him, well mounted, with a couple of pistols cocked and primed. The king was alone and unattended, it being customary for hunters to separate; and seeing him approach, "Captain Michau, said he to him, with a bold and determined air, dismount; I have a mind to make trial of your horse, that I may know if it be as good a one as you say it is." The captain obeyed, and dismounting, the king got upon his horse, and taking the pistols, "Do you design to shoot me with one of these? said he: I am told, you intend to kill me, but in the mean

time I can kill you if I please." Saying this, he discharged the two pistols in the air, and commanded the captain to follow him. Michau, having good reasons to desire to be excused, took leave of him two days after, and never appeared." Decade of Henry the great, book viii. Busbeq, who at that time resided at Paris, in the quality of ambassador from the emperor Rodolphus II. assures us also, in his letters, that a deserter, whom he does not name, administered poison to the king of Navarre; but that this prince, either by the strength of his constitution, or the weakness of the poison, felt no bad effects from it: and adds, that this same man having attempted afterwards to shoot him with a pistol, and failed, was taken and put to the torture; and that it was known, by the behaviour of Henry III. upon this occasion, that he had no part in the designed assassination. Epistle 46.

† The first step which discovered the designs of the league, was an association of princes, prelates, and gentlemen of Picardy, who met at Peronne, to avoid

1585.

royal armies fell upon the king of Navarre, when the danger that equally threatened the two kings was turned against him alone, through the weakness of Henry III. who allowed his own enemies to give laws to him, and conducted himself the hand that sought to overthrow his authority.

obeying the edict of sixty-three articles, given in the year 1576, in favour of the protestants. The manifesto that was there drawn up, served for a model to all the other provinces, and even to the states of Blois, which were summoned about the end of that year, and whose resolutions obliged Henry III. to declare himself the head of the catholics against the huguenots, that he might not leave this title to be assumed by the duke of Guise. At first, they talked only of maintaining the catholic religion alone in the kingdom, but at length a debate concerning the succession to the crown was introduced, in which they brought the pope and king of Spain. See the form of these associations in the MS. volume marked 8826, in the king's library, p. 160. The conspiracy of the nobility of Normandy, with the oath to preserve the catholic religion in France, and the crown to the house of Valois, see in vol. 8832. p. 5. All this volume is likewise filled with Memoirs relating to the league, and the first states of Blois. See also the treaty of the league made with the king of Spain at the castle of Joinville, and signed by the respective parties, with many other pieces on the same subject, vol. 8866. All, or part of these pieces, with very curious circumstances relating to the same subject, may be found in different authors, such as the Memoirs of Nevers, vol. I. Memoirs of the league, vol. I. Memoirs of state by Villeroy, vol. II. De Thou, book lxxiii. and lxxxii. D'Aubigné, vol. II. book iii. chap. 3. Matthieu, vol. I. book vii. and viii. Le Novenaire de Cayet, vol. I. at the beginning; and many others. Many persons believe the origine of the league to be much more ancient, and that it took its rise in the council of Trent, through the endeavours of the cardinal of Lorraine, the uncle; during which Francis duke of Guise on his side formed the plan of it in France;

but the death of the latter suspended the effect. 'Tis pretended also, that Don John of Austria passing through France, in his way to Flanders, concerted the scheme with the duke of Guise. The college of Forteret has passed for the cradle of the league. 'Tis said that an advocate, named David, carried the Memoirs to Rome; and that these Memoirs, which may be read in the first volume of the Memoirs of the league, being intercepted by the huguenots, gave them the first certainty of it. Some persons have doubted whether this advocate, who died in his journey to Rome, or, as others say, in his return thence, did not treat with the pope by his own motion, and agreeably to his own opinion: which is not less probable. As for Henry III. he certainly deserves all the reproaches which the duke of Sully here casts upon him. He had undeniable proofs of his enemies designs upon the royal authority; to whom, when he broke the edict of pacification in 1577, he said aloud these words, "I am much afraid, that by our endeavours to suppress calvinism, we shall bring the mass into danger." We are assured, that all the secrets of the league were discovered by a gentleman named la Rochette, to whom they were entrusted, and who suffered himself to be taken on purpose, that he might reveal them without danger. In a word, 'tis also certain, that the duke of Guise began to raise the standard of his party in the year 1585, when he was still so weak, that he could not depend upon more than four thousand foot and a thousand horse. Beauvais Nangis also (and he relates it himself in his Memoirs) asked him one day what he intended to do if the king should come to attack him: "I will retire immediately to Germany, replied the duke, and there wait for a more favourable opportunity."

HENRY

HENRY III. perceiving the league would publicly raise the standard of revolt, waked a little from the lethargy into which he had been plunged, and thought proper to send the duke de Joyeuse * into Normandy, to oppose the duke d'Elbeuf, who kept an army there, which the league made use of to extort the famous edict of July †, wherein all the huguenots were ordered, either to go to mals, or to leave the kingdom in six months.

1585.

Claude of Lorraine.

JOYEUSE, who had my two brothers in his army, passed by Rosny, and prevailed upon me, without much difficulty, to go with him: by attacking the league, the friends of the king of Navarre entered into his true interests. I gave him the best reception in my power, but nothing charmed him so much as the beauty of my horses.

LAVARDIN likewise took his way through Rosny, but went to lodge at the extremity of the town. Chicot ‡, who would always

* Anne duke of Joyeuse, the eldest of seven sons of William of Joyeuse.

† This was the treaty of Nemours, the triumph of the league, and the disgrace of Henry III. Henry IV. told the marquis de la Force, in the presence of Matthieu, who relates it in his eighth book, that the moment he was informed of this shameful weakness of the king of France, his mustaches turned suddenly white on that side of his face, which he supported with his hand. Sixtus the fifth appeared ashamed himself; and by the same bull of September the 5th, 1585, wherein he excommunicated all that assisted the huguenots, he likewise excommunicated those who undertook any thing against the king and kingdom. He foresaw at that time all the miseries that would befall France. See these articles of Nemours, and the proceedings of the league in France and Rome, vol. I. of the Memoirs of Nevers, p. 661, and following.

‡ Chicot was a Gascon, brave, rich, and a buffoon. At the siege of Rouen, he wounded Henry of Lorraine, count of Chabigny, in the thigh; and taking him prisoner, presented him to Henry IV. saying, "Here, keep what I give thee." The count, enraged at being taken by a fool, gave him a blow on the head with the hilt

of his sword, which killed him. He used to say whatever he pleased to the king, without giving him any offence. When the duke of Parma came to France, Chicot said to the king, before all the courtiers, "My friend, I see very well that all you do will signify nothing, unless you either "turn catholic or pretend you are one." Another time he said to him, "I am convinced that to be peaceably king of France, you would give both papists and huguenots to Lucifer's clerk; so true it is, that you kings have no religion but in appearance." "I am not surprized," said he another time to his majesty, "that so many persons desire to be kings: it is a good trade, and by working at it only an hour in a day, one may make sufficient provision for the rest of the week, without being obliged to one's neighbours; but for God's sake, my friend, take care and keep out of the hands of the leaguers, for if you should fall into some of them, they would hang you up like a hog's gut, and write upon your gibbet, At the crown of France and Navarre, are good lodgings to be lett." Memoirs for the history of France, vol. II. p. 72.

1585.

give free scope to his humour, resolv'd to divert himself at Lavardin's expence, whom he called a madman; and sending for him one day, told him with a mysterious air, that that devil of a huguenot (meaning me) certainly intended to keep the deaf man (a nickname he gave likewise to the duke of Joyeuse) prisoner. Lavardin, without reflecting that his attempt would be usefess, tho' it had not been ridiculous, armed himself immediately, with all his domestics, and came with them in bravado before my door; where he was oblig'd to bear the railleries of the whole company, who did not spare him.

WHAT I am now going to say, will hardly appear credible. We set out together, and had scarcely reach'd Verneuil, when the duke of Joyeuse received a packet from court, which inform'd him, that the king had concluded a peace with the league, and that it was his majesty's intention, that the army, which two days ago was to support him against the league *, should be led against the king of Navarre. Joyeuse, in relating this to me, added, "Well! monsieur le baron de Rosny, this stroke will give me a cheap bargain of your fine horses, for the war is declared against the protestants: but I persuade myself, continued he, that you will not be so simple as to join the king of Navarre, and by embarking in a cause that will infallibly be ruined, lose your fine estate of Rosny."

THE duke might have spoken much longer without interruption; for although I was sufficiently acquainted with the court, so that nothing from that quarter could surprize me, yet I could not reflect, without astonishment, upon those difficulties through which fortune seem'd to take a pleasure in leading the king of Navarre, before she conducted him to that greatness that was destin'd for him; for I was always persuad'd of this in my own mind, and the predictions of la Brosse were continually present to me. My answer, therefore, to Joyeuse, turn'd wholly upon these prefaces; after which

* The king was oblig'd to it at Châlons by the leaguers, who were assembled there. He scarcely excus'd himself to the king of Navarre, upon the necessity he was driven to. This prince and the queen his Mother suffer'd themselves to be unseasonably intimidated by the threats of the league, whose forces were exaggerated, although it would not have been difficult to have destroy'd

them in the beginning. The council miss'd an opportunity of uniting the Low Countries to the crown, by sending back the deputies from those provinces, without an answer, who came to offer the sovereignty of them to the king, provided he would march with his troops on that side. Thus were two great errors committed at one time. De Thou, book lxxxii.

I quitted

I quitted him abruptly. This step might appear a little extravagant to him; and I have been informed, that he said to those about him, "There goes a consummate fool; but he will be finely deluded by his forcerer."

1585.

I RETURNED to my house, from whence I set out again immediately, after taking some new measures conformable to the sudden change which had so lately happened. I went directly to Guienne, where the king of Navarre was, and staid with him four or five months, during which he was employed in making preparations against the storm that was burling upon him. He carried me with him to Montauban, where he held several conferences with the protestants upon the part it was necessary they should take in this conjuncture. Unhappily for them, upon this occasion, when all was at stake, they did not understand their true interest sufficiently, at least so as to oblige them to a perfect union amongst themselves, and a faithful concurrence in the same designs. From that time, some of the principal leaders thought more of their own advancement than the king's, without considering that their fortunes were so closely connected with his, that if he failed, it would be impossible for them to succeed. Each was for building a fortune for himself, independent of the general plan.

THIS disunion of minds shewed itself more apparently in a private conference held at St. Paul de Lamiate, where audience was given to a doctor of divinity, named Butrick, sent thither by the elector Palatine. It was there that the viscount de Turenne gave the first indications of that turbulent, false, and ambitious spirit, which formed his character. He had, in concert with this Butrick, projected a new system * of government, into which they had drawn monsieurs de Constans, d'Aubigné, de St. Germain-Beaupré, de St. Germain de Clan, de Brezölles, and others. They wanted to form the calvinist part of France into a kind of republican state, under the protection of the elector Palatine; and five or six lieutenants in his name were to be sent into the different provinces.

In the bishopric of Castres.

* The historian who gives us the life of the duke of Bouillon, does not deny that these were the views of this calvinist nobleman. He was a very able politician, extremely ambitious, passionately desirous of the quality of leader of the calvinists of

France, and very capable of filling that post. This is all that can be said of him, to soften those terms, rather too severe, which monsieur de Sully frequently makes use of in these Memoirs, when he speaks of the duke of Bouillon.

1585.

IF we examine this project, it will easily appear, that the king of Navarre was but little obliged to these gentlemen, since, by this plan they blended the princes of the blood with the officers of the protestant party, and reduced them all to the quality of lieutenants under a petty foreign prince. This was not the only time that the king of Navarre found secret enemies in his councils, amongst his dependents, and, in appearance, most faithful servants, and even amongst his own friends and relations.

FROM men all things may be expected; they are not to be kept firm to their duty, integrity, and the laws of society, by fidelity and virtue, but by their hopes, and wishes. But how could these consummate politicians undertake to mention unity and conduct in their pretended republic? they, who were for giving it 10 many heads, each independent of the other, and all under little subjection to a protector too weak to make himself be obeyed. It was perceived immediately, that their design was to make themselves so many sovereigns in their several districts, not foreseeing that by that means they would only deliver up each other to the discretion of Spain, and the league, who would easily destroy them, by attacking them separately.

ALTHOUGH these cabals of the principal officers in the protestant party with a foreigner, were carried on privately enough, yet happily they did not hinder the better party from prevailing in the assembly. The duke of Montmorency * was of opinion, that in the present danger we should be all united, and keep ourselves effectually upon the defensive. I insisted, in all the councils, upon the necessity of acknowledging the authority of one only head, and of not weakening our power by dividing it. As we came out from one of these councils, the king of Navarre drawing me aside said to me, " Monsieur le baron de Rosny, it is not enough to speak well, we must act still better: are you not resolved that we should die together? it is no longer time to be frugal; all men of honour, and who have their religion at heart, must venture one half of their estates to save the other. I am persuaded, that you will be amongst the first to assist me, and I promise you, if I succeed, you shall partake of my good fortune." " No, no, sir, replied I, we will not die, but we will

* This is Henry, marechal Damville, afterwards duke of Montmorency.

" live

“ live together, and make our enemies shorter by their heads. I have still a wood that will produce me a hundred thousand francs, and all shall be employed on this occasion; you shall give me more when you are rich, which will certainly happen. I had a preceptor who was possessed by a devil, and he foretold it me.” The king of Navarre could not help smiling at this folly, and embracing me closely, “ Well, my friend, said he to me, return to your house, be diligent, and come to me soon again, with as many of your friends as you can bring with you, and do not forget your wood of high trees.” He afterwards communicated to me the design he had to draw the war to Paris, or at least to the Loire; which was, in effect, the only means of succeeding. He told me also, that he carried on a private correspondence in Angers, but that he feared the prince of Condé would by his precipitation obstruct his designs there, more than the catholics; the event will shew if he judged rightly. He promised to inform me of all that passed, and took leave of me, with a thousand testimonies of friendship, which I shall never forget.

1585.

I ARRIVED at Bergerac, almost in the same moment that the cardinal de Lenoncourt *, M. de Sillery, and M. de Poigny came thither also, being deputed by the court to the king of Navarre, to represent to him, for the last time, the necessity he was under of submitting to the king's pleasure, and of changing his religion †. Poigny

* Philip de Lenoncourt, cardinal and archbishop of Rheims. Nicolas Brulart, marquis of Sillery, afterwards chancellor. John d'Angennes, lord of Poigny.

† In the Memoirs of the life of J. A. de Thou, book iii. there is a conversation which Michael de Montagne had with this president, that the reader may not be displeas'd to see here. “ As they were discoursing, says the author, upon the causes of the present troubles, Montagne told the president, that he had been a mediator between the king of Navarre, and the duke of Guise, when these princes were at the court; and that the latter by his cares, his services, and assiduities, made advances to gain the king of Navarre's friendship; but finding that he made a jest of him, and that after all his endeavours he was still an implacable enemy, he had recourse to war as the last resource to defend the

“ honour of his family; that the enmity which rag'd in the minds of these two persons, was the cause of a war, which was at present so far kindled, that only the death of one of them could extinguish it; that neither the duke, or any of his family, believed themselves secure, while the king of Navarre lived; and the king of Navarre, on his side, was persuaded, that he should draw no advantage from his right of succession to the crown, during the duke's life. As for religion, added he, which they both make such a noise about, it is a good pretence to procure adherents, but neither of them is much affected by it. The fear of being abandoned by the protestants, is the sole cause that prevents the king of Navarre from embracing the religion of his ancestors, nor would the duke recede from the confession of Augsburg, if his uncle Charles, cardinal

M came

1585. came to me the next day, disclosing to me the purport of his commission, and asked me what I thought would be the event of his journey. I assured him that he was giving himself an useless trouble; and that on an occasion when religion, the state, and the royal authority were in so great danger, it would not be words only that could prevail upon the king of Navarre. He shrugged up his shoulders, sighed at my answer, and instead of replying, "I believe, said he to me, it will be a difficult thing to procure a mass in this city." I conducted him to the chapel myself with the other deputies, being desirous to persuade them by this liberty that was allowed to catholics, in a city wherein the protestants were masters, that we were not the real enemies of the king.

WHAT I had foretold the deputies of the event of their commission, exactly happened. As for me, I continued my journey to Paris, where, on my arrival, I found nothing was talked of but the design of ruining the king of Navarre entirely, and extirpating the huguenots. Every thing there was conducted according to the inclination of the league, which, since the shameful step the king had taken, ruled despotically, and all the worthy Frenchmen that remained, were under a necessity of lamenting in private the misfortunes which the king's weakness had drawn upon the kingdom. It was to these that I addressed myself, and I had some conference with Mess. de Rambouillet, de Montbazon † the elder, d'Aumont, de la Rochequion, des Arpentis, and some others. They all assured me, that when once the king of Navarre should appear in the neighbourhood of the Loire, he should soon see a considerable number of true Frenchmen in his train. I confirmed them as much as I was able in these good resolutions ‡, and after I had bought some horses at Paris, I made haste to procure those sums I had promised the king.

I LEARNT by public report, what had happened at Angers: but, in order to give a distinct account of it, it is necessary to take the

" of Lorraine, had convinced him, that he might follow it without prejudice to his interest. These, he said, were the sentiments he discovered in these princes, when he was employed in their affairs."
 † Nicholas d'Angennes, marquis of Rambouillet. Lewis de Rohan, created duke of Montbazon, in the year 1588.

John d'Aumont, marechal of France. — de Silly, count of Rochequion. Lewis du Bois, lord of Arpentis, master of the king's wardrobe, governor of Touraine.

‡ Monsieur de Rosny's negotiation with Henry III. is mentioned by de Thou, book lxxxii.

story a little higher. Briffac, who was governor of the castle of this city, placed a lieutenant there in his absence, called captain Grec, with twenty soldiers, on whose fidelity he had an entire reliance. Two of these soldiers, having been formerly of the reformed religion, suffered themselves to be gained by the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé, and waited only for a favourable opportunity to deliver up the castle to them, which would necessarily be followed by the surrender of the city. When it was known at Angers, that Henry III. had joined with the king of Navarre against the league, a third party was formed, headed by du Hallot *, who likewise endeavoured to gain Rochemorte and Fresne, so were the two soldiers named. Matters did not long continue in this state; the two soldiers, persuaded by the prince of Condé, surprized captain Grec, and killed him, together with some of his men: after which they seized upon the castle. Du Hallot, who knew not of the change that had so lately happened at court, gave himself no trouble about this action; on the contrary, he satisfied the people, by representing to them, that the two soldiers had only acted according to the king's orders; and he remained in this error, till offering to enter the castle, he himself experienced the treachery of Rochemorte and Fresne, and through his mistake, suffered death upon the wheel †.

1585.
Charles de
Cossy, comte
de Briffac.

HITHERTO every thing succeeded for the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé's party. But they soon experienced the instability of fortune. Rochemorte having been drawn beyond the bridge by the catholics, who kept the castle invested, perceiving that their design was to surprize the place, and make him their prisoner, endeavoured to get in again. In this tumult, those within the castle thought of nothing but of drawing up the bridge immediately. Rochemorte grasped the chains, which losing from his hold, he fell into the ditch, where a stag that was feeding dispatched him by tearing him in pieces. Fresne only remained, who, two days after, as he was sleeping upon a parapet on the wall, where he thought himself in safety, was killed by a carbine, shot from the other side of the river, at the distance of above 500 paces. After which the catholics drove out the rest of the huguenots from the city and castle, with the same

* Michael Bourrouge du Hallot.
Lewis Bouchereau de Rochemorte Leon
de Fresne.

† The king was so much afraid of the
league, that he publicly disfavoured du
Hallot's enterprize.

1585.

facility that they had seized it. Things would not have taken this unfavourable turn, if the king of Navarre had conducted the enterprise alone; for he would not have suffered the two conspirators to begin their operation, till he was at the gate to support them with his whole army.

THIS ill-concerted scheme produced more misfortunes; the prince of Condé being engaged in the siege of Brouage, when news was brought him, that his party had surprized Angers, balanced not a moment whether he should quit the siege, but went immediately to the assistance of his confederates at Angers; where arriving too late, he failed in both his designs. This was not all; the whole catholic army being idle and dispersed, assembled again in the neighbourhood of Angers, which took away all possibility of regaining it, precipitated all the actions of the campaign, and brought the prince of Condé himself, as we shall see presently, into a danger, from whence he escaped but by a singular instance of good fortune.

AFTER this first act of hostility on the protestant side, I believed it would be no longer possible to keep any measures with the catholics. If to continue at Rosny, therefore, was dangerous, the country being overspread with royalists, it was no less so to endeavour to make my way to the king of Navarre: however, I resolved upon this last expedient, being convinced, that he never had more need of my assistance than in the present conjuncture; and that the difficulty of sending dispatches through the midst of an enemy's army, was the only cause of my not hearing from him as he had promised. * Messieurs de Mouy, de Feuquieres, and Morinville, to whom I imparted my design, judging it to be too hazardous, refused to accompany me; but this did not hinder me from setting out on my journey, attended only by six gentlemen, and my domestics, two of whom carried portmanteaus, in each of which were six thousand crowns.

In Perche.
In the coun-
ty of Char-
train.

I LAY the first night at Nonancourt, and the second at Chateaudun. Hitherto no unfortunate accident befel me, for although we every where met with great numbers of catholic soldiers, yet they all supposed I was going, like them, to join the body of the duke of Joyeuse's army; with whom, as a soldier, named Mothepotain, informed me, every thing went very well. I left Chateaudun before day, lest I should be discovered, and came to Vendome; where not being willing

* Isaac Vaudré, or Vaudray, lord of Mouy. — de Pas-Feuquieres.

1585.

to be known by Bénéhart *, I made Boisbrueil, one of the gentlemen in my train, pass for the master of the troop, and I mounted, like one of the domestics, upon a horse that carried baggage. He who appeared to be the chief amongst us, was asked several questions, to which he made proper answers, and we were suffered to pass. We traversed the whole city, in order to lodge in the most distant part of the suburbs. Bénéhart, who believed us to be catholics, as we had assured him we were, very obligingly sent to advise us to return into the city, because the prince of Condé's army, which had been repulsed before Angers, were dispersed over the country, and sometimes made excursions to the gates of the city, which rendered our stay in the suburbs very dangerous. What he represented to us as a misfortune we should have looked upon as a very great happiness; but there was a necessity for concealing it: therefore, the pretended master of the equipage, seeming to approve of this advice, ordered the baggage to be put upon the horses again, that we might return into the city. It belonged to me, who performed the part of a domestic, secretly to protract our stay till the night approached. The hurry and confusion, occasioned by the removal of all the people who lodged there, for the order was general, kept our artifice unsuspected: at length, we in reality made preparations for going, as well as the rest; but after our horses had been fed and refreshed, and the night half over, we mounted, and, instead of entering the city, filed off into a bye street, which I had caused to be reconnoitred, and got into the fields on that side, where I supposed the prince of Condé's army might be.

WE had, however, reason to apprehend, that the artifice which had hitherto proved so successful, would occasion our ruin, through the impossibility of distinguishing readily, what party those whom we might happen to meet, belonged to. A mistake might cost us our lives; but there being no remedy, we continued our journey, though with sufficient uneasiness, thinking it necessary not to alter our usual answer. In effect, the first we met with was a company of light-armed horse, commanded by Falandre. To the question, which was, *Qui vive*, we replied, *Vive le Roy*; and Falandre examining us no farther, advised us to join him, lest we should meet the prince of Condé's little army, which he assured us was not far off; adding, that if we doubted him, we might get further information from two or three companies of *goulets* †, who were

* James de Maillé de Bénéhart, governor of Vendôme.

† So called from the bows with which they were at first armed. They served coming

1585.

coming after. These last words furnished us with a pretence for evading his perplexing civility: we feigned to have reasons for not following the same rout with him, and for waiting to take our measures from the answer we should receive from the argoulets. In reality, we were no less apprehensive of this other rencounter, but we prepared for it, relying still upon the good fortune of escaping, by means of our disguise. Accordingly, we did not fail to the question, *Qui vive*, which was asked us by the next company we met, to answer boldly, *Vive le Roy*, being persuaded that we spoke to the argoulets of the royal army, whom Falandre had mentioned to us. This supposition, however, probably drew us into a very great danger; for these argoulets having perceived the prince of Condé's army at a distance, dispersed, and threw themselves into the woods. Instead of them, therefore, these whom we now encountered were four companies belonging to the prince; which we soon comprehended by the whole troop's falling upon us, and aiming their pieces, crying out to us to surrender. At that moment, I plainly distinguished three officers of my acquaintance, whom it would not have been difficult in any other situation to have made myself known to; but I reflected, that in such sort of encounters, the first word, the first motion, that tend to an explanation, are generally understood as a refusal to surrender, and followed by a discharge of the piece close to the breast. Instead, therefore, of naming myself, or those officers, I behaved like a man who yields himself prisoner, and marched after the rest; till coming near messieurs de Clermont and St. Gelais, whom I surprized very much by embracing, they ordered my equipage to be restored to me, and likewise the portmanteaus which contained my money.

George de
Clermont
d'Amboise,
marquis of
Galerande.

THE prince of Condé came up soon after these four companies: he could scarcely believe what he saw, so bold did my enterprize appear to him. We lay all night in this place, after supping very temperately out of wooden dishes; and when the time came which obliged us to separate, the prince, who was so thinly accompanied; that far from being able to make head against a royal army, he was not in a condition to defend himself against a strong detachment, and being likewise in a province where he was sought for in all parts, would have

on foot or on horseback, as our dragoons arquebusers; and it is by this name they do at present. When the arquebuses were first in use, they were called horse-

had

had me to receive him into my company, in the quality of a private gentleman. He was so well known, that I could not yield to his request, without ruining both him and myself. I intreated him, therefore, to dispense with my complaisance; and making the same excuse to the duke de la Trémouille, charged myself only with messieurs de Fors, du Pleffis, de Verac, and d'Oradour. The prince of Condé remained behind, extremely perplexed; and finding it still more dangerous to continue with his twelve hundred horse, than to march with a small retinue, he divided them into platoons, of which the most considerable consisted only of twenty horse, making them take by-ways, and marching himself through the roads, by a good fortune of which there are but few examples, twelve times escaped the pursuits of his enemies.

1585.

Claude duke
de la Tré-
mouille.

NOR indeed was I less fortunate myself. To the artifices I had already made use of I added another, which succeeded wonderfully: I assumed the name of one of my brothers; and to make myself look more youthful, cut off my beard and mustaches. This, however, did not disguise me so well, but that through every place I passed, I could hear people about me say, that I perfectly resembled my brother the huguenot. To avoid the questions that might be asked me, I took the style of a zealous partizan of the league, spread the report of the prince of Condé's defeat, and the rout of the protestant forces by the duke of Joyeuse; by which means I arrived safe at Chateau-Renaud. The great difficulty was how to pass the Loire; yet this I accomplished, through the assistance of M. des Arpentis, who acted on this occasion like a true friend. I received, likewise, some services from M. de Montbazon. As soon as I arrived at Montbazon, he sent me a present of wine and fruit, and treated me with so much kindness in several other instances, that although I was known in this place, I complied with his intreaties, and staid there three days, which was no more than necessary, as our horses began to be greatly fatigued. By the death of M. de Montbazon *, which happened soon after, I was deprived of an opportunity of shewing my gratitude to a man, who had the good of the state so nearly at heart.

InTouraine.

FAVoured by my new disguise, I traversed Châtelleraud and Poitiers. At Ville-fagnan, meeting with a regiment of Swis that

Upon the
confines of
Poitou, and
Saintonge.

* He was slain at the battle of Arques.

was

1585.

A village in
Saintonge.In Angou-
mois.

was going to join the marechal de Matignon's army, I resolv'd to draw some advantage from this rencounter. The Swifs were not displeas'd with any thing I said to them, because I always took care to provide them each morning with a repast; and I believe I might have depended upon them, had I even discover'd my true name. I travel'd with them four days, and we did not separate, while I could possibly avoid it. Scarce had I quitted them, when passing the river at St. Marfaud, I was known by Puiferret, who advanced with his company to the bank of the river. Happily for me, I had already got to the other side; and having this advantage of him, I gain'd the house of * M. de Neufvy. At Marton I went down, as usual, into the suburbs, and immediately, thro' a strange foreboding, returned into the city. I was inform'd the next day, that the door of the stable in which my horses were suppos'd to be, had been burst open in the night by a petard; but the reflections I made upon this accident, did not prevent me from giving orders for my departure: when I was accosted by a stranger, who said to me, " Monsieur, I do not desire to know who you are; but if you are a huguenot, and leave this place, you will perish; five miles distant from hence there is an ambush of fifty horse, well armed, which I believe is design'd against you." I thank'd this man for his kindness, without seeming discompos'd by what he had told me, and coldly answer'd, that although I was not a huguenot, yet to fall into an ambush, appear'd to me to be always dangerous. I then return'd to my inn, where pretending that one of my finest horses had hurt his foot, I order'd them to be all unsaddled.

THAT I might be assur'd whether what I had heard was true, I made one of my servants, named Perigordin, who could imitate perfectly well the gibberish of a peasant, disguise himself like one; and after instructing him in what he was to do, sent him to that part of the country, where I was told the ambush was post'd.

PERIGORDIN meeting these fifty horsemen, told them, in answer to the questions they ask'd him concerning the news of the city, that my departure was deferred till the next day. He follow'd them to a town, two leagues from thence, where they retir'd extremely mortified at having miss'd their blow, but resolv'd to return to the same

* The youngest son was call'd Bertrand de Melet de Fayoles of Neufvy; for Magdelaine de Melet de Fayoles, lord of

Neufroy, his eldest, was in the party of the league.

place the next morning: and came back to me to make his report, I set out that moment, and after some other little adventures of the same kind, arrived at the house of M. de Longa, and went from thence to Bergerac, where the king of Navarre then was. This prince, on whom no instance of kindness was ever lost, held me a long time embraced in his arms; and appeared extremely sensible of the dangers to which, through my attachment to him, I had exposed myself. He would make me acquaint him with the least particulars relating to my journey, especially the rencounter I had with the prince of Condé, and the slippery condition in which I had left him.

1586.

'Tis impossible to describe the king of Navarre's perplexity at this time: without troops, money, or aid, he saw three powerful armies marching against him. Those of the dukes of Maienne and Joyeuse were advancing by great journeys; and he had the marechal de Matignon's army actually in front. The forty thousand francs I had brought with me, proved a very seasonable supply to this prince, who could not have raised such a sum in his whole court. We marched towards Castillon and Montégur, which Matignon made shew of besieging; but he falling suddenly upon Castets, we were obliged to turn to that side, and after a long and extreme cold march, for it was in the month of February, we arrived time enough to make them raise this siege.

Cities of
Gascony, in
the bishopric
of Aire.

BUT when we learnt that the duke of Maienne's army was near, then it was, that not being able to think of any means by which we could resist the efforts of two armies, whose numbers were so superior to ours, we were thrown into the greatest consternation imaginable; we knew not which way to turn, nor what resolution to take: one was of opinion, that the king of Navarre should retire into the heart of Languedoc; another, that he should go still farther; and a third advised him to pass over to England, from whence, after he had secured some powerful succours, he should go and put himself at the head of those that Germany had given him hopes of. All agreed upon this one point, that the king ought to go farther from Guienne. It was with grief that I saw this advice, which would leave the protestant party in France without any resource, likely to prevail.

THE king of Navarre desiring to know my opinion, I represented to him, that our affairs were not reduced to such an extremity, as to oblige us to abandon them entirely: that it would be time enough to do that, after we had endeavoured once more to make head against

1586. them every where; which did not appear to be impossible, by leaving, for example, the viscount de Turenne, with a small body of troops, such as could be got together, to act upon the defensive in Guyenne; and while the duke of Montmorency did the same in Languedoc, and Lefdiguières in Dauphiny, the king should reserve the defence of Rochelle, and the neighbouring country, for himself, till the foreign troops, that were now very soon expected, arrived, which would bring the two powers nearer to an equality. The king of Navarre approved of this advice, and declared he would follow it; "But, added he, the duke of Maïenne is not so peevish a boy, but that he will permit me to walk up and down a little longer in Guyenne." He then gave some orders before he set out for Rochelle, and took a journey to Bearn; which the present conjuncture rendered absolutely necessary.

A city of the principality of Albret. A city of Guienne, upon the Dordogne. Another city of Guyenne.

A city of Perigord upon the Vezere.

HE staid there but eight days, and during this interval, the two catholic armies having joined, and seized all the passages by which they thought the king of Navarre could return to Poitou, he saw himself upon the point of being shut up in Nerac. In this extremity the king resolving to attempt all things, rather than not secure himself a passage*; he left Nerac, followed by two hundred horse, and took the road towards Castel-geloux. When he was got half way thither, he separated his whole troop, and keeping only twenty of us that were best mounted, and a like number of his guards, appointed Sainte-foy for a place of rendezvous for all the rest: then, turning short, struck into a road amidst woods and heaths, with which he was well acquainted, having often hunted there, and arrived at Caumont, where he slept three hours. We passed the river after sun-set, and marched all night through the enemy's quarters, and even over the moats of Marmande; after which, taking a bye-way near Sauvetat, we came two hours before day to Sainte-foy, where all the rest of his men, who had divided into small platoons, arrived also by different ways, without the least loss, not even of their baggage. The duke of Maïenne, exasperated at this disappointment of his hopes, went to discharge all his rage upon Montignac le Comte, where captain Roux, and serjeant More defended themselves so courageously against his whole army, that he could not oblige them to surrender, but by granting them the most honourable conditions.

* See this passage of the king of Navarre, and all the military expeditions on both sides, in d'Aubigné, vol. III. Matthieu,

vol. I. book xviii. Cayet, book i. and other historians.

THIS general found less resistance in Sainte Bazeile. Despuailles, the governor of that small place, was allied to the family of Courtenay, and had the reputation of a very brave man: which inspired me with an inclination to shut myself up with him, contrary to the advice of my relations and friends, who without doubt knew him much better than I did. The king of Navarre a long time denied me the permission I asked of him; at last, overcome by my importunity, he gave me thirty men, with whom I threw myself into Sainte Bazeile. I found the place in a very bad condition, without ramparts, and the houses all built of clay, which the cannon went quite through. However, it might have held out some time, but Despuailles being seized with fear, rejected all my advice, and was mad enough to put himself into the enemies hands, who treated the city as they pleased. The king of Navarre, at the first confused reports he heard of this action, was angry with us all; but when he was informed of the truth, the whole weight of his displeasure fell upon Despuailles, which was increased by this cowardly governor having the imprudence to tell him, when he presented himself before him to excuse his conduct, that if he had been there himself, he could not have acted otherwise. The king of Navarre put him under an arrest, from which, eight days after, he was released at our solicitations.

1586.
A city of Bazadois upon the Dordogne.

THE king did not quit the field till he was reduced to the last extremity, and after having disputed the ground inch by inch. When he retreated, he threw the remains of his forces into Monfégur, Castillon, and Sainte-foy. I lent him six thousand livres more, to fortify Montflanquin, where Bethune commanded. At last, fearing some fatal accident on the side of Rochelle, he left some troops in Guyenne, under the command of the viscount de Turenne, and took the road to that city by Pons, and Saint Jean d'Angely.

Upon the Dordogne. Florestan de Bethune. Cities of Saintonge.

THERE were moments in which Henry III. enraged at the shameful part the league obliged him to act, wished ardently to find some means of revenging himself*: but willing to do this without danger, rejected always the thought that often presented itself to his mind, of calling in the king of Navarre, and uniting with him. The deputies from the four Swiss catholic cantons coming to Paris, to treat

* It was in these moments that he said, as l'Etoile relates, *De inimicis meis vin-* *dicabo inimicos meos*; speaking of the leagueurs, and the huguenots.

1586.

of the succours which some time before had been demanded of this republic; the king, who was then in one of his temporary fits of anger against the league, resolved to make use of these Swifs, which, with the troops that were at his own disposal, and those he might expect from the king of Navarre, would form a body of men capable of reducing the league to reason. He wrote to the king of Navarre, and acquainting him with his new designs, desired him to send a person in whom he could confide, to confer with him upon this whole affair, and particularly upon the use they were to make of the Swifs. A blank passport was added to this letter, which the king of Navarre filling up with my name, obliged me to depart immediately.

I ARRIVED at Saint Maur, where the court then was, and went down to the house of Villeroy, with whom I dined, and staid the rest of that day, and on the next he presented me to the king. I shall never forget the fantastic and extravagant equipage and attitude in which I found this prince in his cabinet: he had a sword at his side, a Spanish hood hung down upon his shoulders, a little cap, such as collegians wear, upon his head, and a basket full of little dogs hung to a ribband about his neck. He continued in a posture so fixed, and so immovable, that in speaking to us, he neither moved his head, hands, or feet. He began by giving vent to his indignation against the league, which made me conclude he had received some new affront from it, and talked of his union with the king of Navarre, as a thing, the utility of which he was perfectly convinced of; but some remains of fear made him always add, that he looked upon it as impossible, while the king of Navarre persisted in his resolutions of not changing his religion. I took the word, and told the king in answer, that it would be in vain to propose such an expedient to the king of Navarre, who by agreeing to it must act against his conscience; which, were he capable of doing, would not produce what his majesty hoped from it; that the motive by which the league was actuated, was neither a regard to public good, or to religion; that so precipitate an action would deprive the king of Navarre of all the assistance he might expect from the protestants, without drawing one man from the league; but, on the contrary, such a weakness would increase the pride of their common enemies. The king did not fail to answer my reasons; but I still persisted in maintaining, that the king of Navarre, by complying with the terms proposed to him, could bring only his single person to his aid; whereas by uniting with him in the condition he was now in, without requiring the sacrifice of his religion,

religion, he would strengthen the king's party with a body very powerful in the state. I had a conference, to the same effect, with the queen-mother: and I perceived that the force of my arguments made some impression on them both, at first, and that it was the fear of that change which an union with a prince of the reformed religion might produce, which only prevented them from yielding. I did not, however, despair of prevailing upon them to strike this great blow, and by the (not only gracious but) free and open manner, in which their majesties treated with me, I had reason to flatter myself I should succeed.

I LEFT them in these favourable dispositions to go to Paris, to confer with the Swiss deputies, and brought them to my purpose with very little difficulty. It cost me nothing but a small expence in provisions, especially wine; for which they promised, without any limitation, a body of ten thousand Swiss; four thousand of which were to stay in Dauphiny, and the other six thousand to be employed in the service, and at the discretion of the two kings. The king of France again assured me by Mess. de Lenoncourt, de Poigny, and Brulart, that his sentiments were not altered, and that he passionately wished for the union; which was not less earnestly desired by the king of Navarre: in the dispatches I received from him almost every day, he exhorted me to use all my endeavours to secure its success, and even to sacrifice for that purpose some part of his interest.

AT my return to St. Maur, I gave the king an account of my journey, and asked what use he would make of the six thousand Swiss, and to what place he designed they should go. The king demanded, that they should be brought into the neighbourhood of Paris; and even, if there was a necessity for it, serve him against the league. I foresaw all the inconveniencies that would attend a project of this kind, and did not yield to this article, but by the express command of the king of Navarre, who thought so small a matter ought not to retard their reconciliation. It will be soon seen whether this article was really of as little importance as was imagined, and what was the consequence of this imprudent compliance.

THE treaty between the two kings being concluded upon the conditions that have been mentioned, I resolved to depart from court, leaving only Martilliere at Paris, under colour of continuing the negotiation that had been begun: but he had only attended me to Paris,

1586. to take the first favourable opportunity of going to Germany, to facilitate, by the assistance of messieurs de Clairvant, and de Guित्रy, the departure of a body of German troops from thence, which the protestants of those countries had promised the king of Navarre. This design Marfilliere executed very happily. As for me, I staid but eight days at Rosny with my wife; after which I returned to the king of Navarre, who was extremely well satisfied with the success of my commission.

Claude Antony de Vi-
enne, lord of
Clairvant.

A city of
Lower Poi-
tou.

THIS prince could not resolve to lie idle in Rochelle, and therefore prevailed with the inhabitants to furnish him with twelve hundred foot, two hundred horse, and three cannons; these he gave to the duke de la Tremouille for the reduction of Talmont, which he could not endure to see in the enemies hands. I followed the duke de la Tremouille, with Mignonville, Fouquerolles, Bois-du-Lys, and some other officers.

John de
Sourches,
lord of Ma-
licorne.

THE town having no fortifications, we seized it without opposition, and began immediately to attack the castle; the walls of which were very strong, but had no works on the outside. Maroniere, who was governor of it, although he did not expect to be attacked, depended upon some speedy supplies that Malicorne had engaged to bring him: which determined us to press the place vigorously. The passage by sea from Talmont to Rochelle is but six hours; I embarked for that place to fetch a supply of powder, with which we were not sufficiently provided, and to inform the king of Navarre, that we should find it very difficult to succeed with so small a number of men. The king soon raised two thousand more in the neighbourhood of Rochelle, and shipped them on board of three vessels, which during three days were in danger of perishing. At length we arrived at Talmont; the three vessels cast anchor there one after another, and the besieged learning that the king of Navarre conducted the attack in person, surrendered the place to him.

In Upper
Poitou, up-
on the Bou-
tonne.

IT was want of money that had prevented Malicorne from bringing supplies to the governor of Talmont; the king of Navarre, therefore, being freed from this fear, drew off his troops, in order to attack Chizai. Payolle, who commanded there, defended himself bravely. He made good use of a culverine, which was the only piece of artillery he had in the place; nor yielded till the last extremity. I took notice of a singular accident that happened there: the princess Catherine
having

having sent the steward of her household with a letter to the king her brother, a bullet of this culverine went quite through the body of his horse, and came out at his breast, yet the beast continued standing near ten minutes after.

1586.

ANOTHER shot from an arquebuse was the cause of a much greater misfortune: a gentleman charged with a verbal message to the king of Navarre, concerning some important affairs, was shot dead at the feet of this prince, having only had time to say that he came from Heidelberg, from messieurs de Clairvant and de Guitry. This officer was sent to inform the king, that the German horse, and other protestant troops from Germany, were ready to enter France; and to know of him through what place he thought it most proper they should march. Some were for their entering France, by Lorraine, where the league was very powerful; others maintained, that they ought to take their route by the Bourbonnois, from thence by Berry and Poitou, and the side of the Loire. Messieurs de Montmorency and de Châtillon were for keeping them in Languedoc and near the Rhone. Never was so great a diversity of opinions known, and unhappily the worst prevailed, which was to bring them in through Beauce; doubtless, because the king of France was willing to have them near him, that he might make use of them against the league, or at least to keep it in awe. It is not probable that the king of Navarre would have consented to this, but the accident that has been related was the cause that he was even ignorant of their contentions.

THIS prince, by a continuance of the same good fortune, took Sanzay, and afterwards St. Maixant; the noise of five or six cannons, which till that time were seldom made use of in sieges, produced this effect. He took advantage of his success, and seeing himself reinforced with two hundred horse, and five hundred foot, which were brought him by the prince of Condé, and the count de la Rochefoucault*, whom he had just made colonel-general of his infantry, he believed himself strong enough to undertake the siege of Fontenay, the second place of strength in Poitou; although he was not ignorant, that in this place there was a brave governor, and a strong garrison. The governor, whose name was la Rouffiere, resolved to defend not only the city, but the suburb des Loges also, which was larger and more magnifi-

Other cities
of Upper
Poitou.

* Francis de la Rochefoucault, prince of Marillac, son of him who was slain at the massacre of St. Bartholomew. He was killed in 1591.

1586.

Lewis de
Courcillon
de Dangeau.

cent than the city itself, and surrounded with a great moat; to which were added strong barricadoes, that closed up the entrance of this suburb. The king of Navarre sent la Rochefoucault, at the head of forty gentlemen, to attack the upper end of this suburb in a very dark night. I joined messieurs de Dangeau, de Vaubrot, d'Avantigny, de Challandean, de Feuquieres, de Brasseussès, le Chene, and two or three others. We posted ourselves at one side of the barricadoes, with our pikes in our hands, and our pistols at our girdles, with a design either to throw them down, or leap over them. We were repulsed three times. Vaubrot, Avantigny, and I, in falling, drew five or six hogheads of dung upon us, from which we were apprehensive we should not soon disengage ourselves; but our party having at that instant forced the works, we got up by means of this effort, and the enemies seeing us masters of the barricade, thought of nothing but retreating, after having first set fire to it, to protract our pursuit, lest by following them too close, we should in their confusion enter the city along with them.

WE now took up our lodgings in the finest houses in the suburb, where we found all things in great abundance. The only inconvenience we suffered, was from the small shot of the place, which made the entrance to the king's and our own houses very dangerous; and the batteries upon the ramparts commanding all the avenues of this suburb, it was impossible to enter it without being exposed to continual discharges. One day, when I came out of my own house to go to the king's, which was the most beautiful in the suburb, a ball, as I was passing thro' the street, crushed my head-piece, just as Liberge, my valet de chambre, came up to tie it. I caused a rope to be instantly fastened across the street, and by means of some cloaths that were hung over it, prevented the besieged from seeing at least those that passed.

WE afterwards applied ourselves without ceasing to the trenches and undermining. The king of Navarre took inconceivable pains in this siege: he conducted the miners himself, after he had taken all the necessary precautions to hinder supplies from entering without: the bridges, avenues, and all the roads that led to the city, were strictly guarded, as likewise great part of the country. One night, when I was upon guard with twenty horse, at the ford of a river, I heard the noise of trampling of horses at a distance, which made me conclude I should be attacked. This noise ceased for some minutes, then began again with more violence; and came so near, that I prepared for defence.

fence. I suffered the troop to approach within arms length; but when we were just ready to fire, I perceived the occasion of our alarm to be a number of horses and mares, which had been wandering about this field, and came to water at the river. I was one of the first to laugh at this adventure; but in secret I was not sorry that I had given orders to the person whom I pitched upon to go for assistance, not to set out till we were engaged in fight.

1586.

AT this siege, my principal employment was the conduct of the artillery. The mining was so far advanced, that we could hear the voice of the soldiers who guarded the parapets, within the lodgment of the miners. The king of Navarre was the first who perceived this; he spoke, and made himself known to the besieged; who were so astonished at hearing him name himself from the bottom of these subterraneous places, that they demanded leave to capitulate. The proposals were all made by this uncommon way: the articles were drawn up, or rather dictated, by the king of Navarre, whose word was known by the besieged to be so inviolable, that they did not require a writing. They had no cause to repent of this confidence; the king of Navarre, charmed with a proceeding so noble, granted the garrison military honours, and preserved the city from pillage.

A WOMAN of the city having killed a fat hog the same day that they had capitulated, hearing that the garrison had surrendered, devised a pleasant stratagem, to deprive the rapacious soldiers of their prey. She made her husband hide himself, and wrapping the dead animal in a sheet, laid it, by the help of some friends, in a coffin, and by her cries drew all her neighbours about her. The mournful preparations for a funeral gave them to understand the cause of her lamentations; the priests were deceived as well as others. One of them conducted the funeral procession a-cross the suburbs, into a church-yard without the city, by the king of Navarre's permission. The ceremonies over, and the night being come, some persons posted by this woman near the grave, came to take up the dead animal, and carry it into the city; but they were perceived by some soldiers, who driving them from thence, discovered the truth, and seized the prey. One may easily imagine the secret was not well kept; it was known all over the city: a priest, to whom this woman, prest with remorse of conscience, had revealed it, published the adventure every where.

1586.

Charles
Echalard,
lord of La-
Boulaye.
Other strong
places in the
Lower
Poitou.

THE king of Navarre leaving the lord of La-Boulaye governor in this place; went to take the abbey of Maillezais, the situation of which he found so advantageous, that he resolved to make it a regular fortress, and ordered me to draw a plan of it. Davailles, a relation of La-Boulaye, was appointed to guard it. His troops took Mauleon likewise, and afterwards the castle of La-Garnache; from whence monsieur de Genevois * drove his own mother. She retired to Beauvois, a little city upon the sea-side, whither her son still pursued her, but falling this time into her hands, she in her turn made him prisoner of war.

I WAS not present at either of these sieges; the melancholy news I received from Rosny obliged me to go thither. During my stay at St. Maur, I obtained a protection for my castle and estate of Rosny, together with necessary passports for going thither when I pleased. It was this liberty that made me easy with regard to my wife, at a time when all sorts of outrages against the protestants were allowed. I learnt that this town was at that time almost wholly depopulated by the plague: my wife had lost the greatest part of her domestics, and fear having obliged her to fly into the neighbouring forests, she had passed two days and nights in her coach, and had afterwards taken refuge in the castle of Huet, belonging to madame de Compagnac, my aunt. Her joy, when she knew I was so near her, gave way to her fears of the danger I incurred by coming amongst persons infected with the plague; and thinking to force me to return, she ordered the gates to be shut upon me. She had too much occasion for assistance and consolation to be abandoned in that condition; I entered, notwithstanding her resistance, and staid a month in this house, having only two gentlemen, and as many domestics, with me: breathing the air of the country in freedom, for the report of the plague kept all troublesome visitors from my house. I was not wholly useless to the king of Navarre all this time; my wood-merchant still owed me twenty-four thousand livres, and I prest for the payment of it. The persecution that was declared a-

* D'Aubigné explains this better, vol. III. b. i. c. x. "The lady of La-Garnache, says he, sister to the duke of Rohan, held the city of La-Garnache, and the castle of Beauvois upon the sea in neutrality. Her son, called prince of Genevois, by his mother's marriage with the duke of Nemours, seized La-Gar-

nache, by means of a correspondence he held with the domestics. He made the same attempt upon Beauvois, but he was taken prisoner by his mother. The result of all which was, that the king of Navarre interesting himself in procuring his liberty, obtained it, and by the same means the place."

gainst.

gainst the protestants, put me entirely in their power; and the fear lest this money, together with all my estates, should be confiscated for the use of the league, obliged me to be contented with ten thousand livres.

1586.

As soon as the contagion ceased, I carried my wife back to Rosny, after having taken the necessary precautions to purify the house; and left her at the report, that the duke of Joyeuse, whose march had hitherto been slow, and his operations very inconsiderable, was advancing hastily, to drive the king of Navarre from Poitou. This prince had just then been repulsed before Niort and Parthenai; and finding it impossible to keep all his fortresses against forces so superior to his, he caused the greatest part of them to be raised and dismantled, and preserved only Fontenai, Talmont, Maillezais, and St. Maixant. He afterwards retreated to Rochelle, where I found him.

All these
places are in
Poitou.

THE treaty of alliance between the two kings, which was mentioned above, seeming to promise a more favourable event, the reader is, no doubt, impatient to know the success. All was already over; in one moment the whole design was overthrown. This proceeding of the court was certainly very uncommon, and will appear a mystery absolutely incomprehensible to those who know not what changes, a prince who delivers himself up to irresolution, idleness, and timidity, is capable of assuming in affairs of state: nothing is more dangerous than a mind thus fluctuating and undetermined. In difficult situations, all things ought to be trusted to chance, nor ought it to be wholly neglected; but after having fixed on a particular design, every step that leads to it, ought to be regulated by wise and cool reflections. A necessary peace cannot be too earnestly desired, nor concluded too soon; but in critical circumstances nothing ought to be more carefully avoided, than keeping the people's mind in suspense, between peace and war. It was not by maxims like these that Catherine's counsellors conducted themselves; if they formed any resolution, it lasted but a moment, never held out to the end; and so timorously was it made, that it afforded even but a very imperfect remedy for the present evil. The fault of minds taken up in little trifling intrigues, and in general, of all those that have more vivacity than judgment, is to represent to themselves things that are near, in such a manner, as to be dazzled by them; and see those at a distance through a cloud: a few moments or days make up their futurity.

1586.

To this fault of never being able to resolve upon any thing, the king, or rather the queen-mother, added another still greater*. This was the use of I know not what kind of little affected dissimulation, or to say better, a wretched study of hypocrisy and deceit, without which she imagined her politics could not subsist: the first of these errors concealed from us the misfortune with which we were threatened, and the last tied the hands of those who might have assisted us to prevent it. What could we expect but to be ruined by it sooner or later? Thus it happened to Henry III. through his want of resolution to make use of the remedy that was offered him, by joining his troops with those of the king of Navarre; by which means he might crush the enemies of his authority: he neglected to prosecute this design, and the consequence was, that he saw himself reduced to an extremity which might have been as fatal to the royal name as shameful to the memory of this prince.

CATHERINE had recourse to her usual artifices, and thought she performed a great deal, because she endured the fatigue of a long journey: she went into Poitou, and had several conferences with the king of Navarre † at Coignac, Saint Brix, and Saint Maixant. Sometimes she endeavoured to allure him, at other times to intimidate him with the sight of the considerable forces that were going to pour upon him, and whose efforts, she told him, she had hitherto suspended. In a word, she forgot nothing which she thought might induce him to change his religion. This, however, is certain, that it was not without regret she saw the league in a condition to oppress the king of Navarre, because it was not her interest that his ruin should be ac-

* It has been asserted, that the interest of the true religion had no part in the politics of this queen. Witness these words which she was heard to say, when she thought the battle of Dreux was lost, "Well! we must pray to God then in French."

† The queen asking him what he would have? he replied, looking at the young ladies she had brought with her, "There is nothing here, madam, that I would have." Perefice's history of Henry the Great. Matthieu adds, that Catherine pressing him to make some overture, "Madam, said he, there is no over-

ture here for me." Vol. I. book viii. p. 518. This interview was at St. Croix the 25th of September, "He was hunting one day at Saint Brix, and wanting to shew that his horse was more lively than two very fine ones belonging to Belliévre, a herd of pigs behind a hedge frightened his horse, who threw him upon the earth, where he lay senseless, bleeding at the nose and mouth. They carried him like one dead to the castle. However, two or three days after he disappeared." Mem. of Nevers, vol. II. p. 588.

complished by that means. But what security did she give this prince, by the rash and unseasonable measures she wanted to engage him in? Had he not reason to believe, that the proposal she was constantly making him to change his religion, was, at the bottom, but an artful snare to deprive him of all assistance from the protestants, to make him countermand the troops that he expected from Germany, to draw him to court, to ruin him, and, after him, all his adherents? I had particular proofs that justified these apprehensions; for those conferences at which I was present with the king, not affording me the means of clearing my doubts, I held private ones, by his orders, with the ladies d'Uzes, and de Sauves, who were better acquainted with Catherine's inclinations than any other persons, and by whom I was loved with so much tenderness, that they always called me their son. In order to come to the knowledge of their real sentiments, I pretended to be well convinced of what indeed I only suspected, and complained that the queen-mother made use of all her endeavours to sacrifice the king of Navarre to the league. These two ladies confessed to me in confidence, that they believed religion served Catherine only for a pretence, and that affairs were in such a state, that the king of Navarre could no otherwise extricate himself from his difficulties, but by the force of his arms. They protested to me afterwards, that they saw with grief the bad dispositions of the council towards this prince. These words I have always believed to be sincere, although spoke in a court where, next to gallantry, nothing was so much cultivated as falsehood.

1586.

WHATEVER were the queen-mother's * intentions, she returned without obtaining any thing; and Joyeuse with an army took her place. The conduct of an army entrusted to Joyeuse was a second mystery: Was it to mortify the heads of the league, who had better pretensions to this command than him, or to ruin them entirely, if the new general had succeeded? Was it, on the contrary, the discovery of his connections with the league, that induced the king to give him a post, wherein he was assured this ungrateful man would perish, or at least miscarry? Or was it only to remove a favourite from his pre-

1587.

* “ After a long conversation, the queen-mother asking him if the trouble she had been at was to produce no other fruit, she who loved nothing so much as peace; he answered, Madam, I am not the cause of it; it is not I who

“ hinders you from sleeping in your bed, “ it is you that prevents me from resting “ in mine; the trouble you give yourself “ pleases, and nourishes you; peace is “ the greatest enemy of your life.” Preface, part i.

fence,

1587.

sence, who had now a rival in his affections; for it is often a mere trifle, that produces effects which are always attributed to the most solid causes: but was it not rather to enhance the lustre of his favour by an employment so distinguished? Such was the spirit of the court, that conjectures, the most opposite, were supported by equal probabilities. What seems, however, to determine in favour of the last supposition, is, that the army which Joyeuse commanded was composed of the best forces in the kingdom, was filled with the flower of the nobility, and plentifully provided with whatever could contribute towards rendering it victorious.

Gabriel Prevot of Charbonnières.

THE king of Navarre employed himself chiefly in putting Saint Maixant in a condition of defence; he went thither with so much haste and precipitation, that sinking under his watching and fatigue, he was obliged, in his return to Rochelle, to throw himself into a waggon drawn by oxen, where he slept as in a bed. To prevent the provision with which he had stored Saint Maixant from being consumed, he ordered the two regiments of Charbonnières, and des Bories, which had been appointed to defend it, to be posted at La Motte-Sainte-Eloi, and there to expect the enemy's arrival. All these precautions could not prevent the reduction of this last place, and its castle, nor that of Saint Maixant, Maillezais, and many others, any more than the defeat of several companies, amongst others that belonged to Despuelles, which was beat almost within sight of Rochelle. The cruel behaviour of the conquerors made these misfortunes still more affecting; all we could do in revenge, was to fall upon the waggons and the stragglers, during the marches of this army.

ONE day, as the duke of Joyeuse led his army back again from Saintes to Niort, I posted myself with fifty horse in the forest of Benon, near the great road, to wait for an opportunity of striking some blow. A soldier whom I had directed to climb up a tree, to observe the order and motion of the enemy's army, told us, that he saw a detachment advancing some paces before the first battalions. Those who accompanied me were for falling upon this detachment, which they supposed it would not be difficult to subdue, before any assistance could come up to it. I did not relish this proposal. I remembered a maxim of the king of Navarre's, that to attack a party when the whole army was near, seldom succeeded; and I restrained the ardour of my troop, who burned with an eager desire to come to blows with them. We saw this detachment pass by, and afterwards the whole army, the

batta-

1587.

battalions of which we could easily count. The last ranks marched so close, that I was of opinion there was nothing to be done; but as we were ready to make our retreat, the centinel informed us, that he saw two small squadrons of fifty or sixty horse each, that marched at a great distance from each other. I would have suffered the first to pass by, but it was impossible now to restrain the impetuosity of the soldiers; we fell upon the first with such fury, that we left twelve or fifteen dead upon the place, took as many prisoners, and the rest saved themselves by flight. But how greatly was I mortified that I had not followed my own opinion, when I found the second troop was composed of fifty of the principal officers of the catholic army, with the duke of Joyeuse himself at their head, he having stopped at Surgeres, to refresh himself with a collation there. When I gave the king of Navarre an account of this action, he told me smiling, that he perceived I was willing to spare the duke's squadron, on account of my two brothers who were with him. One of them having an inclination to see Rochelle, I obtained a passport for him, and conducted him every where. I went to Niort soon after, where the enemy's army lay, to agree upon terms of a combat that had been proposed between the Albanois of captain Mercure's company, and a like number of Scots under the command of Ouïmes; but the duke of Joyeuse would not permit it to be executed.

A town in
the country
of Aunis.

I FOUND this general gloomy and discontented, and guessed so truly the cause of his uneasiness, that when he told me he should soon set out for Montreſor, I replied without hesitation, that he could go very easily from thence to the court. At these words he turned towards my brother, as accusing him of having revealed what had passed. Though he knew that there was nothing in it, he imagined his disgrace was certain, since the report of it had already reached Rochelle; and it was this, I believe, that confirmed him in his resolution to go and destroy, by his presence, the cabals of his enemies. However, he concealed his sentiments, and coldly answered, that I suffered myself to be deceived by my too great discernment; and endeavoured to persuade me, that he had no intentions of returning to Paris: but I was so well assured of the contrary, that I went back immediately to the king of Navarre, to concert with him proper measures for drawing some advantage from an absence which would leave the catholic army without leaders; for I did not doubt but many of the general officers would take this journey likewise: in effect, Joyeuse was no sooner set out,

In Tou-
raine.

1587. out, than his whole army, already badly disciplined, lived without order and obedience.

Upon the
confines of
Poitou,

THE king of Navarre, who had secretly assembled twelve hundred men, which he had drawn out of his garrisons, fell so seasonably upon the companies of Vic, of Bellemaniere, the marquis of Refnel, Ronfey, and Pienne, and even upon that of the duke of Joyeuse, that finding part of them in bed, and part at the table, he cut them all in pieces. He oftener than once alarmed the whole army, which was now under the command of Lavardin. He followed it to la Haye in Touraine, and found means to keep it, as it were, besieged during four or five days. If on this occasion he had had forces sufficient to have enabled him to keep his post longer, it is my opinion, that hunger would have delivered the whole army into his power, the soldiers spreading themselves over the villages, and neglecting their safety to get provisions. We passed the river, and surprized them every moment.

DURING this short space of time, we killed and took above six hundred men. With six horse only, I went into a village full of soldiers; they were so accustomed to be beaten, that I ordered the arms of those who were at the tables, and upon the beds, to be seized, and their matches to be put out, without their offering to repulse us, although they were forty in number. I brought them to the king of Navarre, and they enlisted in his troops.

THE count of Soissons *, who was discontented with the court, had long given the king of Navarre hopes, that he would come over to his party, and this prince neglected nothing that could keep him in this favourable disposition. The negligence of the catholic army afforded them both the opportunity they waited for. The count of Soissons took the road towards the Loire, and the king of Navarre sent all his troops to Rosiers to facilitate this prince's passage over the river. They served him likewise to seize the baggage of the duke de Mercœur; the great convoy that escorted it, was attacked so suddenly near a bank, that they surrendered without striking a blow, and the baggage, which was extremely rich, was entirely pillaged. My part of the

* Charles of Bourbon, fourth son of Lewis I. prince of Condé, who was slain at Jarnac, and brother to Henry I. prince of Condé, of Francis, prince of Conti, and

the young cardinal, Charles of Bourbon, but by another mother, Frances d'Orleans de Longueville.

booty amounted to two thousand crowns. My brothers were no longer in this army; I had obtained a passport for them to leave la Haye. 1587.

THIS service was repaid by another of the same kind; they procured me a passport for Paris, whither a pressing occasion called me. At this time the persecution against the protestants was at its height. On which side soever they turned, inevitable ruin awaited them: in the villages, where every one became a soldier, in order to pillage, their houses could not secure them from the fury of their persecutors; and in Paris, and other great cities, they were exposed to rigorous searches, which the zeal of religion inspired, and the desire of being enriched by their spoils made but too severely executed. Princes will often see themselves subjected to misfortunes like these, while they know not how far their rights * and duties with regard to religion extend. They cannot punish with too much severity, a crime by which nature, society, or the laws, are wounded. A religion that is capable of authorizing such actions, becomes necessarily the object of all the rigour of their justice; and then only is religion subjected to the power of crowned heads; but their jurisdiction does not extend over consciences, in that precept that regards our love of God, the different comments of which form the difference of religions. The sovereign Lord of all reserves to himself whatever relates to speculation, and leaves to princes all that tends to destroy the common practice of it. Ignorance, or contempt of this maxim, was the cause of great misery to the protestants: those whose estates were large enough

* 'Tis true, it never has been demonstrated, that religion obliges sovereigns to persecute those who make profession of another faith, but this does not hinder the maxims which the duke of Sully establishes here from being very dangerous, in that they seem to discharge kings from that indispensable obligation they are under to preserve the true religion; an obligation which includes that of making the worship, and all the exterior practices of it, to be exactly observed; which is equally conformable to the principles of a wise policy, as to those of religion; a fatal experience having but too well shewn, that it is much more necessary to prevent all disputes upon matters of religion, than to

silence them when they are begun. After the confession monsieur de Sully so often makes in his Memoirs of that spirit of revolt, and independence, which conducted all the steps of the calvinist party in France, it is strange he is not sensible that, according to his own maxims, this body deserved to suffer all the rigour of the law. This place, in my opinion, sufficiently justifies what I have said in the preface to this work, that it is more proper to relate all the author's sentiments in theology, than to suppress them. It is not possible to understand his meaning here upon the subject of charity. Obscurity is generally a proof of false principles, and weak reasoning.

1587.

to admit of their living in Paris, chose that as the least dangerous way, because of the ease with which they could keep themselves unknown in a city so full of tumult and confusion.

My wife had retired thither some time, having used the precaution to take a borrowed name; to her was added, besides the common misfortunes, that of being far advanced in her pregnancy, during which she wanted all kinds of conveniencies. When I supposed she drew near her time, the apprehensions of what might happen to her in this condition, made me resolve to take a journey to Paris. I found her just delivered of a son, to whom I gave for godfather the lord of Rueres, then a prisoner in the goal of the parliament, and the child was carried from the baptismal font to church, by a citizen named Chaufaille and his wife; for the protestants did not cease to meet in churches, and hold assemblies, notwithstanding the severe informations that were made against them. At this very time, several women were burnt upon that occasion; the dangers I ran myself were extremely great, and I avoided them only by not being known, which was indeed an amazing instance of good fortune.

At last the number of spies increasing in all parts of the city, the search was so diligent that nothing could escape. I did not think it possible to stay any longer in Paris, without exposing myself to evident danger. I left it therefore alone, and in disguise, and fled to Villepreux; and from thence I took a bye-road to Rosny.

The duke of Joyeuse had been received in Paris with praises and acclamations, which ought to have made him blush in secret for not having deserved them. They did not, however, hinder him from being sensibly affected with the defeat of his army, of which he was soon informed. He endeavoured by all possible means to make satisfaction for this loss, which in the disposition the king was in with regard to him, was not a difficult task. His arrival had disconcerted all the secret practices of his enemies, and his favour * with Henry was risen to such a height, that he could refuse him nothing. All the courtiers attached themselves to him, and he set out again for

* In his embassy to Rome, he was treated as the king's brother: he had a heart worthy of his great fortune. One day having made the two secretaries of state wait too long in the king's

anti-chamber, he excused himself by resigning up to them a hundred thousand crowns which the king had just given him." Notes upon the Henriade.

Guyenne with the flower of the French nobility, while several other bodies of troops, taking separate ways, assembled at the rendezvous he had appointed for them.

1587.

THESE different marches of the troops made the roads so dangerous, that I found no other means of returning to Rochelle, but by altering the date of my passport, which was expired. By this little fraud I got safe to the king of Navarre, whom I found employed in taking measures to prevent the dreadful storm he saw ready to burst upon him. He drew together all the soldiers he could find in Poitou, Anjou, Touraine, and Berry, and sent orders to the prince of Condé, the count of Soissons, messieurs de Turenne, de la Trémouille, and Rochefoucault, to join him with all the forces they had: yet, with all these supplies, his troops were greatly inferior to those of the duke of Joyeuse. They only served to put him in a condition of opening a way through Guyenne, Languedoc, and the Lyonnais, towards the source of the Loire, where he depended upon meeting the German auxiliaries. He made use of all his endeavours to accomplish this junction, before the troops of Joyeuse were all joined. This prince, therefore, advanced with his army towards Montlieu, Montguyon, and la Roche-Chalais *, but always closely followed and watched by the enemy's general, who having penetrated into his design, thought he ought not to wait for the arrival of the marechal de Matignon, nor of several other regiments that were coming to join him, lest he should lose an opportunity, which he might never be able to recover. His forces were already so much superior to the king of Navarre's, that this resolution could not be accused of rashness and temerity; and the king, who never hazarded a dangerous action, but when obliged to it by necessity, instead of seeking the battle, thought of nothing but how to get the river between them, that he might pursue his march without opposition, and gain the Dordogne, upon which he had several strong forts which might stop the enemy's pursuit.

WITH these dispositions on both sides, the king of Navarre arrived at the pass of Chalais and Aubeterre. It was of great importance to him to gain Coutras †, a post that might favour this passage, and no less to Joyeuse to hinder it. He sent Lavardin to

* Cities upon the borders of Saintonge, of Guyenne, and Perigord, as were Chalais, and Aubeterre.

† Coutras, a city of Guyenne, upon the borders also of Perigord, at the confluence of the rivers of Lille and Droume.

1587. possels himself of it; but la Trémouille, being more diligent, prevented him, and maintained himself in it, after a very sharp skirmish. The king of Navarre resolved to take advantage of this post to attempt the pass, and marched thither in the night, reserving to himself the care of conducting the troops over, and left that of the baggage, particularly the artillery, to Clermont, Bois-du-Lys, Mignonville, and me. As it was necessary to make use of all possible dispatch, we set ourselves to work immediately, having the water up to our knees. One half was already got to the other side of the river, when the scouts, whom the king of Navarre had sent during the night to make discoveries, returned with some prisoners they had taken, and informed us, that Joyeuse having resolved to force the king of Navarre to a battle, had marched all night, and would be up with him at furthest by seven or eight o'clock in the morning. This intelligence convinced the king that our labour was not only useless, but extremely dangerous, because if found by the enemy employed in passing the river, that part of his troops which should remain on this side of it must be inevitably defeated, as it could receive no assistance from the troops on the other. Those who had already got over, were ordered to return immediately. Our labour was now redoubled, and to add to it, we lost Mignonville *, for whom the king had occasion. Although we were extremely weakened by the fatigue we had suffered, yet that did not hinder the king from pointing out to us an eminence, upon which he expressed a wish that his artillery could have been placed, but durst not hope that we should have time to gain it. In effect, we already discovered the enemy's van. Luckily Joyeuse, who without doubt was not sufficiently acquainted with the ground, or suffered himself to be too far transported by his ardour, had given orders for fixing his artillery in a place so low, that afterwards finding it would be useless, he caused it to be removed, and by that means gave us leisure to place our own. It must be confessed, that this general, by some means or other, drew but little advantage from his artillery, and that this was one of the chief causes of his losing the battle. This shews, that there is nothing more necessary for the general of an army, than an exact and piercing sight, which shortens distances, and prevents confusion. I never knew a general that possessed this quality in an equal degree with the king of Navarre †.

* Mignonville, who was slain soon after before Nonancour, when Henry IV. stormed that city. He was marshal de camp, and an excellent officer. Henry had a great number of subaltern officers of uncommon merit and abilities in his army;

such were Montgomery, Bellezuns, Montausier, Vaudoré, des Agoux, Favas, whom the historians, in relating this battle, have mentioned with honour.

† Le Grain makes him pronounce this military harangue to his soldiers, "THE

1587.

THE * battle was already begun, before our artillery, which consisted only of three pieces of cannon, was fixed, and we had soon occasion for it. The troops in monsieur de Turenne's quarter behaved very ill; that of la Trémouille was forced the first shock, which was beginning to throw the whole army into disorder. The catholics cried out victory; and indeed they wanted but little of being victorious; but at the same moment our artillery began to play, and so terrible † was the fire, that every discharge carried away twelve, fifteen, and sometimes five and twenty men. It put a stop immediately to the impetuosity of the enemies, and reduced them to such an extremity, that seeking to avoid the fire, they dispersed, and offered only a disorderly and ill-sustained body to the efforts of the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and the count of Soissons, who scoured the field at the head of three squadrons. These three princes ‡ performed prodigies of valour in this battle; they overthrew all that opposed them, and striding over the bodies of the dead to meet new dangers, their arms were all batter'd with blows. The face of things was changed in an instant, and the death of the catholic general || gave the protestants a complete victory.

“ friends, behold here a prey much more considerable than any of your former booties; it is a bridegroom, who has still the nuptial portion in his pocket, and all the chief courtiers with him.” Dec. of Henry the Great, book iv.

* It began the 20th of October, at nine o'clock in the morning, and was ended at ten. The victory was complete, five thousand of the enemy were left dead upon the place, and five hundred taken prisoners. In the king of Navarre's army, there were but very few soldiers slain, and not one prisoner of distinction. De Thou, book lxxxvii. Mem. of du Pleffis, book i. D'Aubigne, vol. III. book i. Matthieu, vol. I. book viii. p. 533. Father Daniel, in his history of France, vol. IX. 4to. gives an exact description of the battle of Coutras. I could have wished to have transcribed the whole article here.

† The first fire of the artillery, says le Grain, carried off seven captains of the regiment of Picardy, the best and

“ most warlike in the duke's army.” Book iv.

“ † All I shall say to you,” said the king of Navarre to them “ is, that you are of the house of Bourbon, and please God, I will shew you, that I am your eldest brother.”

His valour was that day far superior to all the others. He wore a plume of white feathers on his helmet, to make himself remarkable. Some of his friends throwing themselves before him, to defend and cover his person, he cried, “ Give me room, I beseech you; you stifle me; I would be seen.” He forced the first ranks of the enemy, took several prisoners with his own hand, and collared an officer named Château Regnard, cornet of a company of foot, saying, Yield thee, Philistine. Perefice, ibid.

|| Slain in cold blood, by la Motte St. Henry; others say, by two captains of foot, named Bordeaux, and Desceliers.

1587.

As soon as I beheld the enemy fly, I abandoned the cannon, which were now useless, and mounting a horse which Bois-breuil kept ready for me behind the artillery, I flew to learn tidings of my brothers, and I had the consolation to hear, that neither of them had been in the battle. I met the king of Navarre busy in dispersing* the fugitives, and completing his victory, which he did, not thinking himself secure while there remained any to oppose him. The bodies of Joyeuse and St. Sauveur † his brother, were drawn from beneath a heap of carcases, and laid upon a table in the hall of the castle of Coutras, and a coarse sheet thrown over them ‡.

* Some persons seeing the fugitives halt, came and told him, that the marshal de Matignon's army was in sight: he received those tidings as a new subject of glory, and turning courageously to his men, Let us go, my friends, said he: two battles in one day, is what has never before been seen. Prefixe, *ibid.*

† Claude de Joyeuse, the youngest of seven sons of William duke of Joyeuse.

‡ The following is an anecdote, the truth of which I cannot answer for. However, the reader may not be displeas'd to see it here; I met with it in the Memoirs of Amelot de la Houffaye, vol. II. p. 443. who relates it as drawn from the history of the lords of Enghien, by Colins. This author speaks thus, "The king of Navarre gained the victory, to the great satisfaction of the king of France, who

"secretly corresponded with the victorious army, through the faithful interposition of the marquis of Rosny, of the house of Bethune, now duke of Sully, who remained unknown at Paris." This author seems to have been acquainted with the duke of Sully's secret negotiations with Henry III. already mentioned; but he is mistaken in this, that these negotiations produced no effect, since the duke of Joyeuse was still highly favoured by this prince, at least if we may believe monsieur de Sully, who ought to know better than any other: And that Sully could not be at Paris, because he was at the battle; and that even the last journey he took there, some time before, had no other motive than the desire of seeing and assisting his wife.

M E M O I R S

O F

S U L L Y.

B O O K III.

THAT the protestant party might have derived great advantages from the victory of Coutras, and that they did not, is equally true. I am sincere enough to confess, that the king of Navarre did not, upon this occasion, do all he might with a victorious army, and master of the field: if he had advanced to meet the foreign auxiliaries, nothing could have prevented their junction; and, after a stroke so important, his party would have at least been equal to the catholics. 'Tis certain, that the true value of a moment is never known, the wisest are deceived*. The ambitious designs, and self-interested views of the several leaders in the victorious army, snatched from the king of Navarre the fruits of his victory; but this is a truth few people are acquainted with.

1587.

THE prince of Condé being seduced by the advice of Trémouille, thought the time was now come, when he could execute the bold

* Our best historians agree in these two things, that the king of Navarre knew not how to take advantage of his victory, and that he did not do all he might have done.

D'Aubigné is almost the only person who exculpates this prince's officers, and lays the blame wholly upon him. Vol. III. b. i. c. xv.

scheme

1587.

scheme he had long before meditated, which was to dismember the crown of France of Anjou, Poitou, the countries of Aunis, Saintonge, and Angoumois, to compose of them an independent sovereignty. With this view, he hastily withdrew the troops he had brought to the general army, and turned all his thoughts to the reduction of Saintes and Brouage, which he flattered himself he should be master of at the first alarm; and that afterwards, nothing would be able to oppose him. So true it is, that ambition resembles that bird in the fable, who has a strong wing, and an insatiable hunger*.

* The duke of Sully does not agree here with d'Aubigné, du Pleffis Mornay, and the author of the life of the duke of Bouillon; it is probable he had better memoirs than them all, with regard to the design he attributes to the prince and the duke on this occasion; but I am afraid, there was some prejudice and passion on his side. In my opinion, monsieur de Thou is better able than any other person to decide this question: speaking of the consequences of the battle of Coutras, he says, that a council being assembled to deliberate upon what measures were necessary to be taken, the prince of Condé proposed, that they should go to meet the foreign troops along the side of the Loire, and secure them a passage over this river, by seizing Saumur; that this advice was not followed, for reasons which he relates, and which are very bad; and it was agreed only, that the prince of Condé should go, with what troops they could spare him, to join to the German army towards the source of the Loire, taking his way thro' the heart of Angoumois and Limosin. That the king of Navarre, on his side, seeing himself abandoned by the greatest part of the nobility of Poitou and Saintonge, marched towards St. Foi in Agenois, from whence he took the rout to Pau, leaving the conduct of his little army to the viscount de Turenne; who not willing to let the soldiers be idle, besieged Sarlat in Perigord, designing at least to lay it under contribution, if he could not take it. This is what de Thou says, to which may be added, a very important circumstance, and at the same time a very true one, since nei-

ther the duke of Bouillon, nor his apologists, could contradict it: which is, that it was the viscount himself who rejected the prince of Condé's prudent advice. From all this it follows, that the prince of Condé was not guilty of what he is here accused of, which is further confirmed by d'Aubigné, who adds, that it was upon a promise the king of Navarre made him to join him soon, that he advanced to Angoumois, where he waited a long time to no purpose. The prince, however, is not cleared of having had likewise views of independence, of which no historian doubts.

Although the viscount Turenne appears to have acted upon this occasion in consequence of the resolution of a general council; yet, in my opinion, we are not the less authorized to think disadvantageously of him. It is bad reasoning in Mariolier to grant on one side, that he was instigated by his ambition to wicked designs, and on the other side to complain, that those designs are supposed the motives of his conduct. This is to destroy the idea he would give us of the duke of Bouillon, as of the greatest politician of his time. These rash judgments are condemned by religion, but are allowed by the laws of history; and political conjectures are often reduced to this foundation alone.

As for what has been said in the same place against the count of Soissons, it is, and will be still more supported hereafter by unanswerable proofs. De Thou, book lxxxvii. Memoirs du Pleffis, book i. D'Aubigné, vol. III. chap. xv. Marfolier's History of Henry duke of Bouillon, vol. I. book iii.

THE

1587.

THE viscount Turenne having the same designs upon the Limosin, and Perigord, where he already possessed great estates, pursued the same conduct with the prince of Condé; and obliging all his troops (which alone composed one third of the army) to follow him, led them to the siege of Sarlat, soothing them with hopes that this expedition would enrich even the meanest soldier. He fully justified the proverb, that great promisers perform the least: the check he received before this little paltry town, ought to have convinced him in time of the vanity of his pretensions. The viscount had no one to accuse but himself for this misfortune; as for the king of Navarre, he had acted quite contrary to his advice.

THE count of Soissons concealed his designs with more art; however, it is certain, that his new attachment to the king of Navarre was not sincere, and that it was interest alone which induced him to it. He had gained the heart of the princess Catherine, the king's sister, and he was continually expressing to this prince, the earnest desire he had of uniting himself more closely to him by marriage; but this design concealed another too shameful for him to suffer to appear. His pretensions by this marriage were, to substitute himself in the place of the king of Navarre; and as he saw no probability that this prince, having the pope, Spain, and the French catholics for his enemies, should ever accomplish his designs, he depended upon enriching himself with his spoils, and upon gaining, at least, the great estates which make up the apenage of the house of Albret on this side the Loire. Such being his intentions, he took care neither to assist him with his advice, or his arm, to push his last victory further; on the contrary, he seized that moment to press him so earnestly to allow him to go to Bearn to visit the princess his sister, that the king, seeing himself in a more destitute condition than if he had lost the battle, thought he was obliged, in gratitude for the assistance the count had given him, to grant him this satisfaction. He himself was also dragged thither (and the count was not ignorant of it) by a passion which had always been the weakness of this prince. Love called him back to the countess of Guiche, to lay at her feet the colours he had taken from the enemy, which he had caused to be set apart for that purpose.

ACCORDINGLY they took the road together to Bearn. Happily this unseasonable journey did not produce all the disadvantages that might have been reasonably expected from it: it was so far of use

1587.

to the king of Navarre, as to give him a more perfect knowledge of the person on whom he was going to bestow his sister. The count of Soissons could not so well dissemble his sentiments, but that the king guessed at some part of them; and a letter, which he received from Paris, fully revealed them. By this letter he was informed, that the count of Soissons had taken this step purely at the instigation of the ecclesiastics, who had fallen upon this stratagem to deprive him of all his possessions: that the count had solemnly sworn to them, as soon as he had married the princess, he would bring her with him to Paris, and abandon for ever the party of his benefactor, and afterwards concert measures with them to finish the rest. The king of Navarre received this letter at his return from hunting, when he was just ready to fall into the snare that was laid for him; and it gave him an aversion to the count, which nothing was ever able to remove. He broke with him, and regretted too late, that he had abandoned himself to his advice.

I HAD NOT the mortification of being a witness to all these resolutions which were taken after the battle of Coutras, and which I should in vain have opposed. Some days before these extravagant and senseless schemes had possessed the minds of the principal officers in our army, the king of Navarre took me aside, in a garden, and asked my opinion concerning the condition into which this last action had put his affairs. I told him, that I thought it necessary he should march immediately with all his force towards the source of the Loire, to receive the foreign supplies, or, what would answer the same end, to facilitate their passage, by taking possession of all the towns on this side of the river; and which, except Poitiers and Angoulême, which he might leave, seemed not difficult to be won. By this means he would at least secure to himself the finest and best provinces, from whence he could not be driven in a short time, nor by very inconsiderable forces.

Lewis de Harlai, lord of Montglat.

THE king of Navarre approved of this advice, and appeared resolved to follow it exactly. He told me, that he had just sent Montglat to the foreign army, and that since he could not go to put himself at the head of it, he ardently wished the prince of Conti* would accept of that charge; having received letters from this prince, in which he offered to assist him in person: and he added that, under

* Frances de Bourbon, prince of Conti, and Eleanora de Roye. He died in 1614, second son to Lewis I. prince of Conde, leaving no children by his two marriages.

pretence

1587.

pretence of going to the royal army, the prince of Conti might join the auxiliaries without danger. The king then left to me the care of prevailing upon the prince to take this step, and recommended to me to use all my endeavours to secure the success of it.

I SET out from the army, charged only with a letter of three lines, and sending my equipage to Pons, passed through Maine; where I expected to have found the prince, by means of the acquaintance I had with the governors of those places through which he must pass. I learnt, at my arrival, that the prince of Conti set out by himself two days before; and had not so well concealed his march, but that his intelligence with the foreigners was suspected, which was the cause that the roads were filled with the detachments which were sent after him; and therefore I was obliged to take a circuit, in order to join him, and to pass by Rosny; from whence coming to Neaufse, I was there informed of what had happened. The Germans entering without order, and without guides, into provinces unknown, stopped by large rivers, harassed continually by the troops of the league, had at length been totally defeated at Auneau*: that the Swiss, to avoid the like misfortune, had enlisted, to the number of twelve thousand, in the troops of the league: that the king of Navarre was at Bearn, his forces unemployed, and dispersed on all sides.

THIS mournful news stopped my journey, and rendered my commission useless. Nothing now remained for me to do, but to turn back to Rosny; where, while I secretly deplored the fatal consequences of our bad conduct, I feigned, for my security, to take part in the public rejoicings, for the defeat at Auneau. I visited my estates in Normandy; and while I was expecting those remedies, which time,

* See a detail of this in de Thou, book lxxxvii. D'Aubigné, vol. III. book i. Matthieu, vol. I. book viii. p. 537. Chron. Novenn. vol. I. p. 39. and particularly the Memoirs of the league, vol. I. where it is observed, that at the time this army was encamped near the river Yonne, Montglat came from the king of Navarre, to desire the commanders of it would march towards the source of the Loire, where he would put himself at their head; but they did not think proper to do so. The leaders were, the baron d'Onau, or Dona, Guitry, Clervant, Beauvois la-Nocle, &c. If

they had obeyed this order, the king of Navarre, then returning from Bearn, would have had time to join them with all his troops, and the army would not have been defeated. Davila, in his eighth book, relates the duke of Guise's reply to the duke of Maienne, who was sensible of the danger of attacking an enemy so much superior in number: "Those, said he, that do not care to fight, may stay here. What I cannot resolve upon in half an hour, I never resolve on my whole life."

1588.
Upon the
Dordogne.

By means of
a ladder of
cords.

Thursday
May 12.

and the king of Navarre's return might bring to our calamities, I learnt that this prince had left Bearn, and I went to join him at Bergerac, where the news of the taking of Castillon consoled him a little, amidst for many causes for affliction. The siege of this place had cost the duke of Maienne a million of crowns, and the viscount Turenne retook it for less than two.

A LITTLE time afterwards, we were informed of two accidents that were likely enough to change the face of affairs; one was the death of the prince of Condé*, a death as sudden as tragical: the imprisonment of some of his chief attendants, and the punishment of one of his domestics †, who was torn to pieces by four horses, left no room to doubt that he died by poison. The news of the populace rising ‡ at Paris, and barricading the streets, and of the king's depar-

* Notwithstanding the secret jealousy that subsisted between the prince of Condé and the king of Navarre, yet the king was extremely afflicted for his loss, and shutting himself up in his cabinet with the count of Soissons, he was heard to send forth great cries, and to say, "That he had lost his right hand." Prefixe, History of Henry the great, part I. This prince was called Henry, and was son to Lewis of Bourbon, first prince of Condé. He had no children by his first wife; after whom he married Charlotte Catherine de la Trémouille, whom at his death he left three months gone with child. It is a great error which was spread among the people, that Henry of Condé, the twelfth of that name, was born thirteen months after the death of his father. He was born the 1st of September following.

† The name of this domestic was Brilliant. One of his pages was executed in effigy. The princess herself was comprehended in this accusation. René Cumont, the lieutenant-particulier of St. Jean, commenced a process against her, which was suspended on account of the birth of Henry II. prince of Condé. After six years imprisonment, the princess presented a petition to the parliament of Paris, who brought this affair before their tribunal, and acquitted Charlotte Catherine de la Trémouille of the crime of which she was accused. The

prince of Condé died at St. John d'Angely, March the 5th, 1588, aged thirty-five years. De Thou, book xc. Morisot, I know not upon what authority, says, that the death of the prince of Condé might be occasioned by a wound he received in his side, by a lance, at the battle of Coutras. Henry Magn. cap. xii. p. 27.

‡ I shall not give a detail of it here, as it would be too long, and may besides be found in a great many other books. It is sufficient to say, that Henry III. to prevent the dangerous designs of the league, having ordered about six thousand troops, the most part Swiss, to enter Paris, and spreading them in different quarters of the city, the people rose, and being kept together by some of the chiefs of the league, fortified themselves in the streets, repulsed the soldiers, disarmed the Swiss, defeated the king's guards, and carried the barricades within fifty paces of the Louvre, &c. Henry III. seeing himself ready to be besieged in the Louvre, and not willing to expose himself to the violence of an enraged populace, went out privately by the Tuilleries, and the suburb Mantmante, from whence he got to Chartres. The affair was afterwards turned into a negotiation, between the queen-mother, and the duke of Guise, and the absolute decision of it remitted to the states of Blois.

I observe, after d'Aubigne, that it was
ture

1588.

ture from that city, followed soon after, and was spread every where by the courier, who was sent with an account of it to the duke of Epernon. To this abject condition a king saw himself reduced, who neither knew how to prevent, to stifle, or to divide factions, who amused himself with conjecturing, when he ought to have acted, who exerted neither prudence nor fortitude, nor was even acquainted with the characters of those whom he commanded, nor those that were

very fortunate for Henry III. that his troops seized and kept possession of the suburb St. Honore, and the back of the Tuilleries; and that no one of the league thought of seizing these quarters. Those who guarded the gate of Nesle, fired at a distance upon the king's troop, and seeing the ferry-boat of the Tuilleries approach, in which they supposed the king to be, cut the cable. Chronol. Noven. tom. I.

Henry III. was on his side guilty of a much greater fault, in forbidding Grillon, colonel of the French guards, to take possession of the square Maubert, and the quarter of the university, and by hindering his soldiers from firing upon the populace; who, by a step more firm and seasonable, might have been retained in their duty. The duke of Guise waited six whole days at Soissons, not daring to come to Paris, contrary to the king's orders, which were signified to him by Bellievre, in two letters that he sent him at different times by the post. They were to blame, as Matthieu the historian also observes, vol. I. book viii. for not sending these letters by an express to the duke of Guise; for the duke imagined, that he might elude this order, by denying he had received the letters, as in effect he did at the queen's palace, in the presence of the king and Bellievre, to whom he protested, with deep oaths, that they were never delivered to him. This fault was not committed thro' negligence, but because they had not five and twenty crowns to spare to pay the courier for his journey.

Henry III. was advised by the duke of Epernon, to suffer his guards to assassinate the duke of Guise as he came to the Louvre; and this prince, they say, would have engaged la Guesle and Villequier in the design, but they dissuaded him from it.

It is reported also, that the same day, wherein the streets were barricaded, Alphonso d'Ornano assured him, he would bring him the head of the duke of Guise, if he would permit him. In a word, it is thought, that the king did not make use of half the precautions he might have done, informed as he was of all the designs of the league, having himself narrowly missed being taken as he was going to Vincennes; and had just been convinced by what had happened at the imprisonment of la Morliere, a famous leaguer, that the people only waited for an opportunity of insulting him. The king's council acted without comparison better in that affair of la Morliere, than on the day of the barricades. Memoirs of the league, vol. V. Satyr. Menip.

The duke's design in this enterprize has given rise to great disputes, which I cannot here enter into a detail of; in this, as in all other dubious matters, much has been said pro and con. Those who will have it, that he intended to carry, or suffer the people to carry things to an extremity, to seize the king's person, in a word, to put the crown upon his own head, support their assertions by some writings of great consequence, to which I am obliged to refer the reader. See the first vol. of the Memoirs of the league, and the vol. marked 8866, in the king's library: the chief of which are, A letter written to him by the duchess of Lorraine, after the victory of Auneau, in which she advises him to make use of the present opportunity to declare himself king, &c. A letter written by the duke himself the next day after the fortifications in the streets of Paris, to the governor of Orleans, wherein are these words, "I have vanquished the Swiss, cut in
" pieces part of the king's guards, and
nearest

1588.

neareſt his perſon. The revolutions which happen in great ſtates, are not produced by chance, or the caprice of the people; 'tis a weak and diſorderly government that cauſes rebellions, for the populace never riſe through a deſire of attacking, but an impatience of ſuffering.

“ hold the Louvre ſo cloſely inveſted, that
 “ I ſhall be able to give a good account of
 “ thoſe that are within. This victory is ſo
 “ great, that it will never be forgot,” &c. Many other letters, in which he mentions the king very diſreſpectfully, and the princes of the blood with the utmoſt contempt; to this they add, the diſcontent the duke diſcovered, and the reproaches he made the queen-mother, for having amuſed him with conferences, while his prey eſcaped him. In ſine, the writings that were, ſay they, publiſhed by his commands; wherein was attempted to be proved, the pretended right the houſe of Lorraine had to the crown, not to mention an infinite number of other pieces, which were indeed but ſo many factitious libels againſt Francis duke of Guiſe, reproaching him with having attempted to aſſert his chimerical claims upon Anjou and Provence; and the cardinal his brother, with endeavouring to make himſelf ſovereign of Metz, under the protection of the emperor, a project which the vigilance of Salcedo prevented the execution of; but he loſt his head for it: and for having treated about religion with the king of Spain, at the council of Trent, without his maſter's participation. The greateſt part of theſe writings are ſtill in every body's hands.

For the duke's juſtification they bring thoſe arguments made uſe of by himſelf in a letter, or a ſort of manifeſto, which he drew up the ſame day, being the 13th of May. He there declares, that the report of the king's intention to fill the city with foreigners, and to fall upon the citizens with them, was the true cauſe of the populace riſing; that, inſtead of ſupporting them, he had made uſe of his utmoſt endeavours, till two hours after midnight, to calm the tumult; that he had perſuaded the Swiſs, and prevented the maſſacre; that he had intreated the rebels to reſpect the royal authority; and that, far from attempting any thing againſt the king's perſon, “ I

“ might, ſaid he, have ſtopped him a
 “ thouſand times, if I had been inclined
 “ to do ſo,” &c. Add to this, that in treating with the queen-mother, he required nothing but the deſtruction of the proteſtants, and that religion ſhould be ſecured; and declared likewiſe, that it was not in his own name he treated, but in that of the cardinal of Bourbon, whoſe intereſts he ſupported againſt thoſe of the king of Navarre, and the other princes of the blood.

I do not find it ſufficiently proved againſt the duke of Guiſe, that his deſign was to place himſelf upon the throne, after the death of Henry III. and the cardinal of Bourbon; and this is very extraordinary. What ambitious man, and in his place, could have reſiſted the ſuggeſtions of the pope, the king of Spain, and a great part of Europe, who all conſpired for his elevation? See the duke of Parma's opinion of this event, Davila, book ix. “ The duke of Guiſe made ſhew of doing too much, and in reality did too little: he ought to have remembered, that whoever draws his ſword againſt his prince, ought to have that inſtant thrown away the ſcabbard.” Sixtus V. when he received the news, cried out, “ Oh that presumptuous duke, and that weak king.” “ The earl of Stafford, ambaffador from England, (I relate this anecdote in the words of le Grain, book iv.) “ being adviſed to take a ſafe-conduct from the duke of Guiſe, I will have no other ſecurity, ſaid he, than the law of nations, and the protection of the king to whom I am ſent, whoſe ſervants and ſubjects you and the duke of Guiſe both are.” The firſt preſident de Harlay answered the duke of Guiſe with the ſame firmneſs, That in the king's abſence, he would take his orders from the queen-mother.

There is one piece upon the different conduct of the league and council, before and after the mutiny in Paris, that deſerves to

THE

1588.

THE just resentment that filled the heart of the king of Navarre, for an insult so cruel, offered to one of his own blood, and which, in some degree, reflected a disgrace upon all crowned heads, effaced in a moment the remembrance of Henry III's injurious treatment of himself. He declared his affliction at it in his council, who all with one voice approved of his resolution to assist and defend the king of France; and he sent his secretary immediately to this prince, to assure him, that he might dispose of his person and troops.

THE count of Soissons, whose mind was engrossed by perpetual chimeras, looked upon this event as a stroke of fortune, which by ridding him of all his rivals, would give him the chief sway in the council, and court of Henry III. Changing therefore his battery in an instant, he resolved to go and offer his service to this prince; and to give himself more consequence with him, he sought dependents in the court of the king of Navarre, and from amongst his most affectionate servants, whose fidelity he did not scruple upon this occasion to tempt. The king of Navarre, though he was pretty sensible of all the baseness of this conduct, dissembled his sentiments of it; and reflecting that it would be of use to him to have some person with the count of Soissons, in whom he could confide, to watch all his motions, and study the new system he pursued at court; he commanded me to give ear to this prince's discourse, and to affect a zeal for him that I was very far from feeling. The count of Soissons suffered himself to be easily deceived; he congratulated himself for having gained me, and treated me with a distinction that did not fail to raise me some enemies, who envied me the share I possessed of his favour. I accompanied him in his journey, after having received instructions from the king of Navarre, and concerted with him those measures which his service required me to take upon this occasion.

DURING our whole journey, the count continually entertained me with the favour, the magnificence, and the honours that waited him at court. The king of Navarre, he thought, would not even attempt to rival him: amidst all the strokes of vanity, and insupportable

be read, and is entitled, The Verbal Process of Nicolas Poulain, the mayor of Paris, upon the league, from 1585 to 1588. This Nicolas Poulain, who secretly favoured the king's party, often

gave good advice in this affair, which was never followed. This piece of secret history is to be found in the first vol. of the Journal of Henry III's reign, p. 132, and following.

pride

1588.

pride which escaped him, there mingled, without his perceiving it, a kind of bitterness against the king of Navarre, that sufficiently discovered the hatred and antipathy he bore him. I could neither submit to flatter his inclinations, nor to approve of his ridiculous schemes; and all my answer was, that I foresaw the disunion of the royal family, which had been already the cause of so many misfortunes, would bring France at last under the power of the house of Austria, after it had made them destroy each other. A discourse more soothing would have been more to his taste; but mine, however, seemed to bear the marks of a sincere attachment to him, which could not fail of pleasing.

WE arrived at Nogent-le-Rotrou, and afterwards at Mante, where the king of France was. We found him in that restless and unquiet disposition of mind, which a violent resentment occasions, and filled with confusion for the affront he had so lately suffered. Notwithstanding all this, he was so incapable of taking the advantage of the change in his affairs*, that even at that very time he made the duke of Epemon admiral, and soon after gave him the government of Normandy, vacant by the death of the marechal Joyeuse. The count of Soissons was received in a manner so different from what he expected, that there needed no more to convince him of the folly of his great projects. The king addressing himself to me, asked me if I had quitted the king of Navarre's party? I evaded this perplexing question, by telling him, that in coming to offer my service to his majesty, I did not think myself separated from the king of Navarre, because I was assured, that that prince, whose interests were the same with his, would in a little time do the like. I found this answer did not displease the king; but being surrounded, and carefully observed by persons, on whose countenances it was easy to read the uneasiness which my discourse gave them, he concealed his sentiments. The weakness of this prince was indeed incomprehensible: his real enemies could not be unknown to him, after the audacious manner

* It is believed, that if Henry III. had acted with more prudence and steadiness, he would have been still able to retrieve his affairs. It is certain, that the Parisians, in great consternation at his leaving Paris, sent deputies to him at Chartres, to intreat him with every kind of submission to return to that city; and to render this deputation more affecting, they made the capuchins walk in procession, and enter the cathedral with the instruments of the passion, crying *Miserericordia*. The king received

them with that air of majesty and authority necessary upon this occasion. He shewed great favour to the deputies from the parliament, which had not been any ways concerned in the affair of the barricades; the others he threatened with a resolution never again to enter Paris, and to deprive it of its charters, and sovereign courts; at which they were so greatly alarmed, that the duke of Guise was obliged to exert all his art and credit to pacify them.

in which they had so lately taken off the masque; but still feigning ignorance, he again delivered himself up to the queen-mother *, and through her to his persecutors, with whom she reconciled him. Perhaps, however, this last step was in this prince but a stroke of the most profound dissimulation; for the bold † action he committed

* In the circular letter that Henry III. sent into the provinces, after the action of the barricades, and which began thus, "Dear and well beloved, you have, as we suppose, heard the reasons that induced us to leave our city of Paris, the 13th of this month," &c. This prince speaks more like a suppliant than a king; he defends his design of introducing a foreign garrison in Paris, and doubts of the fidelity of the Parisians. He gives a false and bad colour to his flight, and declares that he is ready to begin the war against the huguenots, at the head of the league. MS. of the royal library, number 8866, 8891.

† The author means the conferences which the queen-mother held, by this prince's command, with the cardinal of Bourbon and the duke of Guise; to which were also admitted, as I find in vol. 8906, of the manuscripts in the royal library, the lords de Lanfac, Lenoncourt, Des-Chateillers, and Miron, first physician to his majesty, who had been employed in carrying messages between the two parties on the day of the barricades. These conferences were held at Chalons, at Sarry, a house belonging to the bishop of Chalons, at Nemours, &c. The league made most extravagant demands there, such as the entire abolition of the pretended reformed religion, the dismissal of all the Calvinist officers, even if they abjured; the publication of the council of Trent, the inquisition, &c. and at last obtained all they demanded by the edict of July 21, which was given in consequence of those conferences. *Memoirs of the league*, vol. I. *Memoirs of Nevers*, vol. I. *Matthieu*, vol. I. book viii. *Chron. Noven*, vol. I. and others.

† The death of the two brothers, the duke and cardinal of Guise, whom this prince caused to be murdered in his own

apartments, by his guards, the 23d of Dec. at Blois, where he held the states. See this murder in the same historians, with a relation of the proceedings and intrigues of both parties in the states of Blois. The cardinal of Bourbon was kept prisoner, the other brothers of the duke of Guise fled.

The duke of Guise perished as the admiral Coligny did; presumption hindered them both from seeing the danger with which they were threatened. The duke heeded none of the warnings that were given him; it is said, that the marchioness of Noirmoutier, the same lady who made so much noise under the name of madam de Sauves, came on purpose to pass the night with him; and neither by arguments or intreaties, could hinder him from going the next day to the council.

Some persons took upon them to justify Henry III. for this action, among others the cardinal de Joyeuse, in a long memorial upon this subject, which he sent from Rome, where he then was. *Villeroy's Memoirs of State*, vol. II. p. 175. But the most judicious of our historians, and even those who have carried the privilege of the royal authority furthest, all detest it. "The shocking circumstances of the murder of the Guises," says Perefice, "appeared horrible, even in the eyes of the huguenots, who said, that it too much resembled the massacre of St. Bartholomew." On the other side it cannot be denied, that Henry III. had no other way of preserving the crown in his house, and perhaps on his own head; for there is not the least probability in what *Villeroy* asserts in his *Memoirs*, vol. I. p. 25. that the king, without taking that course, might have made himself matter of the deliberations of the states of Blois, and have obliged them to comply with his will.

1589.

against the states of Blois, gives us room to believe, that his revenge was never one moment out of his thoughts: and if one might form any judgment of this assembly, in all appearance, every individual that composed it, had each a secret object in view, to which all their designs tended, and which success discovered in some, and disappointment concealed in others.

THE death of Catherine de Medicis, which happened soon after * the assassination of the duke of Guise; did not afford Henry III. more

In this alternative one cannot help lamenting the consequences of bad conduct in a prince, which reduces him to such a sad necessity. He was himself a fatal example of this truth, that he who strikes with a knife, shall perish by a knife.

The duke of Guise was almost adored by the catholics, especially the people, who called him always, *Our great man*. He had a scar on the left cheek, below his eye, which only served to make him more respected, because he received it fighting against the huguenots, at the battle of Chateau-Thierry, by a pistol-shot from a German trooper. He was, on the contrary, so hated by his own family, whom he treated with an insupportable insolence, and severity, that we are assured his relations, and even his own brothers, through fear of falling under the power of a tyrant, were the persons that sent Henry III. the most certain intelligence of his actions and designs; an intelligence which was suspected by the prince, as that given to the duke by many of the courtiers concerning the king's violent resolution against him, was by him; for they both imagined from thence that the design was to prevail upon them to quit the party, and break with the states of Blois, in which each of them would have found his account. Henry III. at first designed only to arrest the duke of Guise, but he found it would be dangerous, and still more to make him prisoner; therefore he determined to have him poignarded. Both the bodies were consumed in a fire, the bones burnt in a low hall of the castle, and the ashes thrown into the air.

The king of Navarre, who had no hand

in this assassination, was the person that gained most by it. In all appearance, while the duke of Guise lived, he would never have obtained the crown. We are assured also, that there were then great designs formed between France and Spain, not only to extirpate the protestant party, but even to dethrone Elizabeth, which the event of the barricades, followed by the death of the duke of Guise, was only able to hinder the execution of. The king of Navarre lamented the fate of the duke of Guise, without blaming Henry III. "I always," said he, foresaw, and said, that messieurs de Guise would never undertake the enterprize they had conceived, and bring it to an issue, without endangering their lives." Cayet, vol. I. fol. 114. Several other persons were of the same opinion. "Cursed be Lorraine," said Hubert de Vins, in the Memoirs of Castelnau, "for his stupidity in supposing, that a king, whose crown he was attempting to take away by dissimulation, would not likewise dissemble with him, to take away his life." "Since they are so near each other," said madame de Fourbin, the sister of de Vins, "we shall hear the very first day, either one or the other has slain his companion."

The tragical events of the year 1588 have appeared to some to verify the prediction of Regiomontanus, and other astrologers, that this year would be the climacteric of the world. I find in it only a new confirmation of the folly of this ridiculous science.

* In the opinions of those who have bestowed so many praises upon this prince's liberty

liberty to follow his inclinations, which led him to unite himself with the king of Navarre. The league was not extinct with the duke of Guise: he had the minds of the people to calm, the grantees to regain, the pope to appease, and Spain to keep in bounds, and the displeasure of all the catholics to assuage, who, after this execution, were very well disposed to question his religion.

1589.

HENRY, like all weak men, magnified these difficulties; he flattered himself he should reduce every thing to order by mildness; and therefore publicly asserted his privilege, explained his reasons for what he had done, and loudly justified his conduct. He ought to have employed arms alone against a party, which had no longer any respect for the royal authority; and instead of increasing the presumption of the populace (who in power are no less insolent, than abject in obedience) by a moderation which can only be ascribed to weakness, he ought to have declared himself boldly the assailant, and fought for vengeance like a king. Had he acted in this manner, conjunctly with the king of Navarre, he might, in all probability, have prevented the loss of Orleans, and an infinite number of other* places; nor had he been at last reduced to the cities of Blois, Beaugency, Amboise, Tours, and Saumur.

I WAS either a witness to all these events, or was soon informed of them at Rosny, whither I had retired, as to a place, where I could

it seemed sufficient to merit the title of a politician, that she knew how to engross the management of all affairs, and to keep herself in possession of authority; but when one reflects, that these supposed abilities, which consisted, however, in making use of unworthy means, and contemptible artifices, brought things at last to such an extremity, that neither she, nor any other, knew any longer what remedies to apply to them; it may be justly asserted, that the quality of a politician did not compensate for the numberless faults she committed. It is believed, that the fatal consequences which she apprehended would attend the murder of the Guises, in which she had no part, the cardinal of Bourbon's reproaches, the horror of the present time, and perhaps the stings of her conscience, hastened her death, which happened the 5th of January, 1589. She was forgot

soon afterwards. De Thou, book xciv. Her last advice to her son was, to put an end to the persecution against the protestants, and to establish an entire liberty of religion in France. Chron. Novenn. vol. I. fol. 132. Brantome's prejudices against this queen renders all he has said to her disadvantage very doubtful, vol. VII. of his Memoirs, p. 31, and following. Varillas is not more to be believed; when he says, that her death was occasioned by her grief for the murder of the duke, whom she was very fond of. Siri praises her like a foreigner, who was not well acquainted with the affairs of our court in that time; for he came to France long after the death of that queen. Memoirs of Recon di Vittorio Siri, vol. I. p. 26.

“* ’Tis a puff of wind,” said Henry III. speaking of those cities, “which has
“ thrown down a pack of cards.”

1589. easily observe whatever passed at court. I left it as soon as I thought it was necessary to give the king of Navarre an account of these transactions. He had not been a little perplexed himself during this interval, in unravelling and overthrowing the schemes of the viscount Turenne; who putting himself in the prince of Condé's place, continued all his projects for himself, and acted in the same manner by the king of Navarre, as the duke of Guise did by Henry III. In an assembly of the protestants, held at Rochelle, he boldly declared, that France, in the present conjuncture, could not possibly avoid seeing her monarchy dismembered; and he gave them to understand that, in the division which would be made of it, he would not forget himself. The king of Navarre complained of this conduct in the same assemblies; and to engage the protestants more firmly to his person, he joined his actions to words, seized upon Garnache, and took Niort by storm, after a bloody and furious battle. It was at his return from this expedition, that he fell dangerously ill * at la Mothe-Frélon.

In Poitou.

Nicholas
d'Angennes.

I TOOK my way through Blois, in order to form my last conjectures by the situation in which I should find the court. Although I made use of all possible precautions to avoid being discovered by any person; yet the marquis of Rambouillet seeing me pass through the street, knew me, though wrapt up in my cloak, and ordered me to be watched to my lodging. The marquis was a man of strict honesty, and had always the good of the state in view, without any considerations of self-interest: he conceived, that it belonged to him to draw some advantage from this encounter, to make one more effort upon the king's mind, and prevail upon him at length to throw himself into the arms of the king of Navarre. He found him in such a disposition as he wished, and the king was the rather induced to employ me upon this occasion, as he remembered I had already been sent to him on that business. Rambouillet coming to me by his order, we concerted together what was necessary to be done; after which he presented me to his majesty, who confirmed to me himself his intentions. The many ineffectual engagements into which he had entered with the king of Navarre, made me

* He left St. Hermine, in Lower Poitou, in the month of January, to go and assist Garnache, which was besieged by the duke of Nevers. Du-Plessis-Mornay led his troops, and he himself marched on foot, as if he was shooting. He over-heated himself, and was seized with

a pain in his side, attended with a fever, which obliged him to stop at the first house he came to, which belonged to a gentleman called la Mothe-Frélon. Du-Plessis persuaded him to be let blood, which cured him. Life of Du-Plessis-Mornay, book i. p. 125.

think

think it necessary to ask him for a credential letter to that prince; but he denied this request, out of an apprehension that this letter might fall into the hands of the nuncio Morofini *, or the duke of Nevers, to whom, he said, notwithstanding the esteem he had for me, he should be obliged to deliver me, if I was discovered in Blois. I gave up this point, therefore; but afterwards demanded, for the security of the king of Navarre, that when he should enter a country full of his enemies, a town might be given him, that would afford him a free passage over the Loire. This, for the same reason, was not granted. I did not attribute these refusals to any bad intention of the king's, but only to the fear he was in of those two men, upon whom he had voluntarily made himself dependent. I did not, however, believe, that the king of Navarre, without this last article was yielded to, would advance with his troops as far as Blois. But this difficulty was removed by Brigneux, the governor of Beaugency, whom I visited before I went away. After telling me, that he saw, with grief, this place, like the rest, would be infallibly lost by the measures the king pursued, he offered to resign the care of it to me, or to Rebours, or any other officer the king of Navarre should approve; adding, that he chose rather to resign his post, and follow this prince as a volunteer only, than to continue in Beaugency, where his advice was not regarded.

AFTER this assurance, I returned immediately to the king of Navarre: this prince listened to me attentively, but not being able to suppress those doubts, which his frequent disappointments from the king of France had inspired him with, he often asked me, with an unquiet tone of voice, and irresolute action, if I now really thought the king of France sincere? I protested to him that I believed he was; and added the engagement of Rambouillet. "Well then, replied the king, I will not take his towns, while he continues to treat faithfully with me;" for he had taken Châtelleraud that very day. "Return then, added he, and carry him my letters; for I neither fear Morofini nor

* John Francis Morofini, bishop of Bresce. Lewis de Gonzague, duke of Nevers. Sixtus V. had just then published a bull of excommunication against Henry, which this prince used his utmost endeavour to get recalled. This pope, who was said to be equally fit to govern a great kingdom as to be the head of the church, secretly approved of that justice which the

king of France had executed upon the duke of Guise; but he could not pardon him for involving a cardinal in it. See in Villeroy's Memoirs of State, vol. II. p. 175. the cardinal de Joyeuse's letters already cited. Sixtus V. foretold, that the league would reduce Henry to the necessity of applying to the king of Navarre and the huguenots for assistance.

"Nevers."

1589. "Nevers." Accordingly he made me go with him that moment to breakfast in his closet; and I took post again for Blois.

THE king of France, who did not doubt but the king of Navarre's answer would be such as he desired, had, through impatience, advanced as far as Montrichard, with all his train. I found all the lodgings in this little place either taken up or bespoke, so that as I arrived very late, I began to think I should be obliged to pass the night in the street: luckily Maignan found out the marquis of Rambouillet's lodgings, and he provided me with those that had been designed for one of my brothers, who was then at Tours. At midnight I went to the king, who waited for me in a garret of the castle. He approved of, and signed every thing, even to the passage over the Loire; and would have had me to set out again that same night. The report of a treaty between the two kings had already reached Châtelleraud, when I arrived there; and was so passionately desired by the people, that as soon as I appeared, they loaded me with a thousand blessings.

In the Upper Poitou.

THE king of Navarre was already gone from thence. This prince, who depended upon nothing but his sword, being informed that the league had entered Argenton, marched hastily thither, and arrived so seasonably, that he forced the troops of the league to dislodge, before they had received the supplies necessary to maintain them there. He left Beaupré governor in this place, after I had visited the castle, and put it into a condition of defence.

Philip Mornay, lord of Pleffis-Marnay.

THE fatigue I had suffered from so many successive journeys, threw me, at my return, into a continued fever, which confined me to my bed twelve days. Du-Pleffis took advantage of this accident, to deprive me of the honour of a treaty which he had only the trouble of drawing up, and in which the marquis of Rambouillet * had as great a share as himself. This treaty was signed at Pleffis-les-Tours, to the great satisfaction of the two kings. Saumur was the place of security that was agreed upon, and Du-Pleffis did not fail to procure the government of it, as a fit reward for him to whom they were obliged for the success of the treaty.

* It is but just to inform the reader, that these facts are related very differently in the life of Du-Pleffis-Mornay, book i.

p. 131; but to which of the writers most credit ought to be given is not easy to decide.

THIS proceeding appeared to me so extremely unjustifiable, that I complained loudly of Du-Plessis, and even of the king of Navarre himself, who had bestowed the fruit of my labour upon another. The count of Soissons, who never had any regard to the general interest, or took part in the public joy, made use of this circumstance to endeavour to engage me in his new designs; and my two brothers, on the other side, pressed me earnestly to attach myself wholly to the party of the king of France: but I rejected this proposition, nor was my fidelity to my prince to be shaken by all the efforts that were made to seduce me. When I reflected also, that the government of Saumur would have obliged me to a constant residence there, and by consequence have removed me always from the king of Navarre, I found, that what had appeared an act of injustice, was, in reality, a favour, which merited my acknowledgment.

NOTHING now remained for the two kings to do, but to have a conference together, in order to concert their future enterprizes. For this purpose, the king of Navarre set out from Plessis-les-Tours. Still assaulted by some remains of distrust *, which he could with difficulty suppress, he stopped near a mill, about two leagues from the castle, and would know the opinion of each of the gentlemen that composed his train, upon the step he was going to take. I was amongst them, and the remembrance of the injustice, as I then thought it, which he had offered me, keeping me silent: the king of Navarre turning to me, "You say nothing, said he; what are your thoughts of the matter?" I answered, in few words, That it was true, the step he was taking was not without danger, because the troops of the king of France were superior to his; but that I looked upon this to be one of those circumstances, in which something ought to be left to chance; and that as for the rest, one ought to continue one's self with using all the precautions which prudence could suggest. This prince pausing for a few moments, then turning towards us, "Let us go on †, said he, my resolution is fixed."

* "His old huguenot officers, they say, were afraid, that at a time when treachery was so necessary to Henry III. to extricate him out of the labyrinth into which the action he had committed at Blois had introduced him (for he had been excommunicated by Sixtus V.) he would not scruple to purchase his abso-

lution at the price of the king of Navarre's life." Prefixe, *ibid.* This prince had often himself said, as de Thou relates, "That he never went to the king's closet but through the midst of two armies, ranged on each side."

† He wrote to Du-Plessis-Mornay, in these terms: "Monsieur Du-Plessis, the

1589.

THE king of France came into the field to meet the king of Navarre, and the joy of an union which had been so ardently desired, drew together so great a concourse of people, that the two kings continued above a quarter of an hour, at the distance of fifty paces from each other, without being able to approach nearer: at length the croud giving way, they embraced with equal satisfaction on both sides *, and took the road together to Tours, where the king of Navarre lay one night, and then returned to his quarters at Maillé. As for me, I staid at Tours, being detained by a great number of my friends and relations, whom I found there, and fixed my residence in the suburb St. Symphorien.

An abbey
near Tours.

THE duke of Maïenne, who had taken arms to revenge the death of the duke of Guise, and to support the interest of the league, had no design to leave us long in quiet, but marched with his whole army towards this city. The king, who had walked as far as Marmoutier, unarmed, and attended only by twenty horse, narrowly escaped being taken, and was obliged to return precipitately to Tours. The suburbs having no other intrenchments than some slight barricades, erected in haste, by six or seven regiments of royalists, who defended them, I quitted the suburb of St. Symphorien, and ordered all my equipage to be carried into the city. My conduct was by the officers taxed with timidity; but it was not long ere it was sufficiently justified.

THE duke of Maïenne attacked the suburb. He was stopped some moments by means of five or six houses, on the top of the hill, where our people had posted themselves; but they were soon obliged to abandon them, in order to intrench themselves behind the barricades, where expecting soon to be assaulted, they made use of this interval to snatch a hasty refreshment.

I MET the king at the gate of the city, and making me enter, he told me, that he believed it would be in vain to endeavour to defend the suburbs. In effect, the barricades could not resist the enemy's cannon; they were forced at the first onset, and as they had no ditch to support them, their retreat into the city was so confused, and so much

“ ice is broken, not without many warnings, that if I went I should be a dead man: I passed the water, recommending myself to God,” &c,

* At the bridge of La-Motte, a quarter

of a league from Tours: “ Courage, my lord, said Henry IV. to Henry III. two Henry's are worth more than one Carolus.” Matthieu, vol. I. p. 152.

The duke of Maïenne's name was Charles. exposed

exposed to the enemy, that I am surprized all the soldiers in the suburbs were not either taken or slain, and that the enemies did not even enter the city along with them. Two pieces of cannon would have been sufficient for that purpose. I saw the flight of our people from the convent of Jacobins, which looked over the walls of the city; and fearing that the danger would increase, I ran with my two brothers to the gate, to which they all prest tumultuously, and by means of some intrenchments we ordered to be made, rendered their retreat more secure, and with a little time and order, they all entered; after which we closed up the gate, and set a strong guard over it.

1589.

It was no longer doubted, but that the city would be besieged in form. I joined Châtillon, and some others, and we went to intreat the king to confide some important post to our care; he gave us the Isles*, and we laboured there without ceasing from that moment, till the next morning, that the king came to visit our work. He addressed himself to me, and praised our diligence greatly, but it was useless; for at the first news of what had happened, the king of Navarre marched hastily with his troops to Tours, and appeared in three hours before the city. The duke of Maienne would not wait for him, but retreated, after plundering the suburbs, and the neighbouring places. A service of this importance gave great hopes of what an alliance between the two kings might produce, and made the inhabitants of Tours look upon the king of Navarre † as their deliverer.

THE two kings continued together eight or ten days, after which they separated for the expedition that had been projected on the city of Poitiers. While they carried on the works there, the king of Navarre sent me with three hundred horse, and a like number of arquebusers, to whom he also gave horses, to defend Chartres, it having been discovered, that Maintenon was secretly endeavouring to possess himself of this city, in the name of the league. I provided myself with rope-ladders, petards, and other instruments, and came directly to Bonneval, without taking any refreshment that whole day. Some prisoners whom we took for a detachment of twenty-five troopers, informed us, that the enemy had a party of four hundred horse in

Lewis d'Angennes, lord of Maintenon. A town upon the confines of Perche.

* Read the Isle. This quarter, which is inhabited only by watermen, and the meanest people, is of great consequence to the defence of Tours.

† Henry IV. highly extolled the behaviour of Henry III. who shewed great courage upon this occasion. Mem. of Nevers, vol. II. p. 589.

1589.
—de Mont-
gomery of
Lorges.

the field, with Brosse Saveuse * at their head; and that Reclainville † who led the twenty-five troopers, had taken us for a body of a hundred and twenty horse, with which Lorges had just surprized Châteaudun. We concluded from this account, that the party of four hundred horse wanted to come up with us; and we, on our side, having the same desire, left our arquebusiers to pursue the road to Chartres leisurely, and taking ours through the little hills, in order to reach the enemy's squadron, we met them on the top of a small hill, which each party had climbed up on his own side; so that we neither saw them, nor they us, till we were within two hundred paces of each other.

May 18.

WE came to blows immediately, and with so much fury, that by the first shock forty of our men were thrown to the ground. I was of this number, together with Mess. de Châtillon ‡, de Mouy, de Montbazon, d'Avantigny, and de Pressaigny. Happily I had received no wound; my horse, who was only cut in the jaw, got up again, and I found myself still on his back. Perhaps there never was an action of this kind of combat, more furious, obstinate, or more bloody. Four or five times we returned to the charge, the enemies rallying again the moment they were put into disorder. I had two swords broke, and was obliged to have recourse to a pair of pistols loaded with steel balls, against which no arms were proof. Our enemies finding they had lost two hundred of their men, left us at last in possession of the field of battle.

WE were not in a condition to enjoy the fruits of our victory: extreme weariness, and the pain of our wounds kept us motionless. A little rest was all we wished for, when a heavy rain fell, which, mixing with our sweat, wet us over in an instant; for we were obliged to cover our arms with our cloaths: and to complete our misfortunes, we learnt that the duke of Maïenne was at our heels. In this melancholy situation, a council being held, it was resolved, notwithstanding the condition we were in, that we should march all night, and endeavour to get back to Beaugency. We arrived there, almost spent with fatigue and thirst. My strength being quite ex-

* Charles de Tiercelin, and Anne his brother; the eldest was called Saveuse, and the youngest de Brosse.

† Lewis de Alonville, lord of Reclainville, or l'Arclainville, who commanded

in Chartres for the duke of Maïenne.

‡ Francis de Châtillon, the admiral's son, the leader of the troop. Isaac Vaudré de Mouy. Lewis de Rohan, duke of Montbazon.

hausted,

hausted, all I could do was to sink down upon a bed, nor was it possible to awake me to take any nourishment.

1589.

THE report of this battle being spread every where, the king of Navarre came to Beaugency to visit us, and expressed himself highly satisfied with our behaviour. Saveuse being among the prisoners, was brought before him, and the king, who, from the same principle of generosity cared for the brave, and compassionated the unfortunate, endeavoured to console him, by praises on his conduct, and every kind of good treatment. But Saveuse knowing that a great number of his relations, and almost all his friends, perished in the fight, his grief for their loss, the shame he felt at being vanquished, and the dangerous wounds he had received, inspired such an extreme despair, that he became delirious, and died in the frenzy of a raging fever, without suffering his wounds to be dressed. The king of Navarre made us set out for Châteaudun, where eight days rest entirely obliterated all remembrance of our past fatigues.

I WAS upon the point of leaving this place, when a courier brought me news that my wife was dangerously ill. I flew to Rosny, with Dortoman, first physician to the king of Navarre, whom this prince ordered to accompany me. All this canton was in the interests of the league; and one of my brothers *, who had taken possession of my house, the same wherein my wife lay ill, had the cruelty to draw up the bridge, and refuse me entrance. Pierced to my inmost soul with a treatment so inhuman, I swore I would enter, or perish in the attempt, and already began to apply ladders to the walls, when my brother, who did not perhaps expect so much resolution, ordered the gate to be opened.

Nicholas Dortoman, a native of Arnheim.

THE only consolation I had was to find my wife still alive, and to receive her last embraces: all remedies were ineffectual, and she died four days after my arrival. The loss of a wife so dear to me, and whose life had been exposed to such cruel vicissitudes of fortune, shut my heart during a whole month to every other passion but grief. I heard with insensibility the progress of the arms of the two kings, which at any other time would have inflamed me with an ardent desire of sharing in their dangers and glory; for it was about

* This is certainly the eldest, who was called the baron of Rosny.

1589.

this time, that they took Gergeau, Pluviers, Estampes, Chartres *, Poissy, Pontoise, the isle of Adam, Beaumont, and Creil. Every little inconsiderable town boasted of having stopped her king, who found nothing but revolt and disobedience over all his dominions. He was now sensible of the great advantage he drew from the king of Navarre's assistance. As for this prince, he was as prodigal of life as if he had been weary of it: wherever there was most danger, there was he to be seen at the head of his soldiers. In one of those many encounters he had to maintain, at the very moment when, to rest himself, he was leaning upon Charbonniere, this colonel was, by a musket-shot, laid dead at his feet.

I AWAKED as from a deep sleep at the news † of the two kings holding Paris besieged; and leaving a place where every object I saw renewed my affliction, I went to join the army. It was here that I soothed that grief which still filled my heart, by exposing myself carelessly in all the skirmishes we had with the enemy, then more frequent than ever, particularly in the field, which was called the Scholars meadow. The king of Navarre perceived my design, and observing that Maignan, my equery, whom he often ordered to go to me, and force me away, durst not do it, he desired him only to tell me, that he wanted to speak to me.

SCARCE had he uttered one word, when he was interrupted by a gentleman, who whispered something in his ear, and left him immediately. The king of Navarre, amazed at what he had heard, called me again instantly, and told me an assassin had dangerously wounded the king of France with a knife ‡: then mounting his horse,

* Towns in the neighbourhood of Paris, in the isle of France, la Beauce, and l'Orleans. See an account of this in the historians.

† If we may believe Matthieu, vol. II. p. 3. these two kings were greatly dissatisfied with each other. Henry III. could not conceal his jealousy of Henry IV. who, far from expecting to reign, resolved to retire as soon as he had re-established the king upon his throne.

‡ By James Clement, a jacobin monk, born in Sorbonne, a village in Burgundy. He was introduced by la Guesle, the solicitor-general, into the king's chamber, as

having a letter of great consequence to deliver to him. This prince, who had a great kindness for monks, rose from the close-stool upon which he was sitting, having already read part of the letter, when the assassin struck him in the belly with a knife, which she left sticking in the wound. The king drew it out, and wounded the jacobin with it in the forehead, who was immediately killed by the gentlemen of his chamber. His body was burnt, and the ashes thrown into the Seine. The historians have not forgot to observe, as a circumstance at that time not doubted of, that Henry III. was murdered in the same

and

1589.

and attended only by five and twenty gentlemen which were about him, took the road to St. Cloud, which was the king's quarters. At his entrance into this prince's apartment, he found he had just received an injection, which came away again without either pain or blood. The king of Navarre approached his bed, amidst all the agitation and grief that the sincerest friendship could inspire. The king comforted him with assurances, that his wound would have no bad consequences, and that God would prolong his life, that he might be in a condition to give him new proofs of his affection. The wounded monarch pronounced these words in such a manner, as removed part of the king of Navarre's apprehensions, who seeing likewise no appearance of any

house and (if we believe them) in the same chamber, place, and month, where seventeen years before that prince had assisted at the council, in which the massacre of St. Bartholomew was resolved upon. Monsieur Bayle seems to have given credit to this anecdote, which is now proved to be false, the house at the time of the massacre of St. Bartholomew not being built. Henry III. died in the night between the second and third of August, aged 38 years. "James Clement being at St. Cloud, some persons, who suspected him, went at night into his chamber to observe him. They found him in a profound sleep, his breviary before him, open at the article of Judith. He fasted, confessed himself, and received the sacrament before he set out to assassinate the king. He was praised for this action at Rome, in the chair where Henry the third's funeral oration ought to have been pronounced. At Paris, his picture was placed on the altars with the eucharist. Cardinal de Retz relates, that on the anniversary day of the barricades, in the minority of Lewis XIV. he saw a gorget upon which this monk was engraved, with these words underneath, St. James Clement." Notes upon the Henriade.

"The king of Navarre," says Visior Gayet, Chron. Novenn. vol. I. fol. 223. "kneeled at his bedside, sighs and tears not permitting him to speak a word. He took his majesty's hands between

"his, and kissed them. The king, perceiving that he was silent through the strong emotions with which he was agitated, embraced his head, kissed him, and gave him his benediction. Had not the knife been poisoned, the wound would not have been mortal; for it was not deep, and had not reached the intestines, fol. 217. Bourgoin, prior of the Jacobins, was tore to pieces by four horses. They could extort nothing but these words from him, *We have done what we could, but not what we would have done*; which made it be believed, that Henry IV. was designed to have been assassinated at the same time. The sieur de Rougemont was arrested, for having desired to strike the blow himself." fol. 228. He died like a good christian. "He forgave his enemies, and even Clement himself," says Matthieu the historian. See, in the historians, a fuller account of his death. His character may be collected from what is said of him in these Memoirs. He was called, at his baptism, Edward Alexander, by Edward VI. king of England, and Antony king of Navarre; but Catherine made him afterwards assume the name of his father.

It is said, that seventeen or eighteen persons having gathered up the ashes of Clement, which the wind had dispersed, getting into a boat with these ashes, the boat was swallowed up by the Seine, and all that were in it.

dau-

1589. dangerous symptom, left him to his repose, and returned to his quarters at Meudon.

My lodgings were at the bottom of this castle, in the house of a man named Sauvât. After I had attended the king of Navarre to his apartment, I went home to sup, and had just placed myself at table, when I saw Ferret his secretary enter, who said to me, "Sir, the king of Navarre, and perhaps the king of France, desires you will come to him instantly." Surprized at these words, I went with him immediately to the castle; and as we walked, he told me that Dortoman had informed the king of Navarre, by an express, that if he would see the king of France alive, he had not a moment to lose.

I WENT directly to the king of Navarre's apartment, where while our horses were saddling, he did me the honour to consult me upon the present conjuncture. So many different thoughts presented themselves to my mind that moment, that I continued some time silent, nor was the king in less agitation. It was not the event of a little negotiation, the success of a battle, or the possession of a small kingdom, such as Navarre, that employed his thoughts, but the greatest monarchy in Europe. But how many obstacles had he to surmount, how many labours to endure, ere he could hope to obtain it! All that he had hitherto done, was nothing in comparison to what remained to do. How crush a party so powerful, and in such high credit, that it had given fears to a prince established on the throne, and almost obliged him to descend from it! This difficulty already so great, appeared insurmountable, when he reflected, that the king's death would deprive him of the best and greatest part of his forces. He could have no dependence either on the princes of the blood, or the grantees; and in his present condition he had occasion for every one's assistance, yet had no one in whom he could confide. I was struck with fear, when he suggested to me, that it was possible such surprizing, and unexpected news might occasion a revolution, which would expose him with only a few of his most faithful servants to the mercy of his old enemies, in a country where he was absolutely destitute of every resource.

NOTWITHSTANDING all these difficulties, every one confessed that the king of Navarre had but one part to take, which was to seize this opportunity, and use it with all those precautions which generally determine the event. Without attempting to judge of the future, which depends upon too many accidents, much less to subject it to our precipitation; in bold and difficult enterprizes, we should

endeavour to subdue one obstacle at a time; nor suffer ourselves to be depressed by their greatness, and their number. We ought never to despair of what has been once accomplished. How many things have the idea of impossible been annexed to, that have become easy to those who knew how to take advantage of time, opportunity, lucky moments, the faults of others, different dispositions, and an infinite number of other circumstances?

THE answer I made the king was founded on these maxims; and we agreed that, instead of going back to the different provinces, he should remain in the midst of the royal army to support his claim, and set out immediately for St. Cloud, but well armed at all events, taking care, however, to keep our extraordinary arms concealed, that we might not ourselves be the first to create terror and suspicion. When we entered St. Cloud, they told us the king was better; and obliged us to put off our swords. I followed the king of Navarre, who advanced towards the castle, when suddenly we heard a man exclaim, "Ah! my God, we are lost." The king of Navarre making this man approach, who continued crying, "Alas! the king is dead," asked him several questions, which he satisfied by such a circumstantial recital of the king's death, that we could no longer doubt the truth of it.

HENRY no longer doubted, when he saw the Scots guard, who threw themselves at his feet, saying, "Ah, Sire! you are now our king and our master." And some moments after, mess. de Biron *, de Bellegarde, d'O, de Châteaueux, de Dampierre, and several others, did the same.

THE king of Navarre was convinced that this was one of those critical moments, upon the good or bad use of which his destiny depended. Without suffering himself to be dazzled with the view of a throne, to which he was that instant called, or oppressed by difficulties, and useless grief, he calmly began to give orders for keeping every one in their duty, and preventing mutinies: then turning to me, with that familiar air which he used to those of whose affection he was

* Armand de Gontaut, marechal de Biron. Roger de St. Larry Bellegarde, grand ecuyer of France. Francis d'O, governor of Paris, and superintendent of the finances. Joachim de Châteaueux.

assured,

1589.

assured, he bid me go to the marechal d'Aumont's * quarters, and there, with all the precaution necessary to his interest, spread among his troops the news of the king's death, and to speak by this marechal to the French guards, to engage their officers to come and pay their homage to him in the afternoon, and to prevail upon the nobility to do the like. He recommended to me to observe my own quarters carefully, and keep all there in due obedience. After which he applied himself to gain all the foreign powers, on whose assistance he thought he might depend, and wrote or sent deputies to Germany, England, Flanders, Switzerland, and the republic of Venice, to inform them of this new event, and the claim which it gave him to the crown of France.

In the life
of France.

I REPRESENTED to him, that it was absolutely necessary to get possession of Meulan immediately; a place, upon this occasion, of the utmost importance, the governor of which (who was called St. Marc) he knew to be a zealous partisan of the league in his heart. I explained to him in few words how easily this might be executed, and the king approving my scheme, I went to Meulan, and demanded a conference with St. Marc, upon affairs I said of the greatest consequence to him. He came to me, and while I amused him with a feigned confidence, the marechal d'Aumont passed over the bridge with his troops, and taking advantage of the consternation this occasioned, proceeded to the castle, which he made himself master of, and we drove out the too credulous St. Marc.

THE king offered me this government, but from many considerations I chose not to accept of it. Part of his apprehensions were soon justified by the event; he found it impossible to keep either the duke of Epemon †, or many other disaffected catholics, in his service, espe-

* John duke d'Aumont, marechal of France.

† The author of his life assigns very bad reasons for this retreat: it is plain that nothing can excuse it. Upon this occasion it appears, that besides the protestant party, there were three others among the catholics themselves, the first of whom was composed of those persons who abandoned Henry IV. after the death of Henry III. the second, those who not being able to prevail upon this prince to declare that very

moment, that he would embrace the catholic religion, continued with him, but had neither affection to his person, nor a sincere attachment to his interest. The number of these was very great; the chief among them were the dukes of Longueville, and Nevers, d'O, (who had spoken to him in the name of the rest) and many others. The third party was made up of those who declared publicly, says d'Aubigne, that they would serve the king without any conditions: and these were cially

cially those who owed their fortune to the deceased king. Their dissention reduced him almost to those troops only, which he had brought with him, and put it out of his power to continue the siege of Paris, or even to hold the adjacent places. The foreign powers either gave him nothing but promises, or offered him such supplies as could be of no use in his present exigencies: he was obliged therefore to retire into the heart of the kingdom. He had already (though without discovering his real motive for it) caused a report to be spread among his soldiers of an intended journey to Tours. This retreat was equally necessary for the safety of his person, and the success of his affairs. A thousand dangers threatened him in the neighbourhood of a city, where the king his predecessor, though a catholic, and with a powerful army under his obedience, could not escape a violent death. It was here that the last resolution was taken for the murder of this prince; and he had still more reason to tremble, when he reflected that those cruel designs were formed in the midst of his army, and the assassins perhaps near his person.

159.

IN this perplexing situation, it was necessary to place a governor in Meulan, who had a regiment ready to defend it against the league, which, becoming insolent by the king's death, in imagination already enjoyed the conquest of it. I having no regiment, nor sufficient time to raise one, the government of Meulan was given to Bellengreville*

THE king, in his retreat, took Clermont, and some other small towns. His forces were too inconsiderable to admit of his engaging in greater enterprises, which was the reason likewise that I missed of taking of Louviers, upon which I had a design that in all appearance would have succeeded. This design I communicated to the king, and desired he would give me some forces for the execution of it. He could spare me no more than a company of his light-armed horse,

In Beauvaisis.

A city of Normandy.

indeed but very few in number, among which were the marshals d'Aumont, and Biron, Givry, &c. Henry was extremely perplexed at the rude proposition made him by the catholics, and the declaration they added to it, that they would retire, if he did not give them this satisfaction. He told them resolutely, that he would never be reproached with having been constrained to take such a step. And demanded six months time to think upon it. See the

historians upon this subject, and particularly d'Aubigne, vol. III. book ii. chap. 23. Henry IV. received such important services upon this occasion from the marshal Biron, that it was reported, it was he who made him king: and the marshal is said to have reproached Henry with his services in those very terms. Mem. of Brantome, vol. III. p. 346.

* Read, Joachim de Berengreville.

1589. commanded by Arambure, which was not sufficient; but he assured me that I should be joined at Louviers by a regiment of twelve hundred men, that was then at Nogent; and for this purpose he wrote to Couronneau the colonel of it.

WITH this hope I sat down before Louviers, where I waited in vain for the supplies that had been promised me. The river of Eure, which ran into the ditches of Louviers, being turned, a great aqueduct that supplied the city with water became dry. This I observed, and it was through this place that I proposed to enter it; but as it was not probable, that messieurs d'Aumale*, de la Londe, de Fontaine-Martel, de Medavy, de Contenant, and many other officers of the league, of which this city was full, would surrender, or suffer themselves to be taken, without striking a blow, I thought it would be rashness to attempt to force it with a handful of men: in order therefore to justify the truth of what I had asserted, I contented myself with sending several persons into the aqueduct, where I employed them only in enlarging the entrance, by forcing up with a petard the grate that closed it. By this means they several times penetrated into the city, and came out again without being perceived, which was a convincing proof that our attempt would have succeeded, if we had had a sufficient number of soldiers.

In Upper
Normandy.

I RETURNED by Pont-de-l'Arche, to meet the king of Navarre, at Ecoüy, from whence he hoped to go immediately to Touraine; but he found the Normans so well inclined towards him, that he was determined, by their offers, to attempt the important siege of Rouen. While preparations were making for this expedition, we took Gournay, Neufchâtel, the city of Eu, Treport, and Darnetal; where the king received advice that the duke of Maïenne was desirous of coming to a battle with him. I was ordered to go with fifty horse to reconnoitre this general's army, which I found in the neighbourhood of Mante, and spread all over my estate. I went, and posted myself in the forest; from whence I made observations, and brought the king information, that the army of the league consisted of twenty-five thousand foot and eight thousand horse. The king, who had only a little flying camp to oppose to so formidable an army, was not willing to neglect

* Charles de Lorraine, duke of Aumale; Neufchâtel; Charles-François de Rouxel
— Bigars de le Londe, mayor of Rouen; de Medavy; Timoleon de Bauves de
Francis de Fontaine-Martel, governor of Contenant.

any

1589.

any precaution which might be necessary. He had already caused the commander of Chastes* to be sounded, to know if in any case of necessity, he would receive him into Dieppe: and he had reason to be pleased with his answer; but, in order to be better assured of this governor's intentions, he went himself to confer with him, and returned extremely well satisfied. Finding therefore that he might depend upon a retreat so secure as Dieppe †, he the less feared to keep the field before the enemy; and resolving to make head against them till the last extremity, he came and posted himself before Arques.

In the country of Caux.

AT the end of the caufeway of Arques there is a long winding hill, covered with coppice: beneath is a space of arable land, in the midst of which is the great road that leads to Arques, having thick hedges on each side. Lower down, upon the left hand, there is a kind of great marsh or boggy ground. A village called Martinglise bounds the hill, about half a league from the caufeway. It was in this village, and in the neighbourhood of it, that the whole army of the duke of Maienne was encamped. The king was sensible, that by attempting to resist an army of above thirty thousand men, with less than three thousand, his conduct would be accused of rashness; but besides, that it would be very difficult to find a place more favourable for his few forces, and that there was danger in going back, he thought that the present weak condition his party was in, demanded some bold blow at the beginning. He neglected nothing that might compensate, in some degree, for the smallness of his number; he ordered deep trenches to be cut at the caufeway, and above, as well as beneath the great road: he posted twelve hundred Swifs on each side of this road, and six hundred German foot to defend the upper trenches; and placed a thousand or twelve hundred others in a chapel, which stood in the midst of the upper and lower trenches. These were all the infantry he had: his cavalry, which amounted in all to but six hundred men, he divided into two equal squadrons; and with one, posted himself between the wood and the road, and separating the other into platoons, made them go down between the road and the morafs, to fill in some sort that space. He did not sleep that whole night; during which, fearing that the enemies would make

Or Martin
Eglise.

* Aimat de Chastes, knight of St. Lazarus, and governor of Dieppe.

† Henry IV. it is said, was reduced to such an extremity under the walls of this city, that he was upon the point of retiring into England; which the marshal de Biron

prevented, by advising him to make good his post at Arques. Before the battle of Arques, he said, that he was a king without a kingdom, a husband without a wife, and a warrior without money.

1589.

themselves masters of the caufeway, he kept guard there himfelf. In the morning they brought him fome refreshments into the ditch, where he invited his principal officers to breakfast with him; after which he thought, perhaps, to have taken a few moments refl, when he was informed by the guards, that the army of the league was marching towards him, in order of battle.

AT this news, he ordered the vifcount de Chartres, Palcheux, Brafeufe, Avantigny, and three or four others, to advance into the wood, and endeavour to make fome prifoners; they foon returned, bringing with them the count de Belin*. The king went to meet him, and embraced him fmiling. The count, whofe eyes were in fearch of the king's army, feeing hardly any foldiers about him, answered him no otherways than by expreffing his furprize at the fmall number that feemed to be with him. "You fee not all," faid the king to him with the fame gaiety: "for you reckon not God, and my claim, who fight for me." Accuftomed as I was to fee this prince, I could not help admiring the tranquillity that fat upon his countenance, on an occafion fo much the more desperate, as it gave time for reflection. His air was fo ferene, and his ardor tempered with fo much prudence, that he appeared to the foldiers as fomething more than human, and infpired them all with the intrepidity of their leader.

THE duke of Maïenne ordered the upper trenches to be attacked by a fquadron of his German foot, who feemed to refufe fighting, becaufe they had only Germans to encounter, and feigned to furrender. Our Germans were fo effectually deceived by this artifice, that they fuffered the others to advance and gain the trench, from whence they drove out ours; and from this advantageous poff they gave us a great deal of trouble. I foon loft fight of all that was done at the fide of the wood; for that part of the morafs where I was, with ten of my men, was that moment attacked by a fquadron of eight or nine hundred horfe. At the approach of fo large a body, we drew together about a hundred and fifty horfe, and drove them back as far as the valley; where meeting with four other fquadrons, we were obliged to retreat, till being joined in our turn by the count d'Auvergne †, who brought

* Francis de Faudois d'Averton de Serillac, count of Belin, deputy governor of Paris for the duke of Maïenne.

† Charles de Valois, natural fon of Charles IX. He is mentioned hereafter.

It is upon the relation of this count, afterwards duke of Angouleme, that father Daniel, in his hiftory of France, vol. IX. has given a defcription of this battle, to which nothing can be added, and differs but lit-
a hundred

1589.

a hundred and fifty horse more to our assistance, we a second time beat back the enemies squadrons. This game could not last long: three hundred horse from the enemies army joining the first, we were forced to give ground, and regained the chapel in disorder; where fortunately our foot soldiers, who were posted there, stopped this cavalry short, and engaged in a battle, wherein Sagonne * and some other officers were slain.

THE duke of Maienne commanding all the rest of his German foot to attack the chapel, we yielded at length this post; and overpowered by numbers, abandoned the hollows in the road, and even the road itself. This might be called the beginning of a defeat; we should have had reason to fear the event, had we not happily met the battalion of Swiss, who sustained the shock, gave us time to rally, and put us again into a condition of renewing the fight. Nothing could have happened more seasonably. My horse that moment falling dead of his wounds, I mounted a fresh one. To vanquish the brave resistance of our Swiss, the enemies thought proper to order five hundred horse to march along the side of the morass: they would have taken us in the rear, and have easily overwhelmed the Swiss, and the rest of the soldiers, when luckily the horses approaching too near to the morass, they remained entangled in the mire, and their riders with difficulty disengaged them, by leaving their lances sticking there.

THE battle continued some time longer in this state; that is to say, while we had any strength left; but at length we began to sink under the fatigue. On our side the same men were always in action, while our enemies were sustained with fresh supplies, and multiplied every

tle from that in our Memoirs. See also father Matthieu, vol. II. p. 14. and following. Cayet, vol. I. book ii. fol. 263, and following. The Memoirs of Nevers, vol. II. p. 597. and the physician du Cheſne's account, &c. This battle was fought on Wednesday September 20th: it began at ten o'clock in the morning, and ended at eleven. The duke of Maienne, five days before, made several attempts upon Dieppe, which were called *esarmouches du Pellet*. "My companion," said Henry IV. to Arruquer, colonel of the regiment of Souleure, "I come to die, or to gain honour with you." "He drove back the trea-

cherous Germans," &c. Le Grain, book v. "My father," said this prince to colonel Galati, "keep a pike for me, for I will fight at the head of your battalion." Matthieu, *ibid.* p. 14. After the battle, he wrote to Grillon in these terms, "Hang thyself, brave Grillon, for we have fought at Arques without thee." "Adieu, brave Grillon, I love thee whether I will or not."

* John Babou, count of Sagonne. Lewis de Rohan, and Josias de la Rochefoucault, counts of Montbazon and de Rouilly, lost their lives also there.

moment.

1589. moment. Great part of our brigade was disarmed and dismounted : in this extremity, I was deputed by the troop to represent our situation to the king, and to ask him for a reinforcement. I met this prince coming to our quarter : “ My friend, said he to me, I have no supplies “ to send you; however, we must not suffer ourselves to be depreſſed.” In effect, he was in no better condition than we. He turned towards monsieur le Grand, and bid him follow me with all the men he could get together from the upper part of the road. I went back to my party, and with a seeming joy informed them of the supply that was coming ; upon which, however, I but little depended. Inspired with fresh vigour, it may be truly said, that at that moment every man gave proofs of a valour scarcely credible. The thick fog, which concealed us from our enemies, hid from us likewise our danger ; but when this fog was dissipated, the sun shewed us to them, and discovered their whole army to our view, which was pouring upon us. It was already so near, that we could not hope to gain the end of the causeway, where was our last entrenchment, and we thought of nothing but selling our lives dearly.

Roger de St.
Sarry, of
Bellegarde.

OUR safety we owed to a circumstance that we had looked upon as our greatest misfortune. The cannon of the castle of Arques had been rendered useless by the thickness of the fog ; but as soon as the enemies could be distinguished, it made a discharge so just, and was followed by so terrible an effect, although there were but four pieces of cannon, that the enemies were thrown into confusion. Four other volleys succeeded with such rapidity, as went quite through their army ; which, no longer able to endure the fire, retired in disorder to the side of the valley : behind which, some moments after, all this terrible multitude were lost ; astonished, without doubt, at the great loss they had sustained, and disheartened by a resistance which the duke of Maïenne had not expected.

THE king, after an action which had covered him with glory, retired to Arques, from thence he went to Dieppe, harassed continually by the enemies, and engaged in frequent skirmishes ; the detail of which I suppress, as having nothing very interesting after the battle of Arques. The king, however, in one of these rencounters, found himself exposed to a danger still greater : for, believing the enemies at a distance, he was exercising a kind of military game in a meadow, and sustained a discharge from two hundred fusileers, who lay in ambush upon

upon the ground, between two hedges, not more than two hundred paces from the place where we were.

1589.

It is certain, that any other than Henry would have sunk under these difficulties, before he could have been relieved by the supplies which were preparing for him; but by his valour*, and his skill in disputing the ground, he gave time to four thousand English and Scotch, that queen Elizabeth sent him, to pass the sea; and this reinforcement was soon after followed by one more considerable, which was brought him by the count of Soissons, Henry of Orleans, duke of Longueville, d'Aumont, and Biron. It was owing to the count of Soissons that he was so often in danger at Dieppe, who amused himself with disputing about the command of the forces, instead of hastening to the king's assistance.

THE duke of Maienne durst not wait for the junction of all these troops; he disappeared with his army, and left the king master of the field. Henry, then changing his resolution of keeping in Normandy, set out again for Paris, which he had quitted with regret. He passed through Meulan and Poissy, and from thence dispatched me with the duke of Montpensier †, to endeavour to perfect a correspondence he had a long time before begun in Vernon, or to seize the city by means of that terror which his approach would cause in it. We found no probability of succeeding in either of these designs; therefore, the duke of Montpensier went back to Normandy, and I joined the king at Villepreux.

These towns are upon the Seine.

His design was to alarm Paris, and even to attack it; and as he saw opportunity, to attempt to make himself master of it. He had taken the precaution to send persons to break the bridge of St. Maixance,

Upon the river Oise.

* "Sixtus V. presaged, that the Bearnois would be the uppermost, since he was not longer in bed than the duke of Maienne was at table. The duke of Maienne was extremely slow in all his motions. If he does not act in another manner, said the king, I shall certainly beat him always in the field." Perefice, *ibid.* 2. The same pope, after the battle of Arques, applied these words to Henry IV. *Super aspidem & basiliscum ambulabis, & conculcabis leonem, & draconem* :

meaning by the asp the duke of Maienne, the duke of Savoy by the basilisk, the king of Spain by the lion, and himself by the dragon.

† Henry of Bourbon-Montpensier, prince of the blood, the only son of Francis and Renée of Anjou, at that time seven and twenty years old. Henry III. took the government of Bretagne from him, without any cause, to bestow it on the duke of Mercœur. He soon had reason to repent of it.

by

1589.

by which the duke of Maienne might have been able to assist this great city; for that general, alarmed by the king's march, had also come near Paris by the opposite side, that he might not meet the king. Henry, therefore, gave the necessary orders for attacking all the suburbs at the same time: that of St. Germain fell to monsieur d'Aumont, de Châtillon, and me. As soon as the signal was given, we fell upon this suburb; and having, tho' an immense, yet a confused and terrified multitude to oppose, we hemmed two large bodies of soldiers within the enclosure of the market of St. Germain; and there, in a less space than two hundred paces, we left four hundred of them in a moment dead upon the place. I could hardly prevail upon myself to kill men already more than half dead with fear; but putting them out of a condition to resist us, we passed, and advanced as far as the gate of Nelle: fifteen or twenty of us entered the city; but perceiving that our men did not follow us, we turned back: an order from the king to give over the attack was the cause of their abandoning us. The person whom he had sent to demolish the bridge * of St. Maixance had performed this commission so ill, that the duke of Maienne appeared within sight of Paris with his whole army, at the same moment that we entered it.

THE king was now convinced that his enterprize was no longer practicable, and that although we should make ourselves master of the city, which on our side would infallibly have happened, an army thus dispersed in a city of such vast extent as Paris, would have been in danger of being overpowered; having such an infinite number of people to oppose within, and an army without to fight against, which would either enter with us, or keep us besieged there. It was thus that this prince, tempering so happily courage with prudence, never suffered his ardor in battle to hinder him from following the calmer dictates of wisdom. He was satisfied with throwing terror into the very heart of that city that dared to despise him, and giving it to know what it had to expect from him. Part of the suburbs was pillaged: our soldiers leaving nothing in that of St. Germain †, that they

* De Thou observes, that the guard of this bridge was given to William de Montmorency, lord of Thoré; but being indisposed at Senlis, he could not defend it. Book xcviij. It was attacked on All-saints day, upon advice sent by James Corbinelly, a Florentine gentleman, to Henry IV. in these three words, Come, come, come, written on a bit of paper, which the bearer

inclosed in a quill, and held in his mouth. They did not carry it for want of cannon to beat down the gates. Matthieu, vol. II. book i. p. 17. Cayet, vol. I. p. 270.

† “The sieurs de Châtillon, and la Nouë,” says le Grain, book v. “assaulted the suburbs of St. Germain, “Buff and Nelle, which were richer and “more magnificent than the others, and
could

could conveniently carry away. I had for my share three thousand crowns, and all my men made very considerable booty.

Two days after, the king went to Estampes; and resuming his first design of shewing himself in the heart of the kingdom, went towards Tours, and in a short time took a great many little towns in Touraine *, Anjou, Maine, and Lower Normandy. He left some troops with the marechal de Biron, who took Evreux, without cannon. I drove the catholics from Anfreville. The king gave me all the countries about Mante and Rosne to preserve, with a small body of troops, with which I narrowly missed seizing the duke d'Aumale, as he passed by Rosny. Afterwards I joined the marechal Biron, at the siege of Evreux. I cannot give a more circumstantial account of actions of little importance, and must even suppress the greatest part of them, as it is neither possible, nor necessary, to relate at length facts in themselves so inconsiderable.

In Beaucc.

1590.

I FOREWARN the public therefore to expect in these Memoirs a detail only of important events; such as I have been a witness to, or what regards the king himself; and if I should add any others, they will be those, the truth of which I can warrant from the authenticity of those memoirs which have fallen into my hands. As for the rest, it will be sufficient just to point them out, that the reader may from thence form an idea of the condition, and affairs of Henry the Great, in different periods of time. It was to relieve my memory, that I at first committed such particulars as most struck me, to paper; especially those conversations I had with the king, or he with others, either upon war, or politics, which I apprehended might be of great use to me. This prince, who perceived it by my sometimes repeating exactly what had fallen from him on these subjects, commanded me to put my work in some order, and to enlarge it. I found some

“ where they expected to find most resistance, as well upon account of the
 “ fine houses that were in the suburb St.
 “ Germain, which makes its value equal
 “ to the second city in France, as the
 “ abbey St. Germain, which was fortified.
 “ Châtillon made it appear that he re-
 “ membered St. Bartholomew's day, and
 “ was resolved to expiate the murder,
 “ and appease the manes of the admiral
 VOL. I.

“ his father.”

* Alençon, le Mans, Château-Briant, Sablé, Château-Gontier, Maienne, Laval, Argentan, Falaise, Lisieux, Baieux, Ponteau de Mer, Pont l'Evêque, Honfleur, Havre-de-Grace, Donfront, &c. D. Thou, book xcviij. D'Aubigne, vol. III. book liii. chap. 4, &c. See also the Memoirs of the league, and particular accounts of these expeditions printed at that time.

U

disti-

1590.

difficulty in obeying him, for my style was none of the best; and I would gladly have been excused, but upon repeated commands from his majesty, and his promise to correct it with his own hand, I resumed and continued this work with more assiduity. Such was the rise of these Memoirs. But to return to my subject.

In the Isle of France.

THE army of the league sitting down before Pontoise, took it, and afterwards laid siege to Meulan. As I looked upon this place to be of great importance to the king, I endeavoured by all the methods I could think of, to supply it with powder *, and to introduce some person into it on whom I could depend, to prevail upon the besieged to hold out till assistance, which was very near, arrived. And this I performed by making a man swim over to it; and in the mean time sent to inform the king of what had passed, and to demand supplies. My repeated instances determined this prince to come thither himself; but it was with great unwillingness that he left other places where his presence was no less necessary. "Your importunity brings me to the assistance of Meulan." Thus he wrote to me. "If any thing unfortunate should happen, I shall never cease to reproach you." It would indeed have appeared very surprizing to me, if no misfortune had happened; for this prince leaving all his infantry before Honfleur, brought with him so small a number, that it was impossible for him to sustain the attack of a whole army which then pressed Meulan, and would not fail to fall upon him as soon as it was known how ill he was attended.

In Perche. Upon the river of Eure, bishopric of Evreux.

THIS I took the liberty to represent to him; and, in effect, he had no sooner left Verneuil to proceed to Ivry, than going out to reconnoitre, I saw the whole army of the league, which was no doubt informed of his march, making directly towards him, which obliged him to turn back to Verneuil. It was not usual for this prince to give ground before his enemies, nor did he now without great regret. In the first transports of his rage, he reproached me as the cause of his suffering this affront, and with being less solicitous for his reputation, by calling him thither, than careful to preserve my lands from pillage. It was not difficult for me to justify myself; and this prince, who comprehended the importance of such a place as Meulan, gave orders for all his army to join him.

* The duke of Sully is mentioned with de Thou, book xxviii. and father Mathieu, vol. II. p. 22.

THIS produced the effect which I had promised myself. The enemies seeing the army on its march, drew their cannon on this side the river, and without wholly raising the siege, abandoned the care of it, to guard against surprizes.

1590.

I SENT the king advice of this proceeding, and he thought it necessary to hasten his march, to prevent any accident which might occasion the loss of Meulan, and sent me the scouts of his army, that while I waited for his arrival, I might be able to give the besiegers some trouble. He came soon after, and entered the fort, where being desirous of observing the enemy's army *, he climbed up, with some of us, into the belfrey. The besiegers that moment directing a battery against this belfrey, demolished the staircase, and obliged the king, and all of us that were with him, to come down with the help of a cord, and a stick passed between our legs. The king, to pay them in the same coin, ordered four pieces of cannon to be raised in this place: which was contrary to my opinion; for I foresaw that the enemies would quickly dismount them, which really happened before we could derive the least advantage from them, and the besiegers fired there so furiously all day, that we were not able to remove these four pieces till night. The enemies, who took care to have the river between them and the king, made a terrible attack on the bridge on that side; but this was their last effort. The king posting himself at Orgreux, they were afraid of being overcome, and suddenly decamped.

THE marquis of Alegre had better success, and seized Rouen for the league. I received the news of it at Rosny. The king, whose whole attention it had been to hinder the reduction of this place, marched instantly to Rouen; but upon his arrival at Gaillon he learnt that the misfortune was without remedy. In revenge he went to besiege Dreux, after putting me in garrison in Passy. The duke of Maëenne, who had been just reinforced with the whole Spanish army, passed the river, and spread his troops all round Mante and Rosny, with a resolution to raise this siege. The vanguard of this army, which was conducted by one of my relations, named Rosny, had orders from the general to possess himself of Passy in his way. I gave the king

Christopher d'Alegre, governor of Gisors.

In the bishopric of Evreux.

* As Henry IV. was ascending the belfrey of St. Nicaise, a cannon-ball

“passed through his legs.” Matthieu, *ibid.* 24.

1590.

notice of his approach, who replied only, that I might do as I pleased. I resolved, therefore, to defend myself; and although monsieur de Rosny wrote to me, representing to me, that it would be rashness to offer myself to be storm'd in a place that had not even walls, and offer'd me very advantageous conditions *, yet he could gain nothing upon me.

I THANKED him for his false complaisance, and, in the night, caus'd a ditch to be dug, which might in some degree serve the garrison for a shelter. Luckily the enemy had no design to waste time in so inconsiderable a siege, and wanted only to seize the place. As they pass'd next morning, the noise of the baggage gave me to understand, that the army had pursued its rout, which drew me out of great perplexity. During the night, which I spent entirely in fortifying Passy, I thought I saw distinctly two armies fighting in the air †. I know not whether this object was real, or only an illusion, but it made such an impression on my mind, that I was not surpriz'd at reading a letter next day from the king, wherein he inform'd me, that the duke of Maienne's army, join'd to the Spaniards, had approach'd with a design to offer him battle; that he had waited for it till the evening of that day on which he wrote to me, but that the whole day had been pass'd in skirmishing, making lodgments, and securing advantages, and that the general action was put off till the next. His letter concluded with these words, "I conjure you then to come, and bring with you as many of the forces as you can,

* Father Matthieu mentions this fact exactly in the same manner as it is here; he even relates the duke of Sully's reply, in the very words he made use of. "Here is the king ready to give battle; tell the duke of Maienne, that he is now reckoning upon winning it; and then I will consider whether I am to lose it."

† The only difference between them is, that this officer of the enemy's, who is here called Rosny, and, a relation of the baron de Rosny, was, according to Matthieu, the baron de Rosne, one of the general officers of the league: however, to those who read the Memoirs of Sully, it would seem impossible for the error to be on his side. Compare the two writers, *Oeconomies Royales*, &c. vol. I. p. 71. and

Matthieu's history, vol. II. book i. p. 25.

† Davila, who also takes notice of this phenomenon, book xi. describes it in this manner: "The thunder and lightning, sometimes mingled with horrid darkness, added to their terrors; and such a flood of rain poured suddenly down, that the whole army was alarmed. A prodigious apparition, which appeared in the sky as soon as it had ceased to rain, increased the general dismay; for during the noise of the thunder, at which the boldest amongst them trembled, two great armies were distinctly seen in the air, that after continuing some time engaged in fight, disappeared, covered with a thick cloud; so that the event of the battle was not seen."

"parti-

“ particularly your own company, and the two companies of Badit
 “ and James’s horse-arquebusers; for I know them, and am resolv’d
 “ to make use of them upon this occasion.” } 1590.

I WAS sensible that, without extraordinary dispatch, I should arrive too late for the battle with these companies, which I foresaw the king would be in great need of, as he was much inferior in numbers to the enemy. I therefore lost not a moment, and was fortunate enough to arrive an hour and a half before the battle began. The king ordered me to make my company pass to the right wing, where his own squadron was, to which he joined it; and making the two companies of arquebusers dismount, sent their horses amongst the baggage, designing to make use of them as the forlorn hope. After this, he bid me follow him to view the disposition of the two armies, “ in order, added he, that you may learn your trade.” He had no sooner placed himself at the head of his squadron *, than the trumpets sounded the charge.

I SHALL not here encroach upon the historian’s right; I leave it to them to relate all the particulars of this battle, and shall confine myself only to what I was an eye-witness of. It is sufficient to say that, upon this occasion, what gave the victory to the weaker party, was the valour of the marechal d’Aumont, who prevented the entire defeat of the light horse, as also the great difference between the enemy’s manner of using their artillery, and ours; and above all, the uncommon abilities of the king, which were never so perfectly known as in the day of battle, in the disposition of his troops, rallying them, their discipline, and their exact and ready obedience.

* “ My companions” said he, addressing himself to his squadron, “ if to-day you run my fortune, I also run yours. I am resolv’d to die, or conquer with you; keep your ranks, I beseech you, and if you should quit them in the heat of the battle, rally immediately; which will be gaining the victory: you will do it between those three trees which you see up there on the right: and, if you should lose sight of your standards and colours, keep my white plume of

“ feathers always in view; there you will find the road to victory and glory.”
 “ Prefixe, *ibid.* 2d part. “ They lost sight of him in the battle, where, accompanied only by twelve or thirteen persons, he was surrounded by the enemy. He killed the count of Egmont’s equerry with his own hand. We must use our pistols, said he to his troop; the more men the more glory.” Matthieu, vol. II. book i. p. 26, &c.

1590.

IT is certain the duke of Maienne, and the count of Egmont, who were at the head of the Spaniards, imagined that if the king ventured to wait for them, the victory would be theirs; and that, if he yielded, or gave ground before them, as they expected, they depended upon nothing less than forcing him out of whatever place he should retreat to; and thus finish the war by a single blow. With such dispositions, what must be the consequence? I say nothing of the generals, who alone are worth many thousand men. The stronger party never makes use of those precautions that are necessary against an enemy of equal strength; and the weaker never forms a resolution to defend itself against a more numerous army, without determining likewise to supply, by valour and address, the deficiency of numbers. Danger, which inspires a courage animated by glory and difficulties, reduces both sides to a kind of equality.

THE king's squadron *, where I was, had the attacks of the count of Egmont to sustain, who fell upon us with his own squadron, and another of a thousand, or twelve hundred German horse. It is true, the Germans, who profess the same religion as our soldiers did, fired their pieces into the air. But the count of Egmont behaved like a man who was resolved to conquer. He charged us with such fury, that notwithstanding the desertion of the Germans, after a terrible fire, and an encounter which lasted a full quarter of an hour, the earth

* See upon this action de Thou, book xviii. D'Aubigné, vol. III. book iii. ch. 3. Le Grain, book v. The Memoirs of the league. Father Matthieu, idem. The Chron. Novenn. of Cayet, vol. II. fol. 327. and an account printed in 1590, and others.

De Thou and Cayet observe, that Henry the IVth's artillery had fired nine times before the duke of Maienne's began; they also blame the duke for having disposed his army in the form of a crescent, like Henry's, when, being superior in number, he ought to have given it the form of a triangle. According to Matthieu, Henry IV. was guilty of a great fault, in not beginning the battle, by falling upon the light horse commanded by du Terrail, and upon the duke of Maienne's body, who, having advanced too far, was obliged to go half a league

about in retreating. It appears, that the cavalry only fought there; and, if we believe le Grain, twelve hundred horse defeated an army of twenty thousand men. But here is a little exaggeration. The king's army was composed of about two thousand cavalry, and six or seven thousand infantry; and the league's consisted of five thousand horse, and eight thousand foot. The count of Egmont, who had boasted that his squadron alone was sufficient to subdue the royal army, was slain in the fight. He was the son of l'Amoral d'Egmont, who was beheaded at Brussels with the count of Horne. It is said, that when he came to Paris, the person who complimented him, mixed in his discourse some praises of l'Amoral his father, "Do not mention him," he replied; "he was a rebel, and deserved to die."

was covered with dead bodies. Our squadron fled on the left, and on the right they were broke and gave ground. At the first onset, my horse was wounded in the nostrils, and in the neck at a second, where the saddle did not reach, and a third quite overpowered him, and carried away two of his feet, and a piece of flesh off the calf of my leg. I received another wound in my hand. A pistol shot gave me a third more considerable; the ball entered my hip, and came out near my belly. I should certainly have been killed, if my equery had not flown to my assistance with another horse, upon which I mounted, though with great difficulty. This instance of affection drew a great many wounds upon poor Maignan, and had like to have cost him his life.

1590.

AT A second charge, this horse was likewise slain, and in the same moment I received a pistol-shot in the thigh, and a cut with a sword on the head. I fell to the earth, and with my senses lost all the remaining part of the action, which from the advantage the count of Egmont had already gained, boded no good to us. All I know is, that a long time after, recovering my senses, I saw neither enemies, nor any of my domestics, near me, whom terror, and the disorder, had dispersed; another presage which appeared to me no less unfavourable.

I RETIRED without a head-piece, and almost without armour, for in the battle mine had been battered to pieces. In this condition I saw a trooper of the enemy's running towards me, with an intention to take away my life. By good fortune I found myself near a pear-tree, to which I crept, and with that little motion I was still able to exert, made such good use of the branches, which were extremely low, that I evaded all my adversary's attempts, and kept him at a distance, who being weary with turning round the tree, at last quitted me. Feuquieres had not the like good fortune; he was killed that moment before my eyes. Just then la Rocheforêt (who has since been with me) passing by, I asked him for a little nag which he was leading, and paid him for it upon the spot thirty crowns. It was always my opinion, that on such occasions, it is proper to carry a little money about one.

THUS mounted, I was going to learn news of the battle, when I saw seven of the enemy approach, one of whom carried the white stan-

1590. standard belonging to the duke of Maïenne's company. I thought it impossible to escape this new danger, and upon their crying, "*Qui vive ?*" I told my name, as being ready to surrender myself a prisoner. But how was I astonished, when instead of attacking me, I found four of these persons intreating me to receive them for prisoners, and to save their lives; and while they ranged themselves about me, appear rejoiced at this meeting! I granted their request: and it seemed so surprizing to me, that four men unhurt, and well armed, should surrender themselves to a single man, disarmed, covered with his own blood, mounted upon a little paltry nag, and scarce able to support himself, that I was tempted to take all I saw for an illusion. But I was soon convinced of the truth of it. My prisoners (since they would be so) made themselves known for *monsieurs de Châtaigne-raie* *, *de Sigogne*, *de Chanteloup*. and *d'Aufreville*. They told me, that the duke of Maïenne had lost the battle; that the king was that instant in pursuit of the vanquished, which had obliged them to surrender, for fear of falling into worse hands, their horses not being in a condition to carry them out of danger; at the same time *Sigogne*, in token of surrender, presented me with the white standard. The three others, who were the duke of Nemours, the chevalier *d'Aumale*, and *Tremont*, not seeming inclined to surrender, I endeavoured to persuade them to do so, but in vain. After recommending their companions to me, seeing a body of the victors advance, they rode away, and shewed me that their horses were still vigorous enough to bear them from their enemies.

Charles of
Savoy duke
of Nemours.

I ADVANCED with my prisoners towards a battalion of Swifs, and meeting one of the king's chief pages, I gave him the standard to carry, it being too weighty a burthen for me. I then saw more plainly the marks of our victory. The field was full of the fugitive leaguers and Spaniards, and the victorious army † of the king pur-

* John de Vivonne, lord of Châtaigne-raie. Charles de Beaufoncle, lord of Sigogne, cornet of the duke of Maïenne's company. The historians take notice of the prisoners *monieur de Rosny* took in this encounter, and the wounds he received to the number of seven. It was for some time believed, that Henry IV. was slain. What gave rise to this false report was the marquis of Nefle, who was that day dressed like the king, being seen surrounded by the enemy, and wounded

in several places, of which he died. *Matthieu*, *ibid*.

† "The king cried, Spare the French, and fall upon the foreigners." *Prefixe*, *ibid*. part 2d. "Henry," says the author of the *Henriade*, "owed this victory to the superiority of his skill and valour. But he confessed that Maïenne had performed all the duties of a great general; he had no fault," said he, "but in the cause he supported." The duke of Maïenne would have been taken, but for
suing

ſuing, and ſcattering the reſt of the larger bodies, had diſperſed, and were again drawing together. The Swiſs ſoldiers of the two armies, meeting, bullied each other with their pikes lowered, without ſtriking a blow, or making any other motion.

THE white ſtandard embroidered with black flowers-de-luce, was known by every one to be that of the Guiſes, which they bore in memory, and through horror, of the aſſaſſination of Blois, and drew great numbers to it, as to a prey equally rich and honourable. The black velvet coats of my priſoners, which were covered with ſilver croſſes, glittered from afar in the field. The firſt who flew to ſeize them, were meſſieurs de Cambrai, de l'Archant, du Rollet, de Crevecœur, de Palcheux, and de Braſſeuſe, who were joined by the count de Torigny. I advanced towards them, and ſuppoſing they would not know my face, diſfigured by blood and duſt, I named myſelf. The count de Torigny no ſooner knew la Châtaigneraie, who was his relation, than judging that, in the condition he ſaw me, I ſhould not be able to preſerve my priſoners from inſult, he intreated me to give Châtaigneraie to his care, for whom he would be anſwerable. I readily granted his requeſt, yet it was with regret that I ſaw him go away. What Torigny did through a principle of friendſhip had a fatal conſequence for the unhappy Châtaigneraie. Some moments after he was known by three men belonging to d'O's company, who had been guard to Henry III. Theſe men levelling their pieces at him, ſhot him dead, crying, " 'Sdeath! thou traytor to thy king, " whom thou haſt murdered, and triumphed in the deed."

I MIGHT have made the count of Torigny pay this priſoner's ranſom, and I was adviſed by ſeveral perſons to do ſo; but I could not reſolve to add this new cauſe of affliction to what he already felt for the death of a man, with whom I had myſelf been well acquainted.

I SOON ſaw myſelf ſurrounded by many perſons, amongſt whom there was not one that did not envy my good fortune. D'Andelot *

his precaution in breaking the bridge of Ivry as he fled. But by that means he expoſed the German horſe and foot to be ſlaughtered there, twelve hundred of which were killed upon the ſpot; a like number of French infantry, and a thouſand horſe. Some have made the loſs much greater. Of the royaliſts, five hundred private men,

and about twenty gentlemen were killed. This battle was fought between Dreux and Nonancourt, at the villages of St. Andre and Foucrainville.

† Charles de Coligny, marquis d'Andelot, one of the admirals de Coligny's ſons.

1590.

came after the rest, and passing through the croud, perceived Sigogne, and the page who carried the standard. He was preparing to seize it, believing his good fortune had preserved this prize for him, when a report that the enemies had rallied, obliged him to go away abruptly. I had not time to draw him out of his error; for after he had bid the page keep that standard for him, he suddenly disappeared. The news was found to be false, and had no other foundation than the arrival of two hundred soldiers from Picardy, which messieurs de Mouy* and de la Boissiere had brought to the duke of Maïenne.

Bertrand de
Vignoles.

BEING now disengaged from the croud, and finding myself in need of help, especially for the wound in my hip, by which I lost a great deal of blood, I advanced with my prize to the head of Vignoles' regiment, which had behaved bravely in the battle. Here fearing no further surprize, I asked for a surgeon to bind up my wound, and desired some wine to prevent fainting, which I found coming upon me. My strength being a little renewed, I got to Anet, the keeper of which gave me an apartment, where I caused the first dressing to be put on my wounds in the presence of the marechal Biron, who spent a few moments there after my arrival, and took some refreshment in my chamber. He was conducting the corps de reserve, which he commanded, to the king, who, without stopping after his victory, had passed the river of Eure, in pursuit of the enemies; and, as I was told, took at last the road to Rosny, where he lay the same night †.

AFTER the marechal Biron was gone, d'Andelot arrived at Anet, full of resentment against me for taking away his prize; for so he thought it. He entered my chamber, attended by five or six armed

* Charles d'Humieres. The vol. of manuscripts in the king's library, marked 8930, is filled with his great actions. Charles, marquis de Mouy, or Moy. Christopher de Lanoy de Boissiere, governor of Corbie.

† "That night he supped at the castle of Rosny. Being informed that the marechal d'Aumont was come to give him an account of what he had done, he rose up to meet him, and embracing him affectionately, made him sit down at his table, with these obliging words, that it was but just, that he who had

"served him so well at his nuptials, should share the feast." Prefixe, *ibid.* 2d part.

Monsieur de Prefixe, in the same place, relates another circumstance, which does honour to the king. "He remembered that, the evening before the battle, he had used some harsh expressions to colonel Theodoric Schomberg, who had asked him for money, and told him in a passion, that it was not acting like a man of honour to demand money, when he came to take orders for fighting. He afterwards went to him, when he was men,

men, and with an air equally fierce and insulting, demanded an explanation, or rather fought to do himself justice; for perceiving the white standard, which, with that belonging to my company, had been placed at the head of my bed, he would have taken possession of it by force, without attending to what I said. I changed my tone immediately, and high words passed between us. In the condition wherein I was, I could do no more. But he speaking with fury, and making use of threats, the noise drew fifteen or twenty of my troopers into the chamber, at the sight of whom d'Andelot restraining his rage, went out, commanding Sigogne to follow him, which he refused, and endeavoured, but in vain, to make him comprehend the injustice of his pretensions.

1590.

THE next morning I caused myself to be carried by water to Passy, with an intention to go to Rosny, to finish my cure. On my arrival, I learned that part of the soldiers in my train, and my valets, with all my baggage, had retired thither, not knowing what was become of me, and intimidated by a report which was spread, that the king had lost the battle. Being apprehensive of the reproaches I might make them, they kept themselves concealed. I caused them to be fought for, but they were so much ashamed of their cowardice, that the following night they fled away on foot; nor have I since been ever able to get any intelligence of them. They left all my baggage behind them, with four of their own horses, which I ordered to be sold, and distributed the money amongst their wounded companions.

As I was not in a condition to mount a horse, I ordered a kind of litter, composed of the branches of trees, with the bark still on, and the hoops of some vessels, to be made for me in haste, and tra-

“ ranging his troops in order, and said,
 “ Colonel, we are now upon the point;
 “ perhaps I shall never go from this place,
 “ it is not just that I should deprive a
 “ brave gentleman as you are of your hon-
 “ our; I come therefore to declare, that
 “ I know you to be an honest man, and
 “ incapable of committing a base action.
 “ Saying this, he embraced him with
 “ great affection. The colonel, sensibly
 “ moved with this behaviour, replied, with
 “ tears in his eyes, Ah! Sir, in restoring
 “ to me my honour, you take away my

“ life; for after this I should be unwor-
 “ thy of your favour, if I did not sacri-
 “ fice it to-day for your service. If I had
 “ a thousand lives, I would lay them all
 “ at your feet. In fact, he was killed
 “ upon this occasion.” Ibid.

The marechal Biron, who at the head of the corps de reserve, had greatly contributed towards this victory, said to Henry IV. “ Sir, you have performed what
 “ Biron should, and Biron has done that
 “ which the king ought to have done.”

1590.

velled by Beurons, to avoid the ascents and declivities of Rougevoie, and Châtillon.

MAIGNAN, who was a youth of a lively imagination, thought proper to give this march the air of a little triumph. Two of the grooms of my stable were at the head of this train, each leading one of my finest horses; they were followed by my pages, one of whom rode on my horse, the same who having received three wounds in the battle, and being thrown to the ground by a fourth, got up again without a saddle, and running about the field, was fortunately known by three of my arquebusiers. This page carried my cuirass, and the duke of Maienne's standard, the other bore my bracelets, and my helmet, so bruised, that it was no longer of any use. My equery, the contriver of this diverting scene, marched next, with his head bound up, and his arm in a scarf: he was followed by Moreines, my valet de chambre, dressed in my coat of orange-coloured velvet, with thin plates of silver, and mounted upon my English nag, holding in his hand, as a trophy, a bundle of the shivers of my pistols, the broken pieces of my swords, and the tattered remains of my plume of feathers. The litter in which I lay came next, covered only with a cloth, upon which they had hung the black velvet coats of my prisoners, with their plumes, and pieces of their pistols and swords at the four corners. The prisoners themselves followed my litter, and preceded the rest of my domestics; after whom, ranged in order, came my own company of soldiers, and the march was closed with James's and Badet's two companies of arquebusiers. They had suffered so much in the battle, that there was not one of them who had not his head bound up, and his arm in a scarf, and some of these brave soldiers were even obliged to be carried by their companions.

WHEN we came near Beurons, we perceived all the plain covered with horses and dogs; and the king himself, who, after a slight repast, had returned from Rosny to Mante, and was hunting there in my warren. This shew seemed to please him; he thought it very happily disposed, and smiled at the vanity of Maignan, who had the honour of being known to this prince, ever since his father, who was a very brave man, had made himself remarkable at the taking of Eaufe. The king approached my litter, and in the sight of his whole train, disdained not to give me such proofs of tenderness and concern, as (if I may be allowed the expression) one friend would do to another. I could not express my gratitude by throwing myself at his feet, but I assured

assured him, and with truth, that I would gladly suffer a thousand times more for his service. He required, with an obliging sollicitude, whether all my wounds were of such a nature, that I might hope to be cured without mutilating any part of my body, which he thought almost impossible, knowing that I had been thrown down senseless, and trampled under the horses feet. When he was convinced that I had nothing to fear, he cast himself on my neck, and turning to the princes and noblemen who followed him, he said aloud, that he honoured me with the title of a true and honest knight, a title which he said, he thought superior to that of a knight-companion of his orders. Being apprehensive that I should hurt myself by speaking too much, he put an end to this agreeable conversation with his usual protestation, that I should share in whatever good fortune heaven should send him; and, leaving me, said, “Farewel, my friend, take care of yourself, and, depend upon it, you have a good master.” There are princes who are capable of gratitude, but this quality is seldom increased, or even kept, in success.

1590.

M E M M O I R S

O F

S U L L Y.

B O O K IV.

1590.

THE same day that the king gained the battle of Ivry, his party also prevailed in Auvergne*, where Randan commanded the troops of the league; but fortune, as it should seem, when she gave this prince success sufficient to put him in possession of several crowns, took pleasure, at the same time, in producing circumstances which hindered the effect, and left him no other fruit of his victories than the sole glory of having conquered. After the battle of Ivry, terror and consternation seized the whole party of the league, so that it seemed hardly possible for the king, who was now resolved to let slip none of his advantages, to have failed of drawing very great ones from the present posture of his affairs. Nor did he expect to have seen them ravished from him by a general mutiny in his army, particularly of the Swiss, who refused to advance a step farther, till they were paid those sums the king owed them.

THIS prince had then neither money nor means in readiness to recover any. He came to Mante, to demand some of the superinten-

* At Issoire. See an account of it in Lewis de la Pochefoucault, count of Cayet, *ibid.* 329. De Thou, &c. John Randan.

1590.

dant of the finances. This man, who secretly hated the king, and beheld his success with grief, took pleasure in adding to his perplexities, and had but one answer to make to all his solicitations. In this time of confusion, when the royal treasure became a prey to the first possessor, the finances were very difficult to manage, and the king's revenues scarce sufficient to satisfy the avarice of the receivers, which generally increased with public misery. Henry wanted that absolute authority, which alone was able to check them, and still more the means of convicting them of any misdemeanor; for he had not the slightest knowledge of the affairs of the finances. Notwithstanding this, he entered into a detail which became necessary for him, and obliged * d'O to deliver up certain sums, which it was not difficult to see had passed through his hands. These sums he made use of to pacify his soldiers; but this affair took up at least five days, during which the king could not leave Mante, and consequently derive no advantage from his victory. I remember to have heard this prince declare, that he now, for the first time in his whole life, saw himself in a situation to convert his desires into designs: "for I have often had desires, said he, but never found a fit opportunity to form designs." He gave the same signification to this last term that all wise men do; a scheme, the success of which is secured by reflection and prudence: and it is in this sense which every one wishes to take what seems right in his own opinion, without prejudice to any other person; but it is fools only who rashly engage in designs, without any appearance of succeeding in them.

DURING his stay at Mante, d'Andelot went to him to complain of me, and this prince gave himself the trouble to come to Rosny, that he might hear us both. D'Andelot was there generally condemned, and the raillery his ridiculous claim drew upon him from the principal officers, made such an impression on his mind, that he went over to the party of the league. I did not think the same justice was done to me with regard to the government of Mante, the taking of which was almost the only consequence of the battle of Ivry. The king, of whom I requested this post, bestowed it on a catholic †, at which I made loud complaints. I confess, to my confusion, that if I had seriously considered the situation the king was then in, every moment upon the point of being abandoned by the foreigners for want of payment, and

* Francis d'O, lord d'O, de Maillebois, and de Fresne, master of the wardrobe to Henry III. first gentleman of the chamber, superintendent of the finances, governor of

Paris, and isle of France. He will be mentioned hereafter.

† This government was given to monsieur de Rosny's youngest brother.

those

1590.

those catholics that were in his service, ready to seize the slightest occasion of disgust for a pretence to quit him, I should not have murmured, that he granted to a catholic, who had but little affection to his person, what he refused to a faithful servant. There was more greatness of mind in being satisfied with the friendship of this prince, independent of its effects, than in receiving favours, which were determined by policy, and the necessity of the time.

Cities of the
isle of
France.

ALL obstacles being removed, the king advanced with his troops, took Dreux, and marched towards Sens, which he expected to have surrendered through the correspondence he held within the city; but this failed, and Henry, unwilling to come so far in vain, and being besides informed that the place was destitute of ammunition, he undertook the siege of it. It was not long before he found himself, through the malice of his secret enemies, in a general want of all things necessary to finish this enterprize, and was therefore obliged to abandon it. To efface the shame, he gave out, that he raised this siege, in order to go and invest Paris itself, and he took his rout thither by Corbeil, Meulan, Lagny, and St. Denis, which he seized in his way.

I WAS not at any of these sieges; and my wounds were not yet half cured, when I learnt that the king had invested Paris; and not able to resist the desire I had to be present at this expedition, I set out, with my arm however in a scarf, and supported by two crutches. The king, forgetting all my complaints, received me with his usual goodness, and commanded me to stay near his person. He communicated to me the design he had formed upon Paris, which he was resolved at the same time to carry into execution over all the suburbs; in order to deprive the city of the subsistence it drew from them, such as fruit, vegetables, &c. He divided his army into ten little bodies, to equal the number of the suburbs he designed to storm; and having made choice of the night for the execution of his scheme, he withdrew to the mountain of Montmartre, that he might send supplies wherever there was occasion for them. He placed himself in an abbey, where he was not only followed by the wounded, who could have no share in the glory of that night, but by all the aged, and the gentlemen of the robe and pen. He made me stay with him at a window, from whence he viewed the action; during which, he conversed with Du-Plessis, Rusé, de Fresne, Alibour*, and I.

* Du-Plessis-Mornay; Martin Rusé, Fresne; his majesty's secretaries: Alibour lord of Beaulieu; and Peter Forget, lord of his physician.

1590.

THE attack began at midnight, with a frightful noise of the artillery, which was answered by that of the city. There was not one person, who did not think that this immense city would be destroyed, either by the fire of the artillery, or the mines kindled in its bowels: never was there a spectacle more capable of inspiring horror. Thick clouds of smoke, through which darted by intervals sparks of fire, or long trains of flames, covered all that space of earth, which, by the vicissitude of light and darkness, seemed now plunged in thick shades of night, and now swallowed up in a sea of fire. The thunder of the artillery, the clashing of arms, and the cries of the combatants, added to this object all that can be imagined terrible, which was still increased by the natural horror of night. This scene continued two whole hours, and was closed with the reduction of all the suburbs, not excepting that of St. Antoine; although by its great extent we were obliged to begin the attack at a considerable distance. They blocked up the city-gates, so that nothing could enter without the permission of those who guarded them; and the people immediately saw themselves reduced to an excess of misery and famine, which I cannot yet think of without horror.

I MUST be permitted to pass slightly over this part; I cannot, with any pleasure, enlarge upon so dreadful a subject. The king, naturally compassionate, was moved with the distress of the Parisians: he could not bear the thoughts of seeing this city, the empire of which was destined for him by providence, become one vast church-yard. He secretly permitted every thing that could contribute to its relief, and affected not to observe the supplies of provisions which the officers and soldiers suffered to enter the city, either out of compassion to their relations and friends who were in it, or with a design to make the citizens purchase them at a high price. Without doubt, he imagined this conduct would gain him the hearts of the Parisians; but he was deceived, they enjoyed his benefits without ceasing to look upon him as the author of their miseries, and, elated with the prince of Parma's arrival, they insulted him, who only raised the siege because he was too much affected with the miseries of the besieged*.

* Perefice, Cayet, and many others are also of opinion, that the king was withheld from taking Paris by storm, and from yielding to the repeated intreaties of his soldiers, particularly the huguenots, by his having perceived, that on this occasion they

were resolved to revenge the massacre of St. Bartholomew, by putting all within Paris to the sword. "The duke of Ne-
"mours, says Perefice, sent all useless
"mouths out of Paris: the king's council
"opposed his granting them passage; but

1590.

To justify an action, in itself as much blamed by the masters in the art of war, as praised for its motive by hearts truly benevolent, the king caused it to be reported, that his design in raising the siege of Paris was to go and meet the prince of Parma †, and by a decisive action put an end to a war already too long. He made use of all the precautions necessary to secure a safe retreat from a city so populous as Paris, and commanded every one to hold themselves in readiness for a general signal; to the end that, all the suburbs being evacuated in a moment, no person might remain at the mercy of the populace. This retreat required great wisdom and address, and was happily effected on the first or second of September in the same year; after which the whole army arrived at the common rendezvous, without meeting with any accident.

“ the king, being informed of the dreadful
 “ scarcity to which these miserable wretches
 “ were reduced, ordered that they should
 “ be allowed to pass. I am not surprized,
 “ said he, that the Spaniards, and the chiefs
 “ of the league, have no compassion upon
 “ these poor people, they are only tyrants;
 “ as for me, I am their father and their
 “ king, and cannot hear the recital of their
 “ calamities, without being pierced to my
 “ inmost soul, and ardently desiring to
 “ bring them relief.” *Perefixe*, part 2d.
 The cardinal de Gondy, bishop of Paris,
 having been sent, during this siege, to make
 Henry propositions for peace: “ I will
 “ not dissemble, said he, but discover my
 “ sentiments to you freely. I am willing
 “ to grant you peace, I desire it myself; I
 “ would give one finger to have a battle,
 “ and two to have a general peace. I love
 “ my city of Paris, I am jealous of her, I
 “ am desirous of doing her service, and
 “ would grant her more favours than she
 “ demands of me; but I would grant them
 “ voluntarily, and not be compelled to it
 “ by the king of Spain or the duke of
 “ Maienne.” It may be added, that Henry
 IV. expected the Parisians would capitulate
 before the prince of Parma's arrival.
 The extremity to which this city was reduced,
 raised at once compassion and horror:
 in the space of a month, 30,000 per-

sons died of hunger: mothers fed upon the
 flesh of their children: by the Spanish am-
 bassador's advice, they dug up the dead bod-
 dies, and made use of their bones pounded,
 to compose a kind of paste. This detestable
 food cost the greatest part of those that eat
 of it their lives. See a relation of this in
 the historians, particularly in the second
 volume of Villeroy's *Memoirs of state*, p.
 358, &c. Read also the fine verses of the
Henriade upon this subject, canto the
 tenth. The Parisians owed their safety
 chiefly to the duke of Nemours; whose
 gallant defence has been lightly praised by
 our writers. The people seconded him
 with an obstinate eagerness, which had
 more of fury than true courage in it. A
 regiment of priests and monks were seen
 there, Capuchins, Folietans, Carthusians,
 &c. grotesquely armed above their frocks.
 This awkward regiment being eager to sal-
 ute the legate, killed his secretary at his side.
 The monks of St. Genevieve, St. Victor,
 the Benedictines, the Celestins, and some
 orders, would have no part in this military
 masquerade. *Cayet's Ch. Novenn. ib. 360.*

† Alexander Farnese, duke of Parma and
 Placentia, son to Octavio Farnese, and
 Margaret of Austria, natural daughter to
 Charles V. He married Mary of Portugal,
 by whom he had Ranucio Farnese, duke
 of Parma, and Odoard Farnese, cardinal.

THE king * knowing that the prince of Parma was in the neighbourhood of Meaux, came and posted himself between this city and Paris, and made his light horse advance as far as Claye; where the two camps being so contiguous, several smart encounters ensued. The king, upon the marshal Biron's representations, preferred to this post that of Chelles, and went thither contrary to his own opinion; for he looked upon Claye to be a more advantageous post, and at the same time fitter to shut up the road to Paris from the enemy's general; for he had still views upon the city, and carried on a correspondence within it, which if the prince of Parma had entered, would have failed him, and which it did notwithstanding. The king then took possession of a rising-ground, which on one side presented nothing to view but a deep valley and a morass, that took away all possibility of acting in that place. The prince of Parma perceiving this, encamped on a hill opposite to ours. It was neither his design nor his interest to hazard a battle, but to give us a check; his camp answered this purpose exactly, as he was there sheltered from any attack, and out of the reach of the cannon. The king became sensible of the error, which too much complaisance for the opinion of another had drawn him into; when, after remaining two or three days in this position, he saw Lagny taken before his eyes, without having it in his power to prevent it †.

1599.

A town between Paris and Meaux.

A town between Paris and Meaux.

A city of Brie upon the Marne.

THIS event, joined to his raising the siege of Paris, mortified him extremely, because he was sensible that it might be concluded from thence, that the enemy was superior to him in judgment, which this

* De Thou says, that Henry IV. was obliged to pretend, that he only raised the siege of Paris in order to go and meet the prince of Parma, and to give him battle; for fear that his soldiers, whom the hopes of the plunder of Paris had only prevailed upon to stay with him, should abandon him. Book xcix.

† The duke of Sully is more candid than the greatest part of the historians, who will not confess that Henry IV. committed any fault upon this occasion. They cannot agree amongst themselves, either about the raising the siege of Paris, or all these different encampments. Villeroy in his Memoirs mentions this circumstance in the same manner as Sully does; and attributes

to that one fault of preferring the post of Chelles to Claye, all the honour the prince of Parma gained by obliging the king to raise the siege of Paris, without coming to a battle; the taking of Lagny, &c. vol. I. p. 190. vol. II. p. 466. See likewise upon all these expeditions Matthieu, *ibid.* 53, &c. and the other historians. The prince of Parma was desirous of seeing Paris, and entered it incognito. "I am informed," said he to the duke of Maienne, "that the king of Navarre makes more use of boots than shoes, and that to ruin him we must protract the time, and employ delays, rather than force." *Cajst's Chron. Novenn. ibid.* 390.

1590.

prince considered as a matter of great importance in war. What gave him still more uneasiness was, that none were more ready to believe, or even to spread these disadvantageous reports, than the catholics of his own army. What reliance could he have on the assistance of persons, by whom the disobedience of his soldiers, and his want of money, were occasioned? and he was convinced that this disposition with regard to him was an incurable malady, which his good or his bad fortune equally increased. Such is the hatred that religion is the foundation of! and in the end, the king had a thousand fatal proofs of it.

A town upon
the Oise.

In Beauvaisis

HE now resolved upon a very prudent measure, and indeed the only one that was left him. No longer persisting in his design of taking Paris, which so many circumstances concurred to ruin, he quitted his post at Chelles, where he ran great hazards with an army whose interests clashed with those of its leader, and suddenly abandoning all those quarters, retreated to the river of Oise, and fixed at Creil; where, without ceasing to harass the prince of Parma, he suffered him slowly to consume of himself. During this time, he made no other motions than what served to hinder his army from being enervated by sloth. He laid siege to Clermont, and continued it by frequent detachments. My company he posted in the neighbourhood of Mante, to keep the country of Chartrain, and part of the isle of France, in order. I obtained leave to continue near his person, though I was not in a condition to do him any very great services; the wound in my hip not permitting me to sit my horse but with great uneasiness, and that in my elbow took away the use of one of my hands.

IT happened as the king had foreseen: the prince of Parma boasted of his advantage in being master of the field; and that he might make use of it, laid siege to Corbeil. The king had provided this place as well as all the other royalist towns, with whatever was necessary to enable them to hold out against a long siege. The enemy's general, who did not expect this, was astonished at the firm resistance of Rigaut, governor of Corbeil, whom he a long time despaired of subduing; but thinking his honour was engaged in this undertaking, he continued his efforts, and succeeded at last. It was with this only exploit, however, that the campaign ended; he had bought it too dear to attempt a second at the same price; and not being able to effect any thing upon the king's army, any more than his towns, he thought the wisest thing he could do was to return to the Low Countries; which he did, to
the

the extreme regret of the league, whom his presence had greatly relieved. 1590.

HE judged, like an able general, that the king, who had (if the expression may be allowed) closed his eyes upon all the advances he had made, would open them upon his retreat; and that this would not be effected with the same ease as the rest. He was not mistaken; but he acted with so much prudence, that he prevented the last misfortune which must unavoidably have happened to any other. Notwithstanding all his precautions, the king, by an infinite number of attacks and skirmishes, sometimes beat up his quarters, and brought him within an inch of his ruin. The most considerable of these little battles, was at the passage over the river of Aîne. It was upon this occasion, that the baron de Biron * engaged himself so far among the enemies battalions, that if the king had not run thither in person, with as many of us as were about him, and made a powerful effort to bring him off, he would have lost his life there, or at least his liberty.

I WAS able to keep my rank with the rest during this whole march, which was an excellent school for a soldier to learn his trade in. It no less justified the conduct the king had till then observed, than it did him honour by the manner in which he executed it. Laying aside only the terms of ignominious and shameful, which the courtiers, eager to please this prince, joined (in my opinion very unjustly) to the prince of Parma's retreat, it is certain, that the manner in which the king rendered an army useless, which had promised itself the conquest of all France, his bravery in attacking a powerful enemy who retreated not through weakness, and his dexterity in seizing all advantages, gave matter for admiration to persons consummate in the art or war, and equally struck the eyes of the ignorant †. The king's conduct upon this occasion, gave his partisans new courage. Several towns submitted, and some catholics came over to his side; among others, the duke of Nevers, who brought his troops along with him,

* Charles de Gontaut, son to the marshal.

† “ Henry IV. says father Matthieu, when he was in pursuit of the prince of Parma, stole away from Attichy, and went, for the first time, to see the beautiful Gabriella at Cœuvres. He contented himself with eating some bread

“ and butter at the gate, that he might not raise any suspicion in her father. Afterwards mounting his horse, he said, he was going towards the enemy, and that the fair one should soon hear what he had performed through his passion for her.” Vol. II. p. 59.

either

1591.

either because he began to be afraid of him, or was disgusted with the league.

IT was not such allies as these that I wished the king: I found he dearly bought by his compliances the assistance of a man, who might have been indeed of some use to him; but who, in my opinion, only increased the number of his secret enemies * in the council: for thus I cannot help calling all those interested catholics, who carried every thing there with a high hand, and thought they had a right to give laws to Henry.

A city of
Vexin.

DURING this prince's stay in the neighbourhood of Mante, I took Gisors, by means of a correspondence, which a gentleman in my company, named Fourges, carried on with his father, who was in the place. I did not imagine the government of this city would have been refused me; but it happened in this instance as it had done in many others. Messieurs de Nevers, d'O, and other catholics, put in practice all those mean artifices, which procured them favours, that ought only to have been the rewards of merit, and prevailed upon the king to give this post to one of their own religion.

I WAS too sincere to dissemble my thoughts of such injustice; I chose to explain myself upon this subject at the very time when all these gentlemen might hear what I said, and concealed nothing that lay upon my heart. The king, who was a better politician than I was, seemed not to be moved with my invectives against the catholics, although he secretly agreed that I was injured, and only answered me coldly, "I perceive you are heated at present; we will talk of this affair another time. I must confess, added he after I retired, that he has some reason for his complaints; his temper is naturally fiery: however, he will never be guilty of any thing base or wicked, for he is a good man, and loves honour." In the first emotions of my anger, I left my company to the care of my lieutenant, and went to take a tour in the valley of Aillant, and to Com-

* By all the letters that passed between the duke of Nevers and Henry III. which are at the end of the first volume of the Memoirs that bear his name, it appears, that the duke of Nevers served this prince effectually against the league, but without any kindness to the king of Navarre.

When he joined this prince, their reciprocal letters shew, that the services he did Henry IV. were considerable indeed, but that he exacted a very high price for them, and that it was with difficulty Henry bore with his caprice, his jealousy, and his bad temper.

bravies, upon my wife's estate, taking only six gentlemen, and my domestics with me. I did not expect to be employed in any military duties in this journey; but while I was at Bontin, the count of Tonnerre * prevailed upon me, to assist him in an attempt he made upon Joigny. His design was to force with a petard a postern-gate, which for a long time before had not been opened, and through that to enter the town. Tonnerre, for this exploit, had only two hundred arquebusers, which he had got together in haste. They followed him about two hundred steps into the city; but here their leader falling by a shot from an arquebuse, terror seized them, and they hastily retreated towards the postern, carrying the wounded count along with them. Their danger, or rather their fear redoubling, they had the baseness to leave him upon the pavement, about thirty steps from the postern; where he would have been cut to pieces by the citizens, if I had not flown to his assistance, with only twenty men: for notwithstanding all my endeavours, I could not prevail upon those cowardly soldiers to face about. However, I rescued Tonnerre, who took the road to Gien, of which he was governor; after which I mustered up his brave troop, and resumed my way to Bontin.

1591.
Upon the confines of Champagne, and Orleanois. In Champagne, upon the Yonne.

A city of Orleanois upon the Loire.

THE remembrance of the king's former goodness to me, and an invincible inclination, drew me back to him. I found him employed in the siege of Chartres †; the taking of which was principally owing to the valour and address of Châtillon ‡. I was prevented from being present at this siege, by an adventure the most dangerous I was ever engaged in, in my whole life; nor have the intentions of the authors of it, or even their names, ever come to my knowledge.

* Francis Henry, count of Clermont and Tonnerre.

† "The magistrate of this city made him a very long harangue; and telling him, that he acknowledged the city was subject to the king, by divine and human right; the king, out of patience at his prolixity, interrupted him, pushing forward his horse to enter, and said, Ay, and add also by the cannons right." Father Chalons' history of France, vol. III. p. 227. This siege was long and bloody. See Matthieu, vol. II. p. 63. Cayet, vol. II. p. 415. and other historians.

‡ Francis de Coligny, son to the admiral, and admiral of Guyenne. He died this year 1591, in his castle of Louve, thirty years of age, leaving by Margaret d'Ailly de Péquigny, three sons. The calvinist party had a great loss in him, for it is believed, that if he had lived, he would even have excelled his father. De Thou, book cii. Three sons of d'Andelot, the admiral's brother, died at one time, in the year 1586, their names were Laval, Sully, and Rieux. They were sons of Francis de Coligny, and Claude de Breaux, sole heirs of the house of Laval. Book lxxxv.

1591.

RETURNING from an assault which Châtillon made upon the body of the place, by means of a bridge of a new and very ingenious structure, the king, who observed that my former ardour for his service was not diminished, called me, and commanded me to bring my company before Chartres. I was obliged to go and get my men together myself, and at the same time to provide every thing necessary for their maintenance. About three leagues from Mante, near the town of Touvery, I saw a brigade of twenty horse in the field, which I ordered Tilly to reconnoitre. Upon his information that they bore white scarfs, I advanced without fear or precaution: as for them, continuing their rout, as if they had not even seen us, they struck into the wood; from which, according to the course of the road I had taken, I could not expect to see them come out. I rode on with Tilly, La-Poterie, and La-Ruë, before the rest of my troop, which consisted only of six other gentlemen, and four servants, who followed at some distance separately. These troopers, or robbers, I know not what to call them, knew the road perfectly, and had taken their measures so well, that they met us at the passage out of the forest, just where our road crossed theirs. The two first took off their hats, when to the word, *Qui vive?* we answered, *Vive le roi*; but at the same time taking advantage of our security, fired close to our breasts. I saw three of the foremost take aim particularly at me. There was no probability that any of us would have escaped; but doubtless, precipitation, fear, and the terrors of conscience, caused the hands of these villains to tremble, so that of three shots at me, one only reached me, which entering my lip, came out at the nape of my neck: it appeared to me, that La-Poterie and Tilly received the two others in their cloaths. La Ruë was the only person who fell.

THE rest of my troop running up at the noise, surrounded me, crying, "*Vive Rosny.*" We all together charged our assailants, who retired, firing, to a village, covered with hedges, where we lost sight of them. They continued only to fire upon us from within the houses, which covered my face with small shot. By this circumstance I concluded, that our adversaries were of intelligence with the country; and that this village was full of soldiers, who only sought, perhaps, to draw us nearer. After several times calling to those traitors to turn and accept a defiance, I thought it was the wisest way to leave them, and take some care of my wounds; especially that in my neck, which was the most considerable, and by which I lost a great deal of blood.

blood. I got to Touvery, where, in the house of monsieur d'Auteuil, I put the first dressing upon them, and from thence retired to Mante, where I was six weeks under the surgeons hand. During this space, the king's army not only seized Chartres, but Corbie likewise. Parabere had the conduct of this siege, in the absence of the king, who was kept at St. Quentin*, by his new passion for mademoiselle d'Éitrées †.

1591.
M. de Com-
bault d'Au-
teuil.

THE siege of Noyon followed that of Corbie. There is none which I could have more wished to have given a circumstantial relation of than this, if I had been a witness of it. A thousand brave actions were performed by the besieged. The duke of Maïenne, who knew this place was of great importance to the league, sent orders to the duke d'Aumale ‡, lieutenant general, who was then at Ham with some of the forces of the party, not to neglect giving it all possible assistance till he approached. The duke d'Aumale endeavoured twice to throw succours into it; but la Chantellerie and Tremblecourt, who led them, were cut in pieces one after the other. The viscount de Tavannes ||,

* It is to this year, and while Henry IV. staid at St. Quentin, that we must bring back this prince's letter to M. de Rosny, which is without date, and may be seen amongst the MSS. of the king's library, the contents of which perfectly agree with the text of our Memoirs, and is as follows: "All the news I have from Mante are, that you have been fatigued, and are much emaciated: if you have any desire to refresh yourself and grow fat, it is my opinion, that you ought to come hither; mean time your brother will send us news from thence of our siege at Chartres," &c.

From several places in these Memoirs, where the share Henry IV. gave to M. de Rosny in all his resolutions is mentioned, particularly that relating to his conversion, which we shall come to presently, we may infer, that this prince had always an entire confidence in him. I have transcribed the foregoing letter to shew by another testimony, that this opinion is not ill founded; and that the duke of Sully has not through vanity imposed upon his readers. The historians have not mentioned this minister till he began to appear publicly at the head

of affairs. 'Tis more than probable, that a long time before that, he had been the soul of all the actions and councils of Henry the Great. 'Tis easy to trace this time back to his most early youth; tho' indeed all the actions of the duke of Sully compose a life, wherein no period of it seems to have been that of youth. This advantage must be allowed to minds born, as it were, grave and serious, over those more lively and full of fire.

† She is often mentioned in the course of this work. Her name was Gabrielle; she was daughter of John Antony d'Éitrées, and Frances Babou de la Bourdaisiere. She bore successively the names of the fair Gabrielle, madame de Liancourt, the marchioness of Monceaux, and duchess of Beaufort.

‡ Charles de Lorraine, duke d'Aumale, son of Claude, slain before Rochelle, in the year 1573. He was the third of Claude de Lorraine's sons; from whence issued all the branches of the house of Lorraine in France: that of d'Aumale was extinct soon after.

|| John de Saulx, viscount of Tavannes, one of the marshals of the league.

1591. major general, thinking he might be more successful, presented himself with four hundred arquebusiers : they met with a party of fifty or sixty horse, belonging to us ; who, after the *Qui vive*, charged them boldly, and put them to flight : the principal officers, who would have resisted, were all wounded, and taken prisoners with Tavannes, their commander. D'Aumale flattered himself, that he should, in his turn, beat two quarters of light horse, which he had ordered Bellanglise to reconnoitre ; but he found them mounted, and going to meet the king ; and having attacked them, these light horse, notwithstanding the great superiority of the enemy, defended themselves so long, and so bravely, that the baron de Biron, *messieurs de la Hargerie*, and de la Boissiere, had time to come up to their assistance : after which, these two troops joining, they defeated d'Aumale's whole detachment, which consisted of five hundred horse, and as many horse-arquebusiers. Very few reached Ham without wounds, and a great number of prisoners were taken.

Lewis d'Ognies de la Hargerie, count of Chaune. Another city upon the Somme.

THE duke of Maïenne arriving at Ham at the very moment that these shattered remains retreated thither, was a witness of his loss, and protested publicly, that he would efface this shame, either by raising the siege of Noyon, or by a battle. He drew together all his forces, ordered the baron de Rosne * to bring him the Spanish troops under the command of the prince of Ascoli in Champagne ; and finding himself at the head of nine hundred foot, and two hundred horse, he advanced towards Noyon. He forgot his oath, when he saw that he had to do with men, who seemed not to have perceived his arrival. The commander of Noyon had represented to him by a gentleman, whom the king permitted to pass through his army, that he had engaged to surrender the place in six days, if no succours were sent to him. The duke of Maïenne, the prince of Ascoli, and the duke of Aumale, suffered Noyon to be taken before their eyes. This commander certainly deserved to have been better seconded. His name was Rieux ; and from a private soldier, became governor of Pierrefond, by his skill and bravery. Upon the report of Noyon's being attacked, he found means to throw himself into it, with fifty horse, and as many arquebusiers, to reassure this city, where all were in consternation and dismay, and to hold it out till the last extremity.

See a relation of the sieges of Noyon, Pierrefont, and of all these expeditions in the above-named historians.

* Christian de Savigny, baron of Rosne, in the duchy of Bar.

1591.

THE duke of Maïenne seeing that his army was now useleſs, ſent it into quarters, and marched ſlowly towards Paris. He had long carried on a correſpondence in Mante, and he now thought it time to execute his deſign upon that place. He privately drew out the gariſons of Paris, Dreux, and Pontoife, and ſuddenly preſented himſelf within muſquet-ſhot of this city, before day. My brother * was governor of it, and I was then there myſelf; my wound not permitting me to keep the field. As ſoon as I was informed of the enemies arrival, I ran upon the ramparts with my head bound up; and cauſing ſome diſcharges to be fired at the aſſailants, forced them to abandon their deſign.

THE duke of Maïenne ſucceeded no better before Houdan, which he alarmed as he paſſed by. My other brother, who was there with his regiment, and ſome companies, gave him ſuch a reception, that he retreated with diſgrace.

On the borders of France and Normandy.

WHAT had happened at Mante, joined to the information my brother had received, convinced us, that the enemies had a correſpondence in the city. After conſulting together upon what was neceſſary to be done on this occaſion, I fixed upon the following expedient: I had ſtill in my pay ſix of thoſe brave ſoldiers who ſerved as a forlorn hope in the battle of Ivry, and to whom, beſides their pay, I gave eight livres a month. They were then in my brother's gariſon, to whom I could not reſuſe them, and their fidelity I was abſolutely aſſured of. As it had been concerted with us two, they pretended to be diſcontented with the governor of Mante; and preſenting themſelves to the gariſon of Pontoife, were received with open arms. They immediately propoſed to d'Alincourt † to make him maſter of Mante by the connection which they told him they ſtill had in that place. To convince the governor of this, they aſked for four ſoldiers, whom by my connivance they conveyed into Mante, and directed them to get acquainted with ſome citizens, who were well diſpoſed to engage in all ſorts of factions. In a little time every thing was agreed upon, and the day fixed for delivering up Mante to the league. Theſe four ſol-

* Solomon de Bethune, called baron de Roſny, the author's youngeſt brother, and the third of thoſe four brothers he mentioned at the beginning of theſe Memoirs.

† Charles de Neuville, marquis d'Alincourt, ſon to Nicolas de Neuville de Villeroi, ſecretary of ſtate: he will be mentioned afterwards.

1591.

diers found so little difficulty in the prosecution of their design, that d'Alincourt, believing the success of it infallible, would have all the honour of it to himself. My soldiers gave me exact information of all that was contriving in Pontoise, and the joy which so well concerted an enterprise occasioned there. The general council of the league, headed by the cardinal of Bourbon *, resided in that city.

MEAN time I took my measures very deep, that no affectation might appear in my conduct. I caused trains of gunpowder to be laid upon the ramparts which they intended to scale, without any one's perceiving it; and shut up all the houses that stood near that side; after which I introduced into the place, by small divisions at different times, the best soldiers of the garrisons of Nogent, Vernon, and Meulan. This done, I thought myself obliged to send and inform the king, who was at Compeigne, of all that passed; which ruined our project. This prince could not resist the desire he had to receive the duke of Maienne himself in Mante, and imagined he took sufficient precaution against hurting our scheme, by not entering Mante till the night it was to be executed, and by carrying in with him only fifty horse, and the same number of foot. As for me, when I saw him arrive, I was so well persuaded that all our measures were broken, that I could not help reproaching him with some warmth for coming thus to undo our work, and exposing, perhaps, the lives of the four soldiers, who conducted it, by means of the evidences that might appear against them. The king assuring me, that nothing of what I feared would happen, went to sup at the governor's, and there, being fatigued with his long journey, threw himself upon a bed with his cloaths on, and large boots.

DAY came, without any appearance of the enemies: I watched for them all night upon the ramparts with one of my brothers; the other staid with the king. Just as I had retired to rest, Bellengreville, whom

* This is not the old cardinal, Charles of Bourbon, son of Charles of Bourbon, duke of Vendome, and brother to Antony king of Navarre, whom the league had proclaimed king. He died of the stone the year before, at Fontenai, in Poitou, whither Henry IV. had caused him to be removed from Chinon, aged sixty-seven years; a prince, who had reason to complain, that they obliged him to ascend a throne which had no allurements for him. He could not conceal his joy for the victory that Henry

IV. gained at Coutras; and only accepted the crown, says Cayet, to preserve it for that prince whom he loved. Chron. Novenn. vol. I. book ii. p. 357. The person mentioned here, is the cardinal his nephew, named Charles after him, son to Lewis the first, prince of Condé, slain at Jarnac, and brother to the prince of Condé, who died at St. John d'Angely, to the prince of Conti, and the count of Soissons. He is mentioned in another place.

I had

I had ordered to observe the enemies motion without, came to me, and informed me, that the duke of Maëenne having received advice that some troops, led by the king in person, had entered Mante in the night, supposed his design was discovered, and retreated, after having advanced as far as Bourgenville. I carried him to the king, to whom he made the same report, and as a proof of the truth of what he said, produced two carts, loaden with rope-ladders, and such other instruments, which the leaguers, imagining they already saw the king at their heels, had left in the field, that they might not obstruct their retreat. The affair became public and irretrievable; for the soldiers who escaped on both sides could not be silent.

1591.

THE king succeeded better at Louviers. This city kept a priest * In Upper Normandy. in its pay, who from the top of a belfrey, which he never left, played the part of a spy with great exactness. If he saw but a single person in the field, he rung a certain bell, and at the same side hung out a great flag. We did not despair of being able to corrupt his fidelity; which two hundred crowns, and a promise of a benefice worth three thousand livres a-year, effected. There remained only to gain some of the garrison; the sieur du Rollet took this upon himself, and succeeded. He addressed himself to a corporal and two soldiers; who easily prevailed upon the rest of the garrison to trust the guard of one of the gates to them only. Every thing being concluded upon, the king presented himself before Louviers, at twelve o'clock in the night. No one rung the bell, nor was there the least motion in the garrison. Du Rollet entered, and opened the gate, through which the king passed, without the smallest resistance, into the center of the town. Fontaine-Martel made some ineffectual efforts to draw the garrison together; as for the citizens, they were employed in concealing their wives and daughters. This city, whose chief riches consisted in its magazines of linen and leather, was wholly pillaged. I had a gentleman with me, called Beaugrard, a native of Louviers, who was of great use to us in discovering where these sort of goods were concealed, and a prodigious quantity of them was amassed together. The produce of my share amounted to three thousand livres. The care of Louviers was by the king configned to du Rollet.

June 5.

THE same good fortune attended the duke of Montpensier in all his enterprizes in Normandy †. This success was no more than necessary

* This priest was called John de la Tour.

† In the Lower Normandy, Falaize, Baïeux, Argentan, Lizieux, &c. were in the

1591.

to comfort the king for the news he received, that the duke of Guise *, whom he considered as his principal enemy, had escaped from the castle of Tours, where he had been confined ever since the assassination at Blois. The king now resumed his former design of attempting Rouen. Secure of the assistance and affection of almost all the cities of Normandy, he quitted Mante, where for some time past he had fixed his abode, and made it a little capital for the residence of his court and council; and caused his troops to file off towards this city. While preparations were making for this important siege, Henry took a private journey to Compeigne, of which love was the true cause, though he gave out that it was to send to Germany for a recruit of horse. The viscount Turenne undertook this affair, through gratitude for the king's having effected, and honoured with his presence, his marriage with mademoiselle de Sedan †, daughter, and sole heiress of the deceased duke of Bouillon, which was concluded

interest of the league: Caën, Alençon, Séz, Ecouché, &c. in the king's. The most considerable action happened in April 1589, in the field of Argentan, near Pierrefitte, Villars, and Commeaux, where the duke of Montpenfier cut off the leaguers of those cantons, whom they called Gautiers, to the number of five or six thousand. They were commanded by the count of Briffac, Pierrecourt, Louchan, the baron d'Echaufour, and others. Three thousand were left dead upon the spot, and a thousand taken prisoners; the rest escaped to Argentan. Commeaux, which is at present scarce a village, was taken with great difficulty. At length the duke of Montpenfier extirpated this whole party, and reduced several of the rebellious cities. He was assisted by the count of Torigny, mess. d'Emery, de Loncaunai, de Beuvron, de Viques, de Baqueville, l'Archant, and others. See these expeditions in the third volume of the Memoirs of the league.

* Charles of Lorraine, son of Henry duke of Guise, who was slain at Blois, and of Catherine of Cleves. He was born in the year 1571. "The flight of the duke of Guise will ruin the league," said Henry IV. as it is related by le Grain. The duke's valet de chambre having found means to amuse Rouvrai, and his guards,

either by play, or drinking, let him down from the highest window in the castle, in the midst of the day, with a rope which he afterwards made use of to descend himself. The duke got into a small boat, which carried him to the other side of the river, where two horses waited for him, &c. Matthieu, vol. II. p. 81. Cayet, vol. II. book iii. p. 465, &c.

† Charlotte de la Mark, daughter of Robert de la Mark, sovereign prince of Sedan, and of Frances of Bourbon-Montpenfier, by the death of her brother, William Robert de la Mark, duke of Bouillon, which happened at Geneva, in the year 1588, she became heiress of this principality. The duke, in his last will, forbad his sister to marry a Roman catholic. This circumstance, the king's friendship for the viscount Turenne, his desire of taking the lady from the dukes of Lorraine, Montpenfier, and Nevers, each of whom demanded her for his son; policy, which advised him to give an ambitious neighbour to the duke of Lorraine; and perhaps the belief that this marriage would induce the viscount to lay aside his design of making himself head of the calvinists in France: these were the motives which determined Henry IV. to marry the heiress of Sedan to the viscount Turenne.

this

this year. Nor was I, for my part, sorry that this retreat gave me an opportunity of enjoying, some time longer, at Mante, the company of madam Châteaupers, with whom chance had brought me acquainted; and the inclination I felt for her was strong enough to make me entertain thoughts of a second marriage.

1591.

THE king had expressly forbidden all commerce, and exportation of merchandises, and every kind of provision into Paris and Rouen, as being cities in open rebellion: but in this, as in every thing else, he was very ill obeyed. The governors of passés, especially on the side of the Seine, gained by the immense sums, which they procured them, almost publicly granted the necessary passports for merchants, and masters of boats. De Fourges, whom I have formerly mentioned, came one day and informed me, that a large boat, whose lading was reputed worth fifty thousand crowns, had gone up the river to Paris, where, after a few days stay, a less one would bring back the produce in silver to Rouen; which he was well assured of, because his father had charge of the boat. I caused it to be so well watched, that in its return it fell into my hands, and I saw with astonishment the passport signed by Berengueville, and my brother, the one governor of Meulan, and the other of Mante; but they did not care to mention this to me, nor did I take any notice of it to them, but caused the boat and its master to be brought to Mante. I opened two large packets, where I expected to find the fifty thousand crowns in specie. But seeing only some pieces of gold and silver thread, and a piece of Spanish silk, I threatened to put the master of the boat into a dungeon. The elder Fourges, alarmed at this threat, presented me with letters of exchange for six and thirty thousand crowns, which he would have persuaded me was the whole produce of the sale. But as he defended himself with much action, the weight of the gold he had about him broke his pockets, and so great a quantity fell from them, that the floor was in an instant covered with crowns of the sun*. He probably intended to apply this sum to his own use, or thought it could be in no place so secure as about himself. 'Tis impossible to express the confusion he was in at this accident. After diverting myself some time in obliging him to take several turns about the room, I ordered him to strip, and found seven

* A gold coin current in those times. It was first struck in the reign of Lewis XI. and so called, because there was the

figure of a sun above the crown. The value of these crowns at this time is sixty-four sols.

thou-

1591.

thousand crowns in gold sewed up in his cloaths. I was then in some necessity for money, and waiting for the sale of my corn, wood, and hay at Rosny: the king made me a present of this sum, and was extremely pleased with the recital of poor Fourges's adventure. As for Berengueville, and my brother, they were extremely angry with me. But to return to the siege of Rouen.

THE king had never seen himself at the head of such considerable forces. Four thousand English were sent him under the command of Roger Williams, and he expected soon a second reinforcement from England, which landed during the siege, commanded by the earl of Essex*, the minister and favourite of queen Elizabeth. The United Provinces, besides the two regiments in the service of this prince, sent a fleet of fifty sail well equipped, with two thousand five hundred soldiers, under the command of count Philip of Nassau, on board, to the coast of Normandy. The duke of Bouillon (for the viscount Turenne took this title after his marriage) succeeded so well in his negotiation in Germany, that he brought back five or six thousand horse, and some companies of foot, with the prince of Anhalt at their head. These foreign auxiliaries, joined to six thousand Swiss, which the king had in his pay, to different reinforcements that came from several places, particularly Normandy; and to those troops, either protestants or catholics, that were at his own disposal, composed, in all, an army of forty thousand men. Caën, and the other chief towns of the province, engaged to furnish provisions, and every thing necessary for a siege, which could not fail of being long, the goodness of the place, and the strength of the garrison considered. The marquis of Villars†, well known for his courage and capacity, shut himself up there with the son of the duke of Maëenne, resolved to bury themselves under its ruins. In effect, from the day that we sat down before this city, till the prince of Parma's arrival, which obliged us to raise the siege, there passed almost six months; and what is worse, six winter months: for it was invested the first of October, and abandoned the twentieth of March following, after attempts on the part of the besiegers, and a resistance on that of the besieged, some circumstances of which I shall relate.

* Robert d'Evreux, earl of Essex, favourite to queen Elizabeth. See the letter of thanks which Henry IV. wrote to queen Elizabeth, Villeroi's Memoirs, vol. IV. p. 249.

† André de Brancas-Villars, of the ancient family of Brancatio, originally Neapolitan. It is not the same with that of the marquis of Villars, which is descended from Honoré bastard of Savoy.

THE troopers of the besiegers were placed in different quarters; the king's were at Darnetal, and that of my company at Fresne l'Ép-
 1591. } plen, where I seldom went, the king having honoured me with a lodging in his. Here I disposed myself for a long stay, and hardly ever quitted him or the marechal de Biron. At first there appeared such an emulation among the officers to be employed, that, to avoid all disputes, the king regulated the time and duration of each of their services; and declared that every fourth day he would himself work at the trench, with the gentlemen that were about his person, who were to the number of two or three hundred.

I HAD solicited beforehand for a post in the artillery, for which my inclination was so strong, that I submitted to serve not only under the marechal de Biron, but messieurs de La-Guiche *, de Borne, and de Fayolles also. But Biron, who hated me, gained over these generals, and prevailed upon them to exclude me, with which I had afterwards reason to be well pleased; for those pieces of ordnance of which I was to have the charge, happened to fall into the enemy's power.

THIS it was that gave rise to the marechal's hatred towards me: It was debated in the council on what side the place should be attacked. Biron was of opinion, that we should begin with the castle; I, on the contrary, did not scruple to maintain, that we ought first to attack the city, which would bring along with it the reduction of Fort St. Catherine. This question was a long time the subject of all conversations, as well at the table, as council; and Biron never forgot the expression I generally used, *The city taken, the castle must surrender.*

I CANNOT comprehend how a man so experienced as the marechal was, could determine for attacking the castle, which, not to mention the uncommon skill of the commander, and the strength of the garrison, nor its excellent fortifications, had this circumstance in particular from the nature of the place, that in attacking it without, not half the number of soldiers could be brought against it which the besieged could bring to defend it; which is quite contrary to all other cities of war.

HOWEVER, the opinion of the marechal de Biron carried it; for his authority, and that dependence to which he had accustomed the other

* Philibert de La-Guiche, John de Durfort de Borne, Bertrand de Melet de Fayolles.

1591.

general officers, secured all the votes. Without doubt, this marshal, flattering himself that nothing could be able to resist so strong an army, took those measures which he thought most honourable, and likeliest to bring the siege soon to an end; and the king, who was resolved not to spare * himself, by following this advice, seemed to be of the same opinion. For I look upon as a calumny only, raised by the marshal's enemies, that report which was whispered in the army, that he had asked the king for the government of Rouen, which this prince had refused him, because he had before promised it to du Hallot †, upon the recommendation of monsieur de Montpensier; and that he endeavoured secretly to thwart this enterprize, and, through envy, gave such advice as he knew would render all our efforts upon this place ineffectual. 'Tis certain, these continual contests with the duke of Bouillon had more than once been like to ruin all; for this nobleman, to be revenged on the king, raised a mutiny amongst the horse and other German forces which he had brought with him.

THE batteries were accordingly raised opposite to the fort, and we contented ourselves with guarding the lower part of the river, and placed there some companies of German foot, which having been worsted in several sallies that were made on that side, yielded the post to the Dutch, who understood sieges better than they. In effect, these last maintained themselves there, and prevented any more sallies from that place. It was not long before the king perceived that he had engaged in a very difficult attempt; but nothing, he imagined, was impossible to continued labour. Villars was not contented with defending himself within; he sallied out of the castle, and caused a deep trench to be cut upon the declivity of the hill, over-against the fort, with which the end of it communicated, and placed there in the night a guard of six or seven hundred men.

* Perhaps also they depended upon blowing up the fort of St. Catherine with the mine; but the design was discovered by the besieged. *Memoirs of the league*, vol. V. Those writers that have defended the marshal Biron's advice against that given by the duke of Sully, with regard to the place at which they should begin the attack, say, that it was very difficult, and, at the same time, very dangerous, for the army of Henry IV. to leave behind them the fort of St. Catherine, the

hill especially being so near the city. See, upon the operations of this siege, F. Matthieu, vol. II. p. 96. and following. Cayet, *Chron. Novenn.* vol. II. book iv. (who is for the duke of Sully's opinion against the marshal Biron) and other historians.

† Francis de Montmorency du Hallot, lieutenant-general for the king in Normandy. He was wounded at the siege of Rouen, and afterwards slain by the marquis d'Alegre.

As this new work was extended far into the country, and as it not only disordered the besiegers in their attacks upon the castle, but also exposed them to be fallen upon in the rear, while at the same time they had the garrison from within in front, the king resolved to seize it, and render it useless to the enemy. For this purpose he made choice of the same night when it was his turn to watch at the trench with his three hundred gentlemen, whom he commanded to be completely armed, and to have, besides their usual arms, halberts in their hands, and pistols at their girdles, and to this troop added four hundred musketeers. It was at midnight, and amidst the extreme cold of December, that we attacked this trench at different places. The action, which was very obstinate, continued half an hour with equal animosity on both sides. We used our utmost endeavours to gain the brink, and the besieged repulsed us several times. I was twice thrown to the ground, my halbert broke, and my arms loosened or broken in pieces. Maignan, whom I had obtained permission to keep near me, raised me, put my arms again in order, and gave me his halbert. The trench was at last carried by main force, and we cleared it of more than fifty dead or dying enemies, whom we threw from the top of the hill. This trench was open to the cannon of the fort, but the king had the precaution to order some gabions, hogheads, and pieces of wood to be brought there, which covered the English, to whom he committed the guard of it.

VILLARS did not expect to have seen his outworks carried in so short a time. When he was told it, and that it was the king himself who had conducted the enterprize, "By heavens," said he, "this prince deserves a thousand crowns for his valour. I am sorry that, by a better religion, he does not inspire us with as strong an inclination to gain him new ones as to detain from him his own; but it shall never be said, that I have failed to attempt in my own person what a great king has performed in his." In effect, he put himself at the head of four hundred men, armed as he had been told the king's were, and taking also eight hundred musketeers selected out of his whole number, he attacked the English, and dislodged them from the trench. The king, piqued with the vanity of Villars, and resolving not to let go his hold, prepared for a second attempt. The English, apprehending reproaches, which they certainly had not deserved, intreated the king to put a hundred English gentlemen in his troop, and to suffer all the foot, who were to attend him on this occasion, to

1591.

be English likewise. They also demanded leave to sustain the first effort of the enemy, and behaved so bravely, that the trench was a second time regained: they afterwards maintained themselves in it, and took away from the besieged all inclination to approach it for the future. By this obstinate struggle for a trench only, it is easy to judge of the event of a siege, of which this attack was but the beginning. The king was sensible, that notwithstanding all his care, and the infinite labour he underwent, he would find great difficulty in succeeding. It was the good destiny of France that preserved this prince on occasions, when he hazarded his person in such a manner, as to make us tremble for his life. And it was upon this account, that the next day after the trench was taken, I took an opportunity to express our common fears, when he drew me aside, in the presence of the catholics, and all the courtiers, to converse with me upon the present situation of his affairs. "I cannot do otherwise, my friend," replied he, as soon as I began to expostulate with him; "and since it is for my glory and crown that I fight, my life and every thing else ought to be of no consideration with me."

IT is certain, that in the king's situation he could not do less than he did, to persuade the world, that if this siege failed, it would not be through his fault; and all those instances of shining valour were no more than necessary to efface the shame of being foiled in an attempt which one half of his army feared he should succeed in, almost as much as the enemies themselves. These were the very same catholics whom I have formerly mentioned, who not contented with having obliged him to begin the siege at a place which rendered the taking of the city impossible, suffered him to sustain all the danger and fatigue, obeyed him but by halves and with regret, created innumerable difficulties, and publicly declared, that nothing was to be expected from them, while he continued to profess a religion different from their own.

IT was to express himself freely upon so many causes of uneasiness, that he was desirous of discoursing with me, and I then said nothing to him, which he did not know as well as myself, at so little trouble were his domestic enemies to conceal their sentiments. He told me, he had perceived for some time the approach of a much greater misfortune, which was the desertion of all the catholics in his army, "which will bring along with it," added he, "the ruin of the state, and the house of Bourbon; for if they once break with me, they will
" never

“ never more chuse a king out of that family.” He added, that this disobedience was an incurable evil, which he was obliged to dissemble the knowledge of. He made me observe, that at the very time we were speaking, messieurs de Nevers, de Longueville, de la Guiche, d’O, and de Châteaueux, jealous of so familiar a conversation with an huguenot, looked at us maliciously from a corner of the hall, and whispered continually together. For this reason, he said, it would be necessary to separate, and that he would go and tell them our discourse turned upon a negotiation with the marquis of Villars, which, in reality, the king had hinted to me in this conversation.

NOTHING could have happened more advantageous for the king; than to have put an end to the siege of Rouen by a treaty with Villars, which, in reality, would have drawn him from the league into his own party. It was what this prince ardently wished for, but still less for the honour of his enterprize, than the advantage that would arise from the gaining over such a man as this governor. He imagined it might be brought about by means of la Font, for whom Villars had great consideration, though he was only his steward. The king was not ignorant that Villars had received this domestic into his service, after he had left mine; and that la Font owed his favour with his new master to those testimonies I had given of his integrity. This thought had struck me before it was mentioned by the king, and I had even found means to get la Font founded upon the subject. His answer, which I related to the king, was, that at present he saw no appearance of what I proposed to him; and, far from consenting to see me, as I desired, he said, he thought himself obliged, to prevent his master’s entertaining any suspicion of his fidelity, to have no commerce with me. All he could do, therefore, was to observe if monsieur de Villars changed his sentiments; and in that case to confirm him as much as possible in them, and to inform me of it.

HENRY thought no more of it; but before we separated he asked me what he ought to do with regard to the siege, and the prince of Parma, who, he had just learned, had passed the Somme, to join his troops with those of the duke of Maienne. The king made no question that his intention was to proceed directly to Rouen, nor that Villars would easily hold out till his arrival. I told the king, that in my opinion there were but two things for him to do, and that it lay in his own breast to determine upon which of them he pleased: one of which was, to change absolutely the order, and place of attack,

1592.

and to carry it to the side of the city, and there use his utmost endeavours to make himself master of it before the enemy should appear: the other, that without loss of time he should go and attack the prince of Parma, and oblige him to repass the Somme, after which he might continue the siege without fear.

THE king resolved upon the last: but, as by following it he had no design to raise the siege, left the prince of Parma, who perhaps had that only in view, should afterwards avoid the battle, he told me, that he would go and meet him with seven or eight thousand horse, who were of no use at the siege; and that he would attack them with this cavalry, or, if he had not passed the Somme, dispute the passage with him. He quitted me, ordering me to prepare myself to go along with him with fifteen or twenty troopers, chosen from the rest of my company.

I RETURNED at the end of two days from Fresne l'Esples; and, on my arrival at Darnetal, I learnt that Villars had made a sally at the head of a hundred horse, with whom he overthrew the guard; and would have been the cause of much greater confusion, if the king, armed only with a cuirass, had not ran thither, followed by the baron de Biron, an English officer (whose name I have forgot), Grillon, and some others that were about him: these three gentlemen especially gained immortal glory there. Grillon's arm was broke by a shot from an arquebuse. As for the king, having precipitated himself into a danger somewhat like that which is related of Alexander the Great in the city of the Oxydracæ, he extricated himself out of it with equal presence of mind, and equal intrepidity. If this, which is only an example, has all the appearance of a fable, Henry's action had two whole armies to be witnesses of it.

James Ber-
ton de Cril-
lon, or
Grillon.

THE prince of Parma, with his whole army, possessed the border of the Somme, and, satisfied with recovering this river, made no other motion; for the governor of Rouen had sent to inform him, that, as he intended to strike some important blow, he might let it be a good while before he came to his assistance; and he likewise waited for the arrival of Sfondrate, who was to bring him the troops of his uncle pope Gregory XIV. *, and those of the duke of Maëenne, who how-

* Sixtus V. died in the month of August 1590. Henry IV. when he was informed of his death, said, "Here is a trick of

"Spanish policy: I have lost a pope who
"was every thing to me."

1592.

ever came not immediately. He had been obliged to go with his best troops to Paris, to punish the insolence of the council of Sixteen, who, abusing the power he had trusted them with, had dared to hang the president Brisson †, and some other counsellors as venerable for their virtue as their age; and who might possibly have carried their outrages farther, if the duke of Maienne, fearing perhaps some sudden caprice of these rebels * against himself, had not doomed them to the like punishment: but as in executing this act of justice he had certain measures to keep, he did not join the prince of Parma as soon as had been expected.

THE king, when he was informed of this disposition, thought it necessary to hasten his march. He left the marechal Biron the care of carrying on the siege, whose forces he weakened but by seven or eight thousand horse; consisting from three to four thousand French troopers, as many German horse, and a thousand horse-archebuffers; at the head of which he left Darnetal, and took the road to the Somme. He passed the first day by Boissiere and Neuf-Châtel; the second by Blangy, Londiniere, Longueville, Senerpont, and Gamache; and the third advanced to Folleville, with one detachment only, leaving the body of his cavalry behind him, under the conduct of the duke of Nevers.

WE met a considerable party, led by messieurs de Rosne ‡, de Balagny, de Vitry, the baron de la Châtre, St. Pol, La-Mothe, and others, who had doubtless advanced with the same design as we, to discover the situation and forces of the enemy. The king commanded

† Barnaby Brisson, Claude Larcher, and John Tardif, lord du Ru, counsellors of the parliament. "A catastrophe very unworthy of so learned and excellent a man," says Mezeray, speaking of the president Brisson, "but usual to those who think to keep well with two parties." For the parliament being transferred by the king to Tours, Brisson was the only one of the six presidents who remained at Paris. The league obliged him to perform the duties of first president, and it was he that helped to degrade king Henry III. According to the duke of Nevers' observation, his death was looked upon to be a just punishment of his ingratitude. Henry III. had freely bestowed upon him the post of president. However, he was one of the greatest men

of the robe. The duke of Maienne revenged his death, by causing Louchard, Ameline, Aimonet, and Anroux, four of the sixteen, to be hanged in a parlour of the Louvre. See the historians.

* One of the sixteen, named Normand, said one day in the duke of Maienne's chamber, "Those who made him, have a right to unmake him." Hamilton, the curate of St. Côme, a furious leaguer, came himself, attended by priests, instead of soldiers, to seize the counsellor Tardif in his house.

‡ Christian or Chrétien de Savigny, baron of Rosne; John de Montduc de Balagny; Lewis de l'Hôpital, lord de Vitry; Claude de La-Châtre; Antony de St. Pol; Valentine de Pardieu, lord de la Mothe,
the

1592.

the baron de Biron, messieurs de Lavardin, de Givry *, de St. Geran, de Marivaut, de Chanlivaut, La-Curée, d'Arambure †, and some others, to go and attack them, who were repulsed and handled very roughly; and part fell, among which was Lavardin. Henry ran with three hundred horse to disengage them; and, believing this encounter might be followed by an action more considerable, at least between the cavalry of the two armies, which was what he ardently wished for, sent orders to Nevers to hasten and join him: but the prince of Parma had a contrary design, and restrained his squadrons, who had retreated of themselves when they perceived ours advance; and the king, seeing no appearance of effecting any thing in the midst of so many battalions, contented himself with observing this army closely, and checking its motions, as he went to his quarters at † Breteuil; where his cavalry, for fear of a surprize, were obliged to keep themselves extremely close, and part of them even lay without all night, though the ground was covered with snow.

THE ardour with which the king went to meet an enemy so greatly superior to him in numbers, awakened all our fears for the dangers to which he exposed his person, and obliged us to represent the consequences to him in very strong terms. But this prince, who had no conception of that caution we proposed to him, when glory was in question, did not alter his conduct; but satisfied himself with naming thirty of us to continue near his person, and not to leave him upon any occasion whatever. An employment highly honourable indeed; but the danger of which, in some degree, made it less desirable. With this precaution, which was no more than necessary, he only resigned himself still more to his eager thirst of glory.

governor of Valenciennes. This last was a Frenchman, of the country of Beauvoisis; but he had all his life served in the Spanish army, and was slain in the year 1595, at the siege of Dourlans, at the head of the Spanish artillery, very much regretted by the Spaniards. The king of Spain had just created him count of Ekelbeke. See his death and panegyric in de Thou, b. cxii.

* Anne d'Anglure, baron of Givry. This officer was equally famous for his abilities in war, and his taste of polite literature. Claude de l'Isle Marivaut; René-Vian, lord of Chanlivaut; — Filhet de

La-Curée: he was one of those persons in whom the king confided, and was called by him nothing but Curée. He performed wonders at the battle of Ivry, and on many other occasions. The vol. of manuscripts marked 8029, of the royal library, is filled with relations of his intrepidity: we may have occasion to mention him hereafter. He was killed in an encounter at the siege of Montauban.

† John lord d'Arambure.

† This town, and some of those places abovementioned, are in Picardy: the others are in the country of Caux.

BEING

BEING informed that the duke of Guise, who commanded the prince of Parma's van-guard, had put himself at the head of his troops to facilitate the lodgment of his infantry in a large town called Bures, he resolved to cut off this troop; which he executed with the utmost bravery, at the head of twelve hundred horse and a thousand horse-arquebusiers. A great number of the enemies were left dead upon the place, and the rest betook themselves to flight. The duke of Guise's green standard was taken, and all the baggage plundered. Henry, who was not willing that any of these troopers should escape, especially their colonel, sent immediate orders to the duke of Nevers * to advance to Bully, that he might possess himself of the road through which he supposed the duke of Guise and the fugitives would retreat to the rest of the army, and to take them prisoners. I was ordered to sustain the duke of Nevers with sixty horse, which I obeyed with reluctance, not doubting but in such hands the affair would have an end very unworthy of the beginning.

1592.
In Beauvaisis

THE duke of Nevers, who was the slowest of all men, began by sending to make choice of the most favourable roads, and marched with a slow pace to Bully, with his hands and nose in his muff, and his whole person well wrapt up in his coach. This once he had no occasion to boast of his extreme caution. It was so long before he arrived, that he gave time to the prince of Parma, who was more diligent than he, to throw a regiment of five or six hundred men into Bully, who made such haste that they reached the town in the beginning of the night. As for the duke of Nevers, the sun was risen the next day when he had just ascended the mountain, at the bottom of which Bully is situated, preceded by his couriers, whom he had that day doubled, through an excess of caution against a flying enemy: the first, to the number of fifty, marched two or three miles before him; and the second, which amounted to an hundred, went some few paces before his coach. But unfortunately, with all his foresight, he forgot to make sure of this passage, and had not sent a single soldier to keep guard there. He began to descend the mountain with great tranquillity, and the more so, as he was ignorant of the troops that were in Bully. His first couriers, entering the city, were sufficiently surprized

* Lewis de Gonzague de Mantua, duke of Nevers, by his marriage with Henrietta of Cleves, duchess of Nevers. Although the author always speaks disadvantageously of him here, the actions he

performed were considerable enough to rank him with the bravest soldiers of those times. See his life and panegyric in Brantome's Lives of illustrious men, vol. III. p. 259, and following.

1592.

at the sight of so much good company; but the cold having obliged the soldiers to unarm themselves, and to lay down their pikes, to range themselves round a large fire that they had kindled, these fifty couriers had time to save themselves by flight. They did not direct their course to that side where their master was, but passed quite through the city, and went out at the opposite end, without being in the least troubled about what might happen to the duke of Nevers; whose coach at that time was sunk into the deepest part of a declivity, equally steep, rugged, and winding. It was in this place that the duke of Nevers, hearing the noise of some fusileers that were firing after his first couriers, and the second coming to make their report, full of consternation, he was frozen with terror; and resolving now to lose no time, threw away his muff and his furs, not without several times exclaiming, "The devil," and quarrelling with his servants for not coming soon enough to help him out. All their endeavours could not disengage the coach, which was forced to be dragged back to the top of the mountain; where the duke again made use of it, to return with more speed to the place where he had lain the whole night. It was thus that we seconded the king upon this occasion: a truly ridiculous exploit, where the danger was far less than the fear, since not a single man was lost.

THE prince of Parma, by this important blow, knowing what sort of an enemy he had to deal with, durst not, for the future, suffer his van-guard to be separated from the army; and perceiving that the king almost never lost sight of him, redoubled his vigilance and caution, which was, without doubt, the cause that he did not take all the advantage he might have done of the encounter at Aumale: an action uncommonly bold on the king's side, and well deserving of a particular relation here.

SOME days after that I have just mentioned, the king, following the prince of Parma at a great distance, had advanced with six thousand horse as far as Aumale. Givry, whom he had sent at the head of some troopers to get intelligence, returned and informed him, that the enemy's army was advancing directly towards him in the plain, in good order, apparently with a design to force him back, and to cut him off in his retreat. The king called a council; and finding, as he said, that he had too many and too few soldiers, he resolved to send all his cavalry back to Ophy, Blangy, and Neuf-Châtel, and to keep with him only four hundred troopers, and five hundred horse-arque-buffers,

buffers, and with this troop to advance into the plain, to discover exactly the condition and number of the enemy; and, hovering about them, to take or cut off some squadrons.

1592.

HE ascended the hill of Aumale with his nine hundred horse, and marched two leagues without perceiving any thing, 'till the sky, which had been extremely cloudy and dark, becoming very clear, he a second time saw Givry return, who came to satisfy him in every particular relating to this army, which was so near that they heard distinctly the sound of the trumpets and drums. The king, however, willing to observe it himself, made an exact review of it, and found that it consisted of sixteen or seventeen thousand infantry, with seven or eight thousand cavalry, who marched very close; the cavalry in the midst of the battalions, and the whole flanked with chariots and baggage, that rendered all approach impossible. From this situation of the enemy, he found he had still too many men; and retaining only an hundred troopers, ordered the eight hundred others to repass the dyke and town of Aumale, and three hundred horse of his squadron to stop upon the declivity of the hill, to be ready to assist him, if there should be occasion. Five hundred arquebusers he gave to the conduct of Lavardin, with orders to post them in the ditches and hedges that were at the entrance of the town, from whence they might harrafs the enemy, if they approached too near. As for him, he not only waited for the enemy with his hundred horse, but even marched to meet them.

In Normandy, upon the borders of Picardy.

WE now gazed upon each other with the utmost astonishment at the rashness of a design, which seemed to expose the king to inevitable death. No one durst venture to expostulate with him, yet knew not how to be silent. At length I was chosen and deputed by the rest to represent to the king, in the name of us all, the danger to which he exposed himself, and to intreat him to alter his resolution. This commission I performed with all imaginable caution. " 'Tis fear," replied the king, " that occasions this request: from you, of all others, " I never expected to hear such a proposition." I conjured him not to think so unjustly of any of us; and told him, that all we required was that he would give us what orders he pleased, provided he would himself retire. Henry confessed to me afterwards, that he was sensibly affected with these words; and repenting of what he had said to me, replied, that no expressions of our fidelity could reach the idea he conceived of it. " But," added he, coldly, and with an air that convinced me how much in vain it would be to speak to him any more

1592. upon this subject, “ be you also assured that I am not so rash as you “ imagine; that I am as careful of myself as any other, and that I will “ retreat so seasonably that no misfortune shall happen.”

THE prince of Parma looked upon this bold attempt as a snare that was laid for him, to draw his cavalry into an open field where he should meet with the king's, which he supposed to be concealed, and much superior to his. He even suspected a long time, that the king's whole army was not far off; and, having no design to engage him, he did not quit his post, which was in the center of the army, where he was seated in an uncovered chariot, without arms or boots, and employed in giving orders to restrain the ardour of the soldiers, who suffered with impatience a hundred men to insult thirty thousand. However, when he was assured, by the report of his light horse and his carabineers, that at present he had but a hundred horse in front, and that if there was any cavalry it must be on the other side of the valley, he thought he should risque nothing by attacking us; which he did with such fury, and at so many places, that we were broke through, and driven back as far as the valley. Here it was that our arquebusers had posted themselves; and on our arrival the king cried to them to charge, after having first warned us not to charge, in order that the enemy might suspect an ambuscade in this place, and stop. In effect, they did stop short; but finding that this cry was followed only with fifty or sixty shots that we fired upon them, they came on again more furiously.

OUR arquebusers, seized with fear, or perhaps willing to chuse a more advantageous ground, had retired much lower than the place that had been prescribed for them, and they were the principal cause of the misfortune that happened. The enemy's squadrons, encouraged by the little resistance they found, forced our ranks, and we could not hinder them from mixing amongst us. We saw ourselves reduced to the necessity of fighting with this vast multitude with our pistols and swords, in a danger that may be easily imagined: and, indeed, in my opinion, there could not be a greater; for the hundred troopers were already reduced to forty. Henry, seeing that none came to his assistance in this extremity, resolved to make his retreat; which, on this occasion, was almost as dangerous as a defence, because we had a bridge to pass, and that bridge at a great distance. This prince, with a composure truly admirable, placed himself in the rear of his troop, and made it file off towards the bridge of Aumale, which, by the

order he caused to be observed, it passed over without confusion. He was the last that passed, and held firm against the enemy till every one of us was on the other side. That moment he was shot in the reins, which fortunately was the only wound he received, and which did not hinder him from continuing to fight on the other side of the bridge, while he was endeavouring to gain the hill; where the four hundred horse he had sent thither made so good an appearance, that the prince of Parma, being more than ever persuaded that he only fought to draw him to a battle, forbid his troops to advance, and made them all return to Aumale.

1592.

THE king, on his side, reached Neuf-Châtel, where his wound obliged him to go to bed. The surgeons removed our fears and consternation by assuring us, that it was a very inconsiderable one. He obliged us to come near his bed, and conversed with us familiarly upon the dangers of that day: upon which I observed, as something very extraordinary, that amongst us all, who were in the chamber, there were not two who agreed † in the recital of the most particular circumstances of the action. In general, it passed as I have related: what appeared doubtful to me, I have suppressed; but as it is here, there are perhaps few kings whose lives * will afford so shining an instance of valour and good conduct.

THE prince of Parma's extreme prudence failed him upon this occasion: it hindered him from cutting off our whole squadron, and finishing the war that day by the death or taking of the king: for the one or other was inevitable. But he was determined to undertake nothing till he was joined by the duke of Maienne, not being willing to bear alone all the inconveniences of a war, of which he was not to have the sole advantage.

† There is scarce any skirmish or battle of which as much may not be said. Although there are a great number of writers, and even contemporaries, who have treated of the military exploits contained in these Memoirs, I cannot meet with two who agree exactly in these descriptions. D'Aubigne, in that of the encounter at Aumale, does not even mention the king's wound, which was the only one he ever received in his life. Matthieu, *ibid.* p. 100, and our best historians, differ but little from our Memoirs.

* Henry having sent to the prince of

Parma to ask his opinion of this retreat, he replied, that "indeed it was a very fine one; but that, for his part, he never engaged in any place from whence he was obliged to retire." *Perf. ibid.* part ii. It was on this occasion that Duplessis-Mornay wrote this excellent letter to the king: "Sire, in war you have been an Alexander: it is time you should now be Augustus: it is our glory and duty to die for you; and yours, I dare tell you, sire, to live for France," &c. Notes upon the Henriade.

1592.

He was not able to comprehend the cause of this delay in the chief of the league: the suspicions he entertained of it made him suddenly change the march of his army, and take the road back again to the Somme. An action very pardonable in a foreigner, who saw himself in the midst of a strange country, where he alone was to sustain the war. Henry, who, without considering what was glorious for himself in this last battle, called it only the error of Aumale, and being solicitous to repair this heroic error, could not resolve to suffer the Spanish general quietly to retreat; putting off therefore the cure of his wound to another time, he again mounted his horse, and harassed the prince continually, only regretting that he could not do more. But he had a politic general to deal with, who, notwithstanding all his endeavours, presented him always with an infantry in front, which he could not break through; and observed so prudent a conduct, that it was not possible, even at the passage of the river, to have an encounter with him. The king at length, quitting him at Pontdormy, returned to Neuf-Châtel, to have his wound cured, at the house of monsieur de Claire; where I was received as a friend and relation. I kept only a valet de chambre, a page, and a footman with me, and sent all the rest of my equipage to my quarters before Rouen.

THE success of the siege became more uncertain every day: at last the king was informed, by a courier, that Villars, at the head of two hundred musqueteers, and three or four hundred soldiers, had in the night made a furious sally on the side of Darnetal; that he had penetrated even into the king's quarters, where he had cut all the German foot to pieces, and carried off six pieces of cannon, and all the powder; that afterwards, pursuing his advantage, he had fallen upon the trench, which he attacked behind; had killed there three or four hundred men, and put the rest to flight: in a word, that he did not retire till he had destroyed almost all the works of the besiegers.

THIS melancholy news recalled the king immediately to Rouen: he was there convinced, that this misfortune was wholly occasioned by the marechal de Biron's fault; but although he looked upon it as irreparable, and hated this commander*, yet he took care to conceal his

* There cannot be a stronger proof of the respect and deference which Henry IV. thought himself obliged to shew the marechal Biron, than what this prince said one day to Châtillon, on a certain occasion,

when this young man offered some very reasonable advice, but contrary to that given by the marechal: "The goslings," said he, "would lead the geese to the pasture. When your beard is white, per-

sentiments.

sentiments. That irreconcilable aversion which the catholics of his party bore to the protestants, made them seize this opportunity to insult the marshal de Biron, who, next to the king, was looked upon as the chief support of the protestants. The catholics said openly, that heaven would never favour Henry's party, while he continued a heretic (a reflection very unreasonable and unjust, the success he had hitherto met with considered;) that they exposed themselves to the divine vengeance by associating with that reprobate body. From thence, animated by their zeal, they formed a design of taking up the huguenots, who had been interred indiscriminately with the catholics, and leaving their carcasses a prey to the crows. Two things hindered the execution of a design as contrary to religion as to nature itself: the difficulty of distinguishing the bodies, and fear lest the protestants, who composed two thirds of the army, should think their honour engaged to revenge upon the living catholics an outrage, which, through a zeal for religion, exceeded all others.

THE king, who perceived these dispositions on both sides, instead of blaming any particular person, or suffering a discontent to appear, which might increase the public broils, affected to say openly that the misfortune was not so great as had been represented. In reality, it did not appear of such consequence to the king as a discord in his army, which would either deprive him of all the catholics in his party, or, on the first opportunity, set one half against the other. It was a mortifying circumstance for this prince, in the midst of so many causes of disquiet, to be obliged to keep all within his own breast, and substitute unworthy compliances in the place of absolute commands: but he was not ignorant that the voice of authority, which has the power of subjecting all men, when it proceeds from a person distinguished for his superior abilities, has no effect upon minds by religion inflamed and disunited.

HE was persuaded also, that after the misfortune occasioned by such bad conduct, nothing now remained to be done but to raise the siege of Rouen; and he sought for a plausible pretence for doing so, without awakening at the same time the public dissensions. He learnt therefore, with great joy, that the prince of Parma, reinforced

“ haps you may have acquired some knowledge. I do not approve of your speaking so freely; that belongs only to my father here,” pointing to Biron, who had threatened to retire. “ We must,” pursued he, embracing him, “ go all to his school.” Matthieu, vol. II. p. 16.

by

1592. by the troops of the duke of Maienne and Sfondrate, was returning hastily to give him battle. He thought this a favourable opportunity to lessen the shame of raising the siege, and to turn against the common enemy the fury of two parties which were rending his army in pieces.

A city in the
country of
Caux.

THAT he might gain time to abandon his lines without confusion, and regulate the order of his march, he sent Givry to throw himself into Neuf-Châtel, which the enemy would be obliged to take before they could come to Rouen. This, although a very strong place, did not hold out near so long as was expected: the cause of which is difficult to be assigned; but the whole blame was cast upon Palcheux, who was much weaker, and worse sustained, than Givry*. Although an old officer, and distinguished by his actions and his wounds, he sustained all the violence of the storm; and was put under arrest at Dieppe, in my opinion, very unjustly. The relations and friends whom the garrison of Neuf-Châtel had in the party of the league, seemed to me to be the true cause that the place made so slight a resistance. It surrendered in the middle of March. The king, by his care and diligence, repaired this misfortune, and brought off his troops from Rouen, without receiving the least check†; and putting himself at their head, advanced without loss of time to that side on which the prince of Parma was approaching the city.

On his arrival at a plain, where the enemy's army must pass, he waited for it; and, as soon as it appeared, sent and offered the prince of Parma battle. The prince accepted it with a joy that was far from being sincere: he was afraid of engaging with a general such as he knew Henry to be, and of exposing to the event of a battle the reputation of the greatest warrior in Europe, which a long series of great actions had acquired him amongst his partisans. Finding himself now in such a situation as that he might be forced to fight, he had recourse to one of the most artful stratagems imaginable to avoid it: he caused the best troops amongst all his battalions to advance, and composed of

* "Neuf-Châtel might have been taken in an hour's time," says F. Matthieu; who nevertheless, as well as the duke of Sully, blamed Givry for surrendering without making greater resistance. Vol. II. p. 102.

† This siege cost the king a great many soldiers: in those times it was reported

that he lost three thousand men, and the besieged only five hundred. The earl of Essex challenged admiral de Villars to single combat, who replied, that his quality of governor would not allow him to accept his challenge. See the Chron. Nevenn. and Mezeral.

them a front of battle; behind which he drew up, as without design, all his cavalry. Under favour of this front of infantry, in such order as was usual for an action, and seeming to wait only for the signal, all his cavalry, the remainder of his foot, and the whole baggage, entered into the defiles which served for an outlet to the enemy's camp; and, covered by hills and bushes, which the prince of Parma knew well how to take advantage of, they saw themselves immediately out of reach of the king's army, who were ignorant of all that passed behind the camp. This front of infantry, which had no depth, taking the same rout after the others, in four and twenty hours all disappeared; nor was it possible, on account of the ground being full of narrow streights and necks of mountains, to disorder the enemy's retreat, nor to engage with his rear-guard.

THE prince of Parma was extremely rejoiced, that, without the least loss, he had reached almost the gates of Rouen. He knew no person would be rash enough to attempt to storm him under the walls of this city: his design, therefore, was to stay there six weeks, which was a sufficient time to refresh his army in, and afterwards to march back to the Somme by Neuf-Châtel, Aumale, St. Valery, and Pont-dormy; confining all the expeditions of this campaign to the advantage of putting this capital, and the rest of the cities that kept firm to the league, out of a condition to apprehend any thing from the king's army. Henry penetrated into this general's views; and laying aside his design of making head against an army so advantageously posted, suffered the prince of Parma to enjoy his triumph, and laid another snare for him. He disbanded his whole army, as if it was now become useless to him, or that he was constrained to it by necessity. Part was dispersed in Arques, Dieppe, Gournai, Andely, Gisors, Magny, and other distant places; and part had Mante, Meulan, and the adjoining places for its quarters: the rest he spread about Pont de l'Arche *, Evreux, Passy, Vernon, Conches, and Breteuil, and fixed himself at Louviers. This conduct was sufficiently justified by appearances: it would not have been long possible to have subsisted a numerous army, had he kept them together; but by the disposition of his quarters, particularly the last, where he had distributed all his best troops, and the promise he had exacted from his officers to repair to Pont de l'Arche at the first order, it was easy for him to reunite his army in a short time. This separation, he did not doubt, would make

St. Valery in
Picardy.

* All these cities, as likewise the places abovenamed, are in Upper Normandy.

1592. the Spanish general perfectly secure, and furnish him with some means of surprizing him, at least in his retreat.

Upon the
Seine, above
Rouen.

IN effect, the prince of Parma, fearing that Rouen, surrounded by so large an army, would be in want of provisions, represented to them that there would be no danger in spreading himself over the country, and made part of his troops advance to Ponteaudemér: d'Hacqueville * delivered up this city to him cowardly enough; and the king not only seemed to be indifferent about it, but also feigned ignorance of the enemy's design upon Caudebec, which greatly annoyed the city of Rouen; and neglecting to send supplies to la Garde, who was governor of it, suffered this place to be taken likewise. He observed, with extreme satisfaction, that the enemy, after these two conquests, drawn by the conveniency of lodgings and provisions, extended themselves along the Seine, below Rouen, as far as they could. The Spanish general, however, was not without suspicion of some design in this inactivity, so unusual with Henry; and probably, had he been the sole commander of this army, he would not have hazarded so much. But his colleague, the duke of Maïenne, who was detained in Rouen by an indisposition, assured him there was no danger; and he believed it, upon a supposition that he was better acquainted with the state of the country.

THE king, finding the enemy contributed of themselves to serve his designs, resolved to hasten the execution of them. In less than eight days he assembled twenty thousand foot, and eight thousand horse, with whom he speedily advanced to Varicarville and Fontaine-le-bourg. All the passages between Rouen and Caudebec he shut up, and began with revenging himself completely for the taking this place and Ponteaudemér, by cutting off from the troops, which were there, all communication with the body of the army, which put them wholly into his power. He afterwards went in person with ten thousand foot, and three thousand troopers, to attack the enemy's van-guard, commanded by the duke of Guise. The surprize into which his sudden arrival threw this troop, gave him an easy conquest of them. The duke's squadrons were broke through at the first onset, and he was obliged to fly with precipitation towards the body of the battalions, leaving, with a great number of the slain, all the baggage, which was very considerable, in the power of the victor.

* — de Vieuxpont, lord d'Hacqueville. He was gained, 'tis said, by a sum of money.

1592.

THE prince of Parma, struck as with a thunderbolt at this news, applied himself wholly to securing his other quarters, by placing the duke of Guise at Yvetot, and in fortifying the camp, in which he lodged his dispersed troops, on all sides. He was desirous of quartering all the army there; but as this camp was too small to contain it, he commanded the rest not to remove far from it, to guard their posts with great care, and to keep themselves very close. After this precaution, which he did not think sufficient, to support all the lodgments spread around his camp, he posted three thousand men in a wood which bounded them, fortified this wood all round with intrenchments, and joined it by a line of communication with the camp. The last step the king had taken made him extremely formidable to the prince of Parma; but this prince thought to escape him by his great foresight, and diligence in going wherever his presence was necessary: he was again mistaken. The next day the king ordered the baron of Biron to attack the wood with a body of eight thousand infantry, composed of an equal number of English, Dutch, and Germans, in order that they might be animated by emulation to excel each other, and caused them to be supported by six hundred troopers, completely armed. The attack lasted three hours; at the end of which the wood was carried. Those who defended it, seeing themselves broke through, fled in disorder to the fortified camp, after having lost eight hundred of their men. Their flight exposed the greatest part of the lodgments, particularly that of Yvetot, where the prince of Parma thought he had inclosed, as in a safe asylum, the duke of Guise, with the same vanguard that had been so badly handled before. Henry, as if he had a personal hatred to the duke of Guise, hastened to reconnoitre the quarter of Yvetot; and judging by the alarm, and the confused cries he heard there, that their consternation was not yet over, he fell upon this quarter with four hundred musqueteers and a thousand foot, armed with pistols and halberds, and attacked it in several places at the same time. The prince of Parma, who had not expected such rapid exploits, saw his whole vanguard upon the point of being put to the sword; and taking counsel only of necessity, ran thither himself, and vigorously sustained our efforts, till the troops of this whole quarter had gained the fortified camp. He lost there seven or eight hundred men, almost all private soldiers. The greatest misfortune was, that in this action, wherein he behaved like a man who knew as well how

1592. to fight as to command, he received a very dangerous wound in the arm*.

NIGHT approached before this battle was ended. The king, instead of taking any rest after a day of such extraordinary fatigue, employed the night wholly in preparing himself for greater advantages. Judging, therefore, that the enemy's army, numerous indeed, and covered with intrenchments, yet dismayed, and half vanquished, would keep close within the camp, where their numbers would do them more harm than good, he hesitated not a moment in resolving to storm it. That readiness and dispatch, which governed all the actions of this prince, was in him not only the effect of nature, but the fruit of reading, in particular the lives of Cæsar and Scipio, whom he studied preferably to all the conquerors of antiquity. He drew out in the night six pieces of cannon, which he directed against the fortification of the camp, that he might make use of them at the dawn of day. He visited his whole army; and kept it in such a disposition, that it might at the same time and place be drawn out in order of battle. His commands were executed with the greatest exactness: his former successes gave an authority to all his words, that made the most mutinous obedient.

* The little reliance one can have on the exactness of those military details which the historians give us, is shewn particularly in this, in which I have observed a great many contradictions amongst them, with regard to the encampments, and the number and date of the encounters. The author of these Memoirs relates all these expeditions in such a manner, that he seems to allow but three or four days for actions which could not, and were not, performed in less than three weeks. He can no otherwise be justified, than by supposing that he intended to give a slight notion only of this campaign. D'Aubigné, either because he was ignorant of the facts, or had no design to relate them minutely, gives room for the same mistake, as our Memoirs, vol. III. b. iii. c. 15. It is in de Thou, Davila, Matthieu, Cayet, and the Memoirs of the league for the year 1592, that we must look for them; although, as I have just said, their relations differ in many circumstances. According to the Memoirs of the

league, which, in my opinion, merit most to be credited, the king defeated the duke of Guise on the 28th of April, and another body of troops on the first of May: on the 5th attacked the fortifications before the camp; and on the 10th, at five o'clock in the morning, began the great attack, in which the prince of Parma received this dangerous wound, vol. V. De Thou will have it, that it was at the taking of Caudebec that the prince of Parma was wounded, and that he did not pass the Seine till the 22d of May, b. ciii. Cayet is of the same opinion, vol. II. b. iv. p. 82, and following. Matthieu blames Henry IV. for not taking the duke of Maïenne prisoner at the skirmish of Yvetot, and, with as little reason, for avoiding a decisive battle, p. 109. The king is by some others accused of still greater faults, in being ignorant of the prince of Parma's preparations to pass the river, and with not knowing how to prevent him.

HERE it is impossible to forbear praising the prince of Parma for a conduct, which, in my opinion, can never be sufficiently admired. His camp lay between Rouen and Caudebec, at some distance from the Seine, over which, in all that space, there was not any bridge; yet the next morning the whole camp was deserted. All the troops, who indeed lay there in heaps one upon another, those that were in Caudebec, and, in general, all that were spread about the neighbourhood of it, had transported themselves to the other side of the river. Can it appear otherwise than a fable or an illusion? Scarce could the king and his army trust the evidence of their own eyes.

THE prince of Parma had foreseen the king's resolution to attack him in his camp the next day; and he did not doubt, after what had passed, but it would be stormed, and his whole army delivered up to the mercy of the victors. A foresight useless, and only productive of despair, to any other, whose prudence had not beforehand provided a resource: for notwithstanding all the duke of Maienne's representations, he had not delivered himself up so entirely to that security he would have inspired him with, as to neglect any means that might extricate him from danger, if it should happen that he should be one day obliged to engage with the enemy in a country where there were so few resources, as on the borders of the Seine below Rouen.

THESE measures had been to provide himself secretly with all the boats he could find, which he caused to be brought near Caudebec. It was to this precaution, which few generals would have been capable of, that the prince of Parma owed the safety of his troops, and the preservation of his glory, reputation, and perhaps his life. He caused these boats to be laid over the river in the night; and notwithstanding the disorder of his camp, and the inconvenience arising from his wound, he gave such good orders, that a bridge was built that very night, over which his whole army and baggage passed securely. This we received particular information of the next day at Caudebec, which surrendered as soon as we approached. He only deserves the reputation of a consummate warrior, who, before a battle, is as cautious as if he was persuaded he should be conquered, and in it behaves as if he was sure of conquering.

ON the king's side, but one moment was lost in astonishment: all the others were employed in taking speedy measures to deprive the Spanish

1572.

Spanish general of part of the fruits of his dexterity. Henry, after having well considered his attempt, and removed all doubts of success from his own mind, held a council of war, and there proposed to pass his army over Pont de l'Arche, or at Vernon, and pursue the enemy immediately. Some of us, though indeed a very small number, supported this proposition as it deserved. If it had been followed, this campaign had perhaps put an end to the war: but, as it should seem, the prince of Parma, having performed actions that lifted him above humanity, obliged fortune now to come over to his side; for, upon the proposal of marching the army to Pont de l'Arche, a cry was raised in the council, and a kind of general mutiny, as if the king had made the most unreasonable proposition imaginable. The catholics, the protestants, and foreigners, seemed to outvie one another in searching for difficulties to oppose it: they cried that the prince of Parma's army, being in a level country, might get to the gates of Paris * in four or five days; whereas it would be as long before we could gain Pont de l'Arche. They represented to the king, that the way through which they must pass being full of forests, mountains, and defiles, the army could reach the rendezvous but in small divisions; and that, although it should have time to come up with that of the league, the fatigue of so troublesome a march would make it impossible for them to attack it. In a word, they all treated this proposal as a design equally ridiculous and chimerical.

THE king, more enraged at the secret intentions of those who talked to him in this manner, than the purport of their discourse, could not hinder himself from replying with some bitterness, That all these difficulties were only unsurmountable to those, to whom fear and a dislike of fatigue made them appear so. He convinced them they might reach Pont de l'Arche in two days, and Vernon in four, from whence they might continually send detachments of four or five hundred horse to retard the prince of Parma's march; to which also the many obstacles he would meet with would contribute, such as the passage over the river of Eure; Louviers, Passy, Maintenon, Nogent-le-Roi, and Chartres, all being sufficient to oblige him to go greatly out of his way: that the enemy had no bridge open to them but those of Aquigny, Cocherel, Serisy, and two or three others which lay out of their

* It is acknowledged by de Thou, that the king might have stopt this army, by sending his cavalry to shut up the passage

to Pont de l'Arche. It is with great injustice, as we find here, that he charges Henry IV. with this error.

road;

road; and that it would not be impossible to break or burn part of these bridges before the enemy arrived.

1592.

THESE arguments sufficiently proved the king's proposal to be practicable; and it may be said, that the general officers, by refusing to yield to them, resisted the strongest conviction. And this naturally occasions two reflections: first, how it happened that a prince, who in all his expeditions made use of mercenaries, picked up wherever he could find them, of different countries, manners, religions, and interests, often a very small number, and always ready to mutiny, should be able to perform what is related of him in this history. The second is, what this prince would have done, if, instead of such troops, he had had a considerable number of well-disciplined soldiers under his command, all united, obedient to his will, constantly attached to his person, and willing to sacrifice their lives for him; in a word, such troops as those conquerors had, whose actions have been so highly extolled by posterity? If these reflections are not made every time they offer, it is because that is in every page: and, besides, no one can be ignorant, that we should judge very ill of merit and abilities by success, if we did not at the same time judge of the success by the obstacles.

IT is scarce possible to assign a reason for that invincible obstinacy which the general officers in the king's army discovered upon this occasion, in opposing so prudent a proposal, unless it was owing to that disposition of mind which I have just now mentioned. If a small number of French protestants be excepted, whose fidelity was unquestionable, and most of the English troops, who seemed to act sincerely with us, all the rest of the king's army, protestants, catholics, and foreigners, served him without affection, often unwillingly, and perhaps wished more than they feared that he might suffer some considerable loss. However, notwithstanding this disgust to their leader, on some occasions they all performed their duty, and seconded him bravely: such had been the attack of the duke of Guise, the encounter at the wood, and the battle that followed it. Such would have been the attack of the prince of Parma's camp, if he had waited for us; for at that time all the king's operations, which he knew well how to give a dependence upon each other, were executed with such rapidity, that he did not suffer their courage, when once heated, to have time to cool, nor their minds to return to their usual habit of thinking. The behaviour likewise of a small number of brave men is alone sufficient to raise emulation in a whole army, and force it to follow their example,

1592.

example, when they are once engaged: but this fierceness, and this ardour, abated, their former ideas return with greater violence, and are so much the more capable of embittering their minds, as they then become sensible that they have done the very contrary of what they intended. Unhappily the leaders of the royal army were in this unfavourable disposition, when the king made a motion to pursue the prince of Parma. The catholics, who had a little time before publicly declared that they were resolved to withdraw their assistance, if the king did not abjure calvinism, within a certain time which they prescribed to him, and reunite themselves with the rest of France, there to appoint a king of their own religion: these catholics could not relish a project, which, by making the king master of his enemies, would put him in a condition of giving them the law, instead of receiving it from them.

THE huguenots, who feared this change of religion as much as the catholics endeavoured to enhance the necessity of it, took umbrage at every thing, and always thought they were upon the point of being sacrificed, while the king only sacrificed himself to that necessity which obliged him to endeavour to gain the catholics. Through an apprehension that, by extirpating the league, they should only labour for the catholics against their own interest, they the easier reconciled themselves to circumstances which would at least make the balance even, and render them necessary: and, in case the king should one day forsake their religion, they were resolved to take such measures beforehand, as might make them be feared both by the catholics, and him whom they gave them for a master.

THESE precautions were, to procure a great number of towns to be yielded to them, to obtain such favourable edicts, and so many other securities, that the king, although a catholic, should find it his interest to be well with them. It was towards this end that the duke of Bouillon, who governed absolutely the resolutions of the army, directed all his views, and to which he made the five or six hundred German horse under his command subservient. On the slightest occasion of discontent, or rather on the first caprice, they broke into murmurs, and threatened, as they did then, that they would return immediately to Germany. The king, being obliged to behave in such a manner as to satisfy equally such opposite parties, was greatly perplexed by his endeavours to stifle these seeds of division: he was desirous of avoiding an open rupture, or at least of protracting it, till he should be out of danger.

danger. It was this perplexity that reduced him to compliances very prejudicial to his affairs.

1592.

THERE is no maze so intricate as was the disentangling those interests which divided the different parties that composed the king's army. I have yet but touched upon the smallest part. The catholics, besides their common object, had each of them his own private one in view, which was to make Henry purchase their personal services at a very high price; and he was convinced, that without this satisfaction they would not bring affairs to a general conclusion. The interests of the French calvinists were not entirely the same with those of the foreign protestants. There were certain times when the English, who alone were united, murmured amongst themselves, that, in all the dangers they were exposed to, they were actuated by a principle of generosity, which, whatever turn affairs might take, would bring them no advantage; and, while this reflection employed their minds, they would look upon themselves as madmen, who sacrificed their lives purely to gratify the passions of foreigners, and demand leave to retire, as they did upon this occasion, when they absolutely refused to engage beyond the Seine, seeing neither any security or resource for them in a country at such a distance from the sea, To exasperate them more, and to strengthen their suspicions, the catholics seized those moments of discontent to persuade them, that the king's abjuration was become absolutely necessary.

WITH regard to the other foreigners, who were paid for their services, d'O, and these same catholics, had a secret equally short and infallible, and they made use of it frequently: this was to keep the king in want of money. Therefore, when the Swiss and German horie were asked if they would pursue the prince of Parma, they replied only by demanding their pay; swearing, that, if it was not instantly given them, they would return to their homes, or engage in the service of the league.

EVEN the Spaniards, the king's declared enemies, had also their intrigues, and took part in this prince's affairs. At this very time they made a proposal to him, not only to withdraw their troops, but even to lend them to him, to serve him against the league, in a word, to put the crown upon his head, provided he would yield Burgundy and Brittany to them for ever. In order to assist the king to subdue those scruples which the making such an extraordinary gift might raise in his

1592.

mind, they recalled to his remembrance the example of Francis I. who, they said, in a situation less pressing, had given up to them the * sovereignty of Flanders and Artois; and that of Henry II. who had given Spain more towns † than were contained in both those provinces. The king had sufficient reason to believe that so unseasonable a negotiation was a piece of Spanish artifice, in the taste of Hagemeau, which tended only to create more confusion, and render him suspected both by the protestants and catholics: but, although this proposition had been really sincere, he had a motive for rejecting it infinitely stronger, which was the implacable hatred he bore to Spain and the house of Austria.

At last even the league, for some view or other, entered into the resolutions that were taken in the king's council. Villeroy, Jeannin, Zamet, and others, offered Henry, in the name of the league, to give him the crown upon certain conditions. It is very difficult to guess the true cause of this step: whether disgust at the pride and insolence of the Spaniards, an artifice to procure new supplies, or a design to alienate the protestants from the king. The only evidence of the sincerity of this proposition was the very hard conditions that were annexed to it: I shall soon have occasion to enlarge upon this subject.

ONE of the least consequences of this chaos of views and interests was the spreading over every affair an impenetrable obscurity, and creating in every mind jealousy and distrust. It is indeed surprizing, that after this the protestants and catholics could live together in the same camp, without exposing the king to the grief of seeing them mutiny, or cutting each other's throats. Those who in a prince sought for what is termed policy, might here find sufficient room to praise the prudence of a king who kept so many jarring interests united, and to admire his discernment in distinguishing those who acted with fidelity towards him: nor ought it to pass unobserved, that so many secret and various designs left an appearance of order and tranquility. Falshood assumed the semblance of truth, and enmity concealed itself under the

* By the treaty which was passed during the imprisonment of this prince at Madrid, the 25th of February 1526, Francis I. resigned his claim there likewise to the duchies of Burgundy and Milan, to the kingdom of Naples, &c. but this treaty was declared void by the states of the kingdom assembled at Cognac.

† By the treaty of Château-Cambresis, in

Jan. 1559, after the battle of St. Quentin, for three cities only of Ham, Câtelet and St. Quentin, France yielded to Spain and her allies more than an hundred and fifty fortified places. The constable Montmorency's jealousy of the duke of Guise, and his eagerness to be freed from his confinement, made him conclude this treaty, at which the whole kingdom murmured.

disguise

disguise of friendship. Those who pretended the greatest affection to the king, either betrayed him, or laboured only to advance their own interest.

1592.

IT would be useless to dissemble, that the marechal de Biron often played this game, either through malice at being refused the government of Rouen, or desire of protracting the war *, or a disposition that took pleasure in creating discord and confusion. He was never known to agree with the general opinion, or to yield to the king's inclinations. He always contradicted, either for the sole pleasure of contradicting, or because he would oblige every one to embrace his opinion. In the council, when the question that has occasioned this digression was debated, he was neither for pursuing the enemy, nor for staying in Normandy: he thought it was necessary to go before and wait for the prince of Parma on the frontiers of Picardy, through which he would be obliged to pass in his return to Flanders. A project uncommonly chimerical, which was immediately applauded by the protestants, who were devoted to the will of this marechal.

THE king saw plainly, that all endeavours to retain such discontented troops in his service would be in vain. The campaign was drawing towards an end, and a siege so long and fatiguing as that of Rouen made the soldiers extremely desirous for rest. The king was resolved to grant it them: he followed that maxim, that a prince should always have the appearance of doing voluntarily even what he was constrained to do. He told the foreigners, that he was willing they should return home, and gave them permission to do so. He distributed all the money he had amongst them, leaving himself without any to supply his necessary expences: and though they were not wholly satisfied in this respect, yet they had reason to be pleased with the noble manner in which he praised and thanked them for their services. As he had left Normandy in peace, and (except Rouen, and a few other cities) entirely reduced under his obedience; and as there was no reason to apprehend that the army of the league would come thither soon, he permitted all the officers of his army, as well catholics as protestants, to retire to their habitations: and, to lay the marechal de Biron under a necessity of not abandoning him with his protestants, which, after

* "What then, rascal! wouldst thou send us to plant cabbages for Biron?" said this marechal to his son, who proposed

to him an expedient to finish the war at one blow. *Perefixe*, part ii. *ibid*.

1592.

this permission, he foresaw he would do, he declared that he would follow his advice, and in a few days would set forwards to Picardy; not that he really entered into this marshal's views, but as he had not yet shewn himself in that province, nor in Champagne, he thought it necessary to make himself known there, and to endeavour to conciliate the affection of the people towards him. A secret * and more powerful motive contributed to favour and confirm this resolution; and Biron, who knew and flattered the king's weakness, drew from thence his best reason.

* His passion for mademoiselle d'Estrées. He sometimes stole away from his army to go and see her. He once disguised himself like a countryman, passed through the

midst of the enemy's guards, and came to her house, not without hazarding the danger of being taken. Notes upon the Henriade.

M E M M O I R S

O F

S U L L Y.

B O O K V.

WHILE the king with a few protestants pursued the road to Picardy, the prince of Parma hastened to Paris, from whence, without any difficulty, he returned to Flanders, but little satisfied with his campaign, discontented to the last degree with the league, and its chiefs, and much troubled at a wound which he knew was incurable.

1592.

It is in general, and particular histories, that a relation of all that was performed this year, and the preceding, in different parts of the kingdom, must be sought for. The attack of St. Denis*, where the chevalier d'Aumale lost his life; the taking Stenay and Dun, in Lorrain; the defeat of the sieur d'Amblise, with the duke of Bouillon's † other exploits, either before or after his marriage; the loss of

* Claude de Lorraine, knight of the order of St. John of Jerusalem, having surprized this city at the head of a body of troops in the service of the league, de Vicran and beat them back. The chevalier d'Aumale was killed in this encounter.

† The duke of Bouillon took Stenay the same day that his nuptials were celebrated. Africanus d'Anglure d'Amblise, general of the troops of Lorraine, coming to attack Beaumont in Argonne, a city three leagues from Sedan, which the duke of the

1592.

the battle of Craon*; the defeat of the sieur de la Guerche, and the blockade of Poitiers, are the principal actions, to which an infinite number of others in Provence, Dauphiné, and Poitou may be added. From the departure of the prince of Parma, to the negotiations which preceded the king's coronation, many things happened worthy of notice, and may likewise be found there. I have, in another place, excused my silence on these heads, and the liberty I allow myself of relating only the most important facts; among which are those that regard the count of Soissons, and the duke of Epernon; and even these the narration I have just made has not permitted me to enlarge upon.

THE count of Soissons †, after having abandoned the king's party, and been at open variance with him at Bearn, still retained hopes of marrying the princess, his sister, of whose affections he always remained master. By the death of Henry III. to whom he had last attached himself, he was left in the king's army, whom he served without affection, and only till he had resolved upon some new project, or till some opportunity favourable to his passion presented itself. He thought he found one in the siege of Rouen, an enterprize, in his opinion, of too much importance to afford the king leisure to employ himself in other affairs. He pretended to take a journey to Nogent, and, stealing away from the camp, went secretly, and with the utmost expedition, to Bearn, in order to accomplish his marriage there unknown to Henry. But he was one of those persons, whose most inconsiderable actions were strictly observed by the king. This prince penetrating into the count's designs, sent such orders there, that the count, upon his arrival at Bearn, found the princess Catherine indeed in the most favour-

Bouillon had taken from the duke of Lorraine, Bouillon defeated his troops under the walls of this place, and d'Amblise was slain.

* This battle was fought before the city of Craon in Anjou, which was then besieged by the royalist troops; they were composed of French, English, and Germans, to the number of 7 or 8000 men, commanded by the duke of Montpensier, the prince of Conty, the duke of Damville, &c. who were defeated by the duke of Mercœur at the head of the Spanish troops, and those of the league. About

the same time, George de Villequier, viscount de la Guerche, attempting to pass the Vienne, a river in Poitou, was defeated at the head of a small body of troops of the league, and himself drowned in the river. See a relation of the blockade of Poitiers, and the several skirmishes before this city, in d'Aubigné, vol. III. book iii. chap. 11. For all these expeditions consult likewise the historians above cited.

† Charles of Bourbon, son of Lewis the first, prince of Condé, (slain at Jarnac) and of Frances d'Orleans-Longueville. He died in 1612.

able

able dispositions towards him, and some say that she had herself pressed him to come thither; but it was quite otherwise with the council, to which the king, in his absence, had committed the care of the province. The sieur de Pangeas, who was at the head of this council, opposed him boldly, shewed him the orders he had received from the king, raised the country upon him, and obliged him at last to return to France, with the disgrace of having failed in his attempt; for which the count could take no other vengeance on Pangeas, than by throwing him down a staircase one day, when he met him in the king's apartments at Pontoisé.

1592.

— de Pardauillan de Pangeas, or Pangeac.

By these strokes the count of Soissons's character may be easily understood; to finish the picture, let it be added, that there never was a more blind or more boundless ambition. To him every new event appeared to lead him a step forwards to the attainment of his ends, and engaged him in new measures, which threw him at so much the greater distance from them, as he imagined he approached nearer. He himself knew not the object his wishes aimed at; restless, uneasy, and jealous, his ambition was fed by every thing, and drew advantage from nothing. Nature had given him qualities quite contrary to those of the king; he resembled him neither in humour nor manners. The king was open, frank, and generous; the count of Soissons to a mind naturally reserved, and incapable of a wise foresight, added an affected moderation and despicable cunning. He endeavoured to impose upon the world an assumed seriousness for an air of grandeur; laboured to appear impenetrable, and mistook the frozen countenance which false gravity wears for respect. Pomp, and the ostentation of grandeur was his taste: in a word, ambition had taken absolute possession of his heart, and his whole behaviour was made up of ceremony and formality. The near affinity this character bore to that of the Spaniards in general, was perhaps the source of that antipathy the king conceived for him, and which he could never surmount.

As for the duke of Epernon*, ambition was not his predominant passion; he was likewise actuated by an unconquerable pride; an insolence,

* John Lewis de Nogaret de la Vallette, duke of Epernon, colonel general of France, governor of Guyenne, Metz, and the county of Meffin. He died in 1642, aged 88 years; and, as the author of his life observes, he was the oldest duke and

peer of France, the oldest officer of the crown, general of an army, governor of a province, knight of any order, and counsellor of state, and almost the oldest man of rank in his time. They called him the king's wardrobe, because of the great num-

1592.

or rather a natural ferocity, that shewed itself in every word and action. Ambition, 'tis said, makes use of various methods to accomplish its designs. Epernon, regarded in this light, could not be an ambitious man, for he used only one, which was that haughtiness by which he expected to carry all before him. In a word, ambition was, in him, but a natural love of independence, inspired by a harsh disposition, misanthropy, and a presumption that made him consider himself superior to friendship and rewards. He hated the king, because he hated the whole world; and, without doubt, there were moments when he was not well satisfied with himself. A constant disobedience to his superiors, an insolent behaviour to his equals, and a cruel and insupportable conduct towards his inferiors, make up the rest of his character.

EPERNON, finding that his enterprizes had not the success his pride had flattered him with, was obliged to alter his behaviour, and sometimes, tho' but seldom, behaved courteously to those whom he might have occasion for; but even his kindnesses, if that phrase may be allowed when speaking of him, had a sort of spleen and contempt in them: so that if he hated the world, he was equally hated by it; no one served him from any other motive than fear, which was the cause that with great dispositions for war, and in a situation which might have made them useful, he ruined his affairs. Provence and Dauphiné held for him, and for Valette * his brother. These provinces, whose governor, before him, had been the grand prior †, the natural brother

ber of posts which he possessed in this prince's household. There is recorded an excellent answer of his to Henry IV. who one day in anger reproached him with not loving him. The duke of Epernon, says his historian, without being surprized at the king's rage, answered coolly, but with great gravity, "Sire, your majesty has not a more faithful servant than myself in the kingdom: I would rather die, than fail in the least part of my duty to you; but, Sire, as for friendship, your majesty well knows that is only to be acquired by friendship." The king, who equally knew how to admire great actions and speeches of this kind, converted all his indignation into esteem, &c. Life of the duke of Epernon, page 225. The character which is here given of him by the

duke of Sully, is rather too disadvantageous; however, it would not be easy to refute what he says: all the historians agree with him in charging the duke of Epernon with a boundless ambition, and his correspondence with Spain is proved by several letters of the cardinal d'Osset. As for his extraction, "Patrem, says Busbeq, habuit bello egregium, avum tabellionem sive notarium." Epist. 17. On the contrary, according to father Vaiffette, he descended from William de Nogaret, famous for his quarrels with the pope in the reign of Philip le Bel. Consult likewise our genealogists.

* Bernard de Nogaret, admiral of France.

† Henry II. and of — Livingstone, a Scots lady.

1592.

of their three last kings, despised him for his extraction, and hated him for his cruelty. They were rejoiced when Epernon (who when Henry III. was living would not remove far from the court) sent them la Valette in his stead, who made himself beloved in Provence, and served the king with fidelity. Henry III. becoming acquainted with the true character of his favourite, began to be apprehensive of him himself; he disgraced Epernon, and had thoughts even of putting him under an arrest at Angoulême. La Valette, on this occasion, lost his government; but all was restored to them after the murder of the duke of Guise, which laid Henry III. under the necessity of strengthening himself with every one whom he could engage in his party, at any price whatever. After the death of this prince, Epernon, whose vanity would not suffer him to obey the king of Navarre, quitted him at Pontoise, notwithstanding all the instances he made him by messieurs de Bellegarde and Roquelaure to return, to which he condescended himself to intreat him. To oppose a king was a circumstance highly flattering to his pride, and in his government of Provence he forgot nothing that might contribute to it: he was the first amongst the nobility to sign the king of Navarre's exclusion from the crown. It will not be rash to judge, by Epernon, of the sincerity of this plea of religion, with which it was then usual to cover a design of restraining the lawful authority.

THE remainder of the duke of Epernon's history will give a superficial knowledge of the affairs of the provinces in the south of France. He there experienced great reverses of fortune: the two brothers assisting each other mutually, were often worsted, and could not prevent three or four considerable parties from being formed in Dauphiné and Provence, which opposed them there, without reckoning one in each of the great towns, who endeavoured to make themselves independent. The duke of Savoy*, and the duke of Nemours his brother, carried on intrigues there, and their party became very powerful, after the king of Spain had permitted the duke of Savoy, who was his son-in-law, and whom he vigorously supported, to be acknowledged count of Provence, and hold this title of his crown. In the midst of their successes, these two princes met with a formidable rival, who stopped their career, and reduced their party to ineffectual menaces. This was Lesdiguières †, remarkable for his valour and

* Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy. He died in 1630.

† Francis de Bonne, duke of Lesdiguières, constable of France.

1592.

Alphonso
d'Ornano,
colonel of
the Corsi-
cans.

Roquebrune
in Provence.

A city of
Languedoc.

good fortune against the duke of Savoy. He always continued faithful to the king, and could never be reproached with having appropriated to himself the fruits of his actions, nor of having coveted the sovereignty of Dauphiné. Perhaps he only wished that the king might long have occasion for his assistance, and never come into this province. Messieurs de Montmorency, and d'Ornano, gave great strength to this party. The others were formed by the duke of Joyeuse*, the countess of Sault, and the count of Carces, with the sieur de Vins. Lewis d'Aix and Cajoux, Ligny, Martinengue, and many others, raised tumults there, and filled these countries with divisions and slaughter; but their faction did not yet extend itself beyond the bounds of one city. La Valette was hardly able to support himself longer in Dauphiné, when he was slain at the siege of a little inconsiderable town. The duke of Epernon immediately invaded this government: for form's sake he demanded letters patent for it from the king, who durst not refuse them to him; but, instead of quelling all these different parties, he went thither only to make a new one, upon which the king had as little reason to depend as any of the others. One may judge of this, by what passed at the siege of Villemur, the only action which I shall give a particular relation of from memoirs, the authenticity of which I can answer for.

THE duke of Joyeuse, a zealous partisan of the league in Languedoc, having drawn together five or six thousand foot, and eight or nine hundred horse, in the neighbourhood of Toulouse, advanced with them on the 15th of June, in the year 1592, towards Montauban, pillaged the little villages, and the flat countries, and after exercising all the cruelties usual in those miserable times, came and laid siege to Villemur.

THE sieur d'Ariat, after whom I relate these circumstances, and the citizens of Villemur, had recourse to Thémines †, who commanded for the king in that province, and intreated him to come immediately with powerful supplies to their assistance. Thémines, knowing he was not strong enough, addressed himself to the duke of Eper-

* Antony Scipio, knight of Malta, who took the title of duke of Joyeuse after the death of his brothers. Christina d'Aguerre, countess of Sault, baroness of Vineune. Gaspard de Pontevéz, count of

Carces. Hubert de la Garde, lord of Vins. Charles de Cafaux, &c.

† Pons de Lauferre de Cardaillac, afterwards marshal of France.

non, and while he waited for the reinforcement the duke promised to give him, sent a detachment of small bodies of cavalry and foot, which got into Villemur with great difficulty, the troopers on foot, because their horses could be of no use to them, the city was so closely environed. Joyeuse was severely punished for the error he was guilty of there, as we shall see presently. This error was the attacking the town itself, instead of beginning with the castle, which, although much stronger in appearance, was in reality the weakest. Without doubt he was not sufficiently acquainted with the place, or had a design to make use of the magazines of corn, and other ammunitions, of which he knew it was full.

1592.

EPERNON sent indeed a considerable body of troops; but as he had given them orders to act but faintly, and particularly to avoid hazarding much in fighting, these troops, although great expectations were raised by them, minded nothing but recreation, abandoned their posts, and by their bad example did more harm than good to the other royalist soldiers. Joyeuse, who did not want courage, especially when he was to act in person, finding the occasion favourable, and perhaps doubtful of the duke of Epernon's designs, fell upon his soldiers, surprized them, and would have made a great slaughter, if Thémines had not run thither time enough to save the remainder; he could not, however, prevent seven or eight hundred from being slain. There needed no more to make Epernon * recal them absolutely. Thémines afterwards strongly solicited both him and the marechal de Maignon for assistance, but in vain; and all he could do was to throw himself into Villemur, with d'Ariat, two hundred and fifty arquebusers, and about a hundred or a hundred and twenty troopers, to support the besieged, whom Joyeuse pressed more vigorously than before. He obliged Reiner, who was lord of it, but who was grown too infirm to perform the duties of a governor upon this occasion, to go out, and resolved to defend himself there till the last extremity, being assured that the king, whom he acquainted with his situation, would not suffer him to perish.

* All this is so positive, that it may balance the authority of de Thou, who mentions this fact very favourably for the duke of Epernon, and that of the author of this duke's life, who maintains that his soldiers drove those belonging to the league

from Villemur, and put this place into a state of defence, p. 134. The Chronologic Novenn. agrees here with our Memoirs, book iv. p. 63. as likewise the Memoirs of the league, vol. V.

1592.

Antony Du-
Pleix, lord of
Lecques.

Raimont de
Messillac de
Reffignac.

In effect, this prince wrote instantly to the dukes de Montmorency, and d'Epéron, to send him supplies. Epéron, accustomed to disobey, gave no attention to this order; but Montmorency sent him Lecques and Chambaut, with some brave protestant troops. These were still too few in number to oppose the army of Joyeuse, lately reinforced by the inhabitants of Toulouse: Lecques, and Chambaut, therefore, had recourse to Messillac, lieutenant for the king in Auvergne, and to the viscount de Gourdon, as remarkable for his courage and fidelity as for his deformity. These two officers marched immediately to the assistance of Villemur, with eight hundred arquebusiers, and two hundred and eighty horse. Joyeuse sent to offer them battle, which they refused, warned by the misfortune which had happened to Epéron's troops, and solicitous only to accomplish their first intention. After this refusal, the besiegers cavalry, who found themselves too much straitened in their lines, demanded permission of Joyeuse to remove into the neighbouring villages, which this general granted with some difficulty, and contrary to the opinion of the sieurs d'Onous and Montberaut. He obliged the officers to give their words, that upon the first signal which should be made them, they would return to the camp.

MESSILLAC, Lecques, and Chambaut, perceiving that this removal of the cavalry had extremely weakened the army of the besiegers, divided their whole foot into four bands, to each of which they added fifty troopers, whom they caused to dismount. A regiment of eight hundred men was drawn up in battalia within view of the entrenchments, with orders to charge on a certain signal. Four hundred men attacked the first intrenchment, and were supported by the four troops. The guard there usually consisted of no more than two hundred foot; but Joyeuse, who had spies amongst us, being informed of the designed attack a few moments beforehand, sent thither four hundred men more, and at the same time made the cannon fire three times, which was the signal agreed upon with his cavalry. It happened, that either through slackness in obeying on their side, or eagerness on that of the protestants, this cavalry did not come up till after the action was begun. Our men advanced before sun-rise, and falling upon the first intrenchment, laid a hundred of those who defended it dead upon the ground; the rest fled towards the second entrenchment, and carrying thither only their fears, this, though much better than the first, was likewise stormed with considerable loss.

THEMINES beholding all within the walls, seconded the assailants, and made so seasonable a sally, that he completed the rout of the besiegers. Their cavalry shewed themselves that moment at the head of the camp; but instead of putting a stop to this confusion, they no sooner perceived the eight hundred men, which composed the body of reserve, with three hundred horse pushing against them, than they followed the example of the rest of the army, and fought for safety in flight. Their terror increasing every moment, it soon became a general rout, which it was not in the power of Joyeuse to prevent. Dragged along himself with the fugitives, he gained a bridge of planks and ropes which he had ordered to be thrown over the Tarn. The number of those who hastened thither, on this side, overcharging this bridge, it sunk under Joyeuse, and he and all that were with him were swallowed up in the river. Fear had so blinded the rest of the troops, that still imagining they saw a bridge where none now was, they plunged into the waves where it had stood. More than three thousand foot, and four hundred horse perished on this occasion, either by the sword or the water. A prodigious loss for an army so inconsiderable, whereas the royalists lost only thirty men. The citizens of Villemur beheld this astonishing spectacle from the top of their walls, with a joy mingled with wonder and horror; which made them compare an effect of fear, which had the appearance of a miracle, with that which the sacred history relates of the Egyptians at the passage of the Red-sea. But to return to the king.

THIS prince went into Picardy, and in order to give employment to his troops, sent the marshal de Biron to besiege Epernai. The siege was long and obstinate; Biron was slain there by a cannon ball *. In Cham-
pagne. And if the king, who during that time staid at Compiègne, had not resolved to shew himself before this city, they would have found great difficulty in taking it. He defeated some powerful succours that were endeavoured to be thrown into the place, and obliged it at last to surrender.

HIS funds failing him entirely, he was obliged, after this expedition, to disband the remainder of the foreign troops. He continued

* Which took off his head. He was almost as famous for his learning as his abilities in war. De Thou greatly regrets the loss we have had of his Commentaries. He commanded in chief in seven battles, and every wound he received

in these battles made a scar. He was god-father to cardinal de Richlieu, who was named after him. The city of Gontaut, in Agenois, gave its name to this family. See the panegyric of this marshal in Brant. vol. III.

1592.

some time longer in his quarters, upon the report that was spread of the prince of Parma's having returned into France to execute the great projects he had formed against the king. The death of this brave general * happened very fortunately for Henry, who saw himself not in a condition to oppose such an enemy. The Spanish army, having lost its leader, dispersed. The time that was taken up in appointing his successor, gave the king leisure to breathe again; he drew near Paris, and thought of nothing but taking advantage of the Spaniards removal.

I DID not attend the king in his journey to Picardy; I went to Mante, where finding madam de Châteaupers in a disposition favourable to my love, I married this lady, and our nuptials were celebrated the same day that the prince of Parma †, with his army, passed through Houdan.

To confess the truth, the king's politics were not to my taste. I saw with pain, that the exigency of his affairs laid him under the necessity of complying with every desire of the catholics, while the protestants were neglected; and after the departure of the foreign troops, which gave their rivals many advantages over them, their assistance was of no consideration. I had, in particular, often experienced the effects of their hatred or jealousy, from whence I concluded, that I should never be able to advance my fortune. I was likewise disgusted with the king's behaviour towards me; his coldness, though I knew

* At Arras, in the abbey of St. Vaast. The Spaniards were accused of having poisoned him through jealousy, but the wound he received in Normandy the year before, joined to the bad make of his body, was the only cause of his death, as was acknowledged when he was opened. Cayet, *ibid.* 90. See in de Thou, book civ. a panegyric on his great qualities. His body was carried through Lorraine to Italy attended by 160 horse, caparisoned in black. He was no more than 48 years of age. He complained of being twice poisoned by the Spaniards, if we may believe d'Aubigné, who assures us, that the Italians were so fully persuaded of it, that from that time they could never endure the Spaniards, vol. III. book iii. chap. 28. And

this also is the opinion of Bongars, book xlix.

† This could not be till the 23d or 24th of May, as the prince of Parma did not pass the Seine till the night of the 21st or 22d of that month. Here then is a mistake either in the *New Journal* of Henry III. printed in 1720, (where in the 271st page, the duke of Sully's marriage is observed to be celebrated on the 18th) or in the *Memoirs* of Sully. The baron de Rosny's second wife was called Rachel de Cocheilet, daughter of James lord of Vaucelas, and of Mary d'Arbaletse. She was first married to Francis Huraut, lord of Chateaupers, and Marais, who died in 1590. She survived the duke of Sully, and died in the year 1659, aged 93 years.

it to be feigned, had such an appearance of a total estrangement, that I determined to quit war, and retire to my estate, there to live far from business, and the tumult of life. 1592.

THE event justified the king's prudence, and I was the first to come over to his opinion, and to give him advice very opposite to my former sentiments; but then I saw things with other eyes. The reflection on all that the protestants and myself had endured; the little consideration I appeared to be then of, and somewhat of that general disposition of mind which always dictated the interest of religion, formed all my resolutions, and were the foundation of that system I built for the king, and which at that time seemed to me to be the only reasonable one. I would have had this prince, doing justice to those who had served him with zeal and affection, to have refused all other assistance, and cast himself entirely in their arms. I was persuaded that after such an open declaration of his dependence upon the protestants, England, Holland, and all the protestant powers in Europe, would exert themselves so effectually in his favour, that they would soon, without any assistance from the catholics, seat him upon the throne. In this, as in every thing else, the king's understanding was superior to mine. He knew, from the first moment, that a kingdom, like France, was not to be gained by foreign hands; and although it had appeared even possible, yet it was the hearts of the French, rather than their crown, that this good prince sought to conquer. And he would have thought the rewards which, on that occasion, he should be obliged to bestow upon the authors of his elevation, to their prejudice, to have been an encroachment upon their lawful rights:

MY last motive for retiring was, that a little after I arrived at Mante, the wounds in my mouth and neck, which I had received in that unfortunate rencounter at Chartres, opened again, and obliged me to go to Rosny to be radically cured, to prevent the fatal consequences which generally attend wounds of that nature. I continued there some time: after a life so tumultuous, as that which, till this moment, I had led, I tasted, with higher relish, the sweets that retirement offers to a heart detached from ambition. I amused myself there with writing the events varied by good and bad fortune, to which I had been exposed for the space of twenty years.

1592.

BUHY *, the king's lieutenant in the Vexin, came one day to visit me, and informed me that the king had written to all the governors to draw together what troops they were able, and to come immediately to his assistance; for it was about this time that they were in expectation of the prince of Parma's return into France; and Buhy, therefore, asked me, if I would not, upon this occasion, do as others did. This question recalled the remembrance of the many governments which I had requested, and had been denied to me; and, lastly, the post of one of the king's lieutenants, which the duke of Nevers, and the catholics had hindered me from obtaining, in a very haughty and insulting manner. I answered this officer, with some emotion, that if the king had had any occasion for my service, he would have done me the honour to write to me. Buhy found something of anger in my reply, and, like a good courtier, exaggerated it, when he repeated it to the king, and gave him to understand, that he ought no longer to have any dependence on me, for I had resolved to spend the rest of my days in the country. This circumstance was added by himself; for I did not esteem Buhy so much as to make him my confidant. "His disposition then is greatly altered," replied the king immediately, "for he never failed to be present on such occasions as are now approaching. Altho' he excuses himself on account of his wounds, I know well enough what detains him; he is offended with me, and not without reason. He would play the philosopher for the future; but when I see him, I shall be able to make all up again; for I know him thoroughly."

John Seguier.

THIS conversation passed in the presence of the president Seguier, who dined with me some time after, and related it to me. Having freely disclosed my most secret thoughts to this great magistrate, whom I knew to be my friend, an honest man, and an excellent politician, he answered me in these words, which I shall never forget, because they first opened my eyes, and removed my prejudices. "Sir, you appear to me to be touched with resentment. We live in a time when tranquillity is very difficult to procure. The wisest amongst us are silent, and patient, in hopes of more favourable days, and the king is so prudent, and so virtuous, that God has no doubt reserved our restoration for him."

* Peter de Mornay de Buhy, brother of Du-Plessis-Mornay.

1592.

FROM that moment, finding no other inconveniency from my wound, than a little difficulty in speaking, I began again to ride, and followed by fifty horse, I made excursions over the great road of Verneuil and Dreux to Paris, in order to resume my former occupation, which I perceived was again likely wholly to engross me. In the second of these journeys, one day when I was riding towards Dreux, between the villages of Marolles and Gouffainville, I met ten or twelve men on foot, who, the moment they saw us, struck into the woods with which that country abounds. I followed them immediately, and seized two of them, who had not quitted the great road. These were peasants who were returning from Paris, whither they had been to sell their poultry. I asked them some questions, and they answered me very ingenuously; they told me, that it was their custom to travel in the night, to avoid the inconveniencies they were exposed to in those roads in the day, but that they had taken courage this once, having nine or ten persons in their company, among whom they said were three domestics belonging to messieurs de Mercœur, de McDavy, and de Vieux-Pont.

THERE needed no more to make me pursue these three men, whose mysterious journey excited my curiosity. It was impossible to overtake them; my people could only seize two others of those that were of Verneuil, from whom finding I could draw nothing by threatenings, I made use of another method. I gave them four crowns, and promised them more, if they would tell me all they knew concerning those three domestics. They desired me to follow them, and led me directly to a large hollow oak, surrounded with thickets, where they told me these servants had stopped, and put some papers into the trunk of this tree: in effect, I found there two tin-boxes, and a ticking sack, which seemed to me to be full. This acquisition consoled me for the messengers escape; and after rewarding the two men, I returned to Rosny, very impatient to open my packets.

THEY appeared to be such as I wished: in the first I found commissions from the duke of Maienne to levy soldiers, several letters written in cyphers, in this general's own hand, to the duke of Mercœur: but papers more important engaged all my attention; they related to the third party, which was then beginning to be talked of, and amongst which I found two memorials that seemed to be of the utmost consequence. The first was a memorial of the demands which

1592.

the president Jeannin * made upon Spain, in the name of the duke of Maienne; and the second contained the answer given to these conditions by the arch-duke Ernest for the king of Spain. All the reflections imaginable could not throw such light upon the duke of Maienne's designs, the spirit of the league, and the politics of Spain, as the contents of these two pieces: of which this is an extract.

THE duke of Maienne submitted the league to the pope, and put it under the king of Spain's protection, upon the following conditions, which regarded the party in general, as well as himself in particular. First, That the king of Spain should furnish, and maintain in the service of the league, an army of sixteen thousand foot, and three thousand horse; in which army there should be two thousand foot, and five hundred troopers, all French, of whom the duke of Maienne was to have the sole disposal, besides four thousand foot more, and five hundred horse, French likewise, who were to continue near his person only, and to be maintained by Spain: That the number of these troops should be augmented as occasion required: That the duke of Maienne should have the chief command of these troops, and those of the party, with the title of lieutenant-general of the crown, till a king of France was elected: That this election should be made in a general conference, by which they certainly meant the states of the kingdom: That till this election was made and confirmed, the pension which Spain already paid to the general should be augmented to as much more, that is, from thirty thousand livres a month, to sixty, besides a hundred thousand crowns, which he should receive immediately, and a hundred thousand livres after the ratification of the treaty; in expectation of which, they should begin, by putting him in actual possession of Burgundy: That after the nomination of the future king, the duke of Maienne should be continued in the government of the state, with the title of lieutenant-general; and that then, and not before, he should yield up the city of Soissons to the Spaniards, because it was at present the only place of security he had for himself in France: That if he found insurmountable obstacles, either in the election of a future king, probably from the king of Navarre, or in the invasion and keeping of Burgundy for the duke of Maienne, the king of Spain should make the duke amends, by an annual pension of three hundred thousand livres, for the possessions he might lose in France; which pension should never be lessened or taken away, whatever

* René Jeannin, baron de Montjeu, president of the parliament of Dijon.

agreement might be made between the king of Spain and the acknowledged king of France, but be continued to his heirs for ever: That Spain should cancel all the duke of Maïenne's debts, or those of the king elected with the consent of this crown, if he was a native of France: That they should give suitable rewards to the other principal officers of the league; these were not expressed, either because the duke of Maïenne was less solicitous about the interests of others than his own, or that he thought this article would be easily settled, because, if money was wanting, the lords might be satisfied with pensions, dignities, or governments.

1592.

SUCH were the demands of the chief of the league, in which, as we have seen, he did not forget himself. For all this, he offered the king of Spain (besides the crown, which, although he was not mentioned, could only be designed for a prince of the house of Austria, since the duke of Maïenne seemed to exclude himself) he offered, I say, a certain number of towns, for whose names, as well as that of the future king, were blanks; those that Spain might take being to be restored to the French catholics, under the protection of the king of Spain and the duke of Maïenne. All was calculated for the security and caution of Spain, till the election of a king, without any further explanation; which proves also, that they thought this election would sufficiently indemnify this crown; at least that they wanted, by this insinuation, to flatter it with hopes, in order to procure an immediate and effectual assistance from it. What gave rise to this suspicion was, their care in insinuating upon, and often resuming, the following clause: That till all these articles were agreed to at Madrid, for which they allotted the space of a month, Spain should first begin by sending a powerful supply into Burgundy, which they said was in great danger. The more to hasten the resolutions of this court, the duke of Maïenne, who throughout the whole treaty shewed himself to be a faithful servant (although a little interested) of the house of Austria, protested coldly, that if these conditions were not thought advantageous enough for Spain, she might turn to whatever side she pleased, for he was weary with bearing the burden, and wished for nothing more than to be eased of it.

BUT this was only a feint; he had to do with a council who would not so easily change, and who understood their interest still better. To this memorial the arch-duke answered, in the name of the king of Spain, That his majesty was well pleased with the title of Defender

1592.

of the League, and would look upon himself as chief of the party : That they should find him always ready to grant them whatever supplies they demanded against the king of Navarre, and even more than they demanded ; for he agreed to send into Picardy alone the nineteen thousand men formerly mentioned ; it is easy to see with what design, this province bounding the Low Countries ; besides those which he offered to send into different parts of the kingdom. He did not seem to be so much alarmed on account of Burgundy as the duke of Maïenne, probably because the council of Spain discovered that this general, who had demanded the possession of this province, would be glad that the troops should be all employed there. Upon this article, he only granted wherewithal to raise a thousand German foot, and to maintain three hundred horse. He added, however, that if the whole force of the war was turned against this province, his catholic majesty would not refuse to send a considerable number of troops there ; and without doubt, in this he meant to keep his word.

As to what regarded Maïenne in particular, his catholic majesty appeared much less liberal. Of all the articles this was the most reduced : he would make no addition to the pension of thirty thousand livres a month ; and would grant him but, and that only while he continued in person in the army, two thousand foot, and five hundred troopers. Upon the other articles he was silent. With regard to those places which might be seized, Spain consented that the duke of Maïenne should keep what he had taken, provided she was allowed to do the same : she would not relinquish her demand of Soissons, and was absolutely resolved to have this city for a security for those advances she made in this war ; she promised only to resign it after the election of the king : this nomination appeared still uncertain to Spain, who gave them to understand, that if she was satisfied with it, every thing might be expected from her gratitude, but beforehand she would risk nothing. For this purpose, all the other articles were left unanswered, and a new one was added, which was, that the duke of Maïenne should remove certain persons from about him, who, doubtless, did not support the interests of Spain with the French general ; their names were not written ; but it was said, that they had been signified by word of mouth to the agent for the treaty. Such were his catholic majesty's dispositions, who by attending only to his own interests, and resolving to sell his assistance very dear, followed exactly the duke of Maïenne's example.

THE

1592.

THE reading of these papers left no room any longer for resentment in my mind; and thinking them of great importance to the king, I hastened immediately to Compiègne. I found time and absence had not altered his sentiments with regard to me. I had half an hour's private conversation with this prince, to whom I related in brief the occasion of my journey. The examination of these papers was deferred till the evening of that day, when, all the courtiers being retired, I was introduced into the king's apartment, and remained there shut up with him. After his majesty had sent for Beringhen and Choirin, to decypher the greatest part of the papers, from them we learned whom the third party was composed of, which as yet had been only mentioned in whispers, and had been formed even in the court, and supported and directed by the abbé * de Bellozanne, the two Durets, and I believe the abbé Du-Perron; all of them dependents of the count of Soissons and the cardinal of Bourbon, and particularly attached to the last. In all appearance, these persons were the authors, and at first the only promoters, of this faction, which was afterwards joined by messieurs de Nevers, de Longueville, de Villcroy, d'O; and the rest of those catholics who were in the court, who valued themselves upon being too good Frenchmen to suffer the Spanish dominion, and too zealous for the Roman religion to consent to have a protestant king. The count of Soissons some time after joined these gentlemen; and it was reported, that, inconstant to his former mistress, he was several times upon the point of marrying mademoiselle de Longueville. They had assumed the name of politicians, to distinguish themselves from the royalists and leaguers, and to shew that they regarded the good of the state, and the preservation of the rights of the crown, beyond every other consideration. Their principal view was alike to exclude every foreign prince, the duke of Maienne, and the king of Navarre, from the throne. The bulk of the party knew no more: but the leaders, who were masters of the secret, thought of nothing but getting rid of the two last by the sword or poison †; after which they might, without any difficulty, make the cardinal of Bourbon king ‡,

* John Touchard, abbot of Bellozanne; Lewis Duret, lord of Chevry, physician; and Charles Duret, counsellor of state, intendant and comptroller-general of the finances, and president of the chamber of accounts.

† This accusation is to be met with in no other writer, and is of the number of

those which the author ought not to assert without giving likewise a proof.

‡ His name was Charles, he was the third son of Lewis I. prince of Conde, and Eleanora de Roye. His other brothers were, Henry, prince of Condé, Francis, prince of Conty, and Charles, count of Soissons,

and,

1592. and not to disoblige Spain entirely, procure a dispensation for him to marry the infanta.

Philip Emanuel of Lorraine.

WHEN this project is compared with that of Jeannin, it is matter of surprize, that papers which contained such opposite schemes should be found in the same packet. Without seeking for the reason of it in the secrets of providence, which by presenting the king, at one and the same time, with all the plots that were formed against his person, seemed to suggest to him such measures as were necessary to prevent them; it is my opinion, that it may be found in the different interests of those persons who corresponded together, and some from a great distance, such as the duke of Merceur, without any other motive than that common hatred they bore to the king, which gave birth to a thousand chimerical designs, and delivered them up to those hints which darted into their minds, without any other fixed and determined object than that of excluding the king of Navarre. In such a confusion of sentiments, it is not surprizing, that he should by the same means meet with such opposite schemes.

I CONTINUED three days at Compiègne, in which time I had several conferences with the king, who appeared to be sensibly affected with the designed attempts against his person, because he had flattered himself, that his conduct would have suppressed such thoughts. He sent me to Mante, perceiving that my endeavours to speak in these conversations might open my wounds. I received from this good prince all the marks of a tender and unbounded confidence. At parting, he desired me to observe carefully every motion of his enemies, and to prepare myself to give him good advice on his arrival at Mante, being resolved, he said, to regulate his behaviour in so difficult a conjuncture wholly by my directions. He stayed no longer in Picardy than was necessary to make some proper dispositions there, and set out for Mante. This city he preferred to any other, because by its situation it was best fitted to discover and overthrow the different cabals of his enemies, at a time when the intrigues of the cabinet were likely to succeed the operations of war. His council was already there, and he caused the princess, his sister, to be conducted thither also. After the discovery this prince had just made of the plots that were laid against his life, it would have been the greatest imprudence imaginable to have neglected any precautions necessary for his security. He doubled his guards, placed in Limay, which is the suburb of Mante, a body of English troops, whose affection to him was unquestionable, and resolved

resolved to hold all the world suspected, since he was convinced that those persons whom he had admitted to his councils, his table, and his pleasures, were capable of forming the most violent resolutions against him.

1592.

IF of all the favours that a prince (as estimable for the qualities of his mind as for the greatness of his actions) could grant, esteem and tenderness are those which have most effect upon a man of honour, how much I am obliged to this prince, who honoured me in particular with his confidence at a time when infidelity, treachery, and all that interest could suggest to subjects who had exalted this idol in the place of love to their king, had left him no other part to take than that of a general reserve and distrust. Nor can I forbear to add (for why should I omit a circumstance which of all others seems most likely to procure me the esteem of truly virtuous persons?) that in a conjuncture so delicate, this prince was resolved to resign himself wholly to my direction, and to me confide his destiny and crown *.

* If we may believe de Thou, Gaspard Schomberg, count of Nanteuil, Lewis de Revol, secretary of state, and himself, contributed to fix Henry IV. in his resolution of changing his religion. There is not a historian who ascribes it to any one particular person; they do not even seem to have thought of Sully in this affair, which however does not invalidate the truth of what is asserted in this part of his Memoirs, that it is chiefly, and even in some manner wholly to him, the honour of it is due. Tacitus tells us, that Augustus, after having deprived one of his chief ministers entirely of his favour, permitted him still to have the appearance of enjoying it: with regard to the duke of Sully, it was quite the contrary, for he already was in absolute possession of his master's favour, while no one suspected it. And that which is most remarkable in their history is, that a long time after this minister's favour with the king was known, by his being in possession of the first employments in the kingdom, even until his master's death, in public the king behaved to him with the utmost circumspicion; while in private, never were familiarity and confidence carried farther

between a king and his subject. Hence it was, that in some histories of Henry the Great, the author of which, without penetrating into the secrets of the cabinet, contented themselves with representing only the public face of affairs, the name of Rosny is never mentioned, and that of Sully, so well known to writers better informed, very seldom, considering the part Sully played during the ten or twelve last years of this prince's life. Incomprehensible as this reserved and mysterious conduct appears, those who reflect upon the situation of affairs in those times, together with the religion of the duke of Sully, will comprehend, without any difficulty, the necessity the king and his master were under, to observe this conduct, and never to depart from it. Nor is this one of the least instances of the prudence and abilities of these two great men. I thought it necessary to make this observation once for all. "Rosny," says Matthieu the historian, vol. II. page 278. "had a long time a share in the king's most important affairs; and from the time of Henry III. was one of his most intimate confidants," &c.

for

1592.

for without me he undertook not the smallest affair, persuaded that the advice of a man actuated by a sincere attachment to him, and (if I may use the expression) a true friendship, ought to be preferred to penetration and ability, when they are joined with a doubtful fidelity. Nothing ever gave me so pure and noble a delight as the honour of such a distinction: but after having resigned myself up to it some moments, I perceived the weight of that burden I was loaded with, and trembled amidst my joy, lest my weakness and incapacity should engage me in some false step that might prejudice, not me, for on those occasions self, I believe, is least in one's thoughts, but the prince who had laid it upon me.

FROM this moment, all those precautions the king made use of for the safety of his person, I also observed in the advice I was going to give him. I prepared myself for it by the most serious reflections on the state of the neighbouring kingdoms in general; and on that of France, of the parties into which it was divided, and of the king, in particular. I considered, that if in such employments as mine, one cannot even be guilty of unintentional faults, without deserving some reproaches, we draw those reproaches upon ourselves when we act according to the dictates of passion. This reflection led me to study carefully my own disposition, and the bent of my inclinations, and convinced me of the necessity of beginning with obliging my own heart to subdue and forget itself. A serious review of my past conduct shewed me the injustice of those complaints which I suffered frequently to escape me against the king's behaviour to me and the rest of the protestants. I searched into the ground of it, and I soon found it in that common prejudice, that to be worthy of the religion one professes, cruelty, perjury, and deceit ought to pass for nothing, provided one can secure the success of it. I suppressed these sentiments, equally injurious to the author of religion, as dangerous to him who makes use of such unworthy means: and when I declare, that there was nothing I more distrustful than those snares which the zeal of religion might lay for me, I shall be easily believed, if the advice I gave the king be attended to.

WHEN I was thus certain of myself, I the less feared to carry my views into that impenetrable chaos of different interests, and into future events, which offered, on every side, nothing but frightful precipices. Must the miseries of France be perpetuated by giving arms, perhaps,

1592.

perhaps, for more than an age, to two parties in religion, then almost equal? Must a prince, who so well deserved to be happy, wear away his whole life amidst the horrors of a war, which till then had not given him time to breathe; and, if I determined upon this, prepare for him labours infinitely greater than all he had yet endured? On the other hand, ought I to expose the whole body of protestants in France, who fought only justice and peace, to become victims of human policy, and deliver them up to the snares of their most cruel enemies; and while uncertain of the event of the war, and at a time when the king might be suddenly taken off, ought I to bring things to such an extremity, that France might, perhaps, become a prey to Spain, and to all her neighbours, or, dismembered by a thousand tyrants, lose in one moment the glory of her name, the lustre of her monarchy, and the succession of her kings? What miseries to be expected by a war? what snares to be dreaded in a peace? how many dangers to be apprehended on all sides? Was it possible to take any resolution, when alarmed by so many inevitable evils?

BUT the greatest danger was the not fixing upon any resolution at all. At last, when all was thoroughly examined, it seemed necessary to prefer that which would put an end to the civil war, restore tranquility to France, submit it to a good king, and put it in a condition to take vengeance on its foreign enemies: I mean that resolution which might the most effectually remove the present inconveniences, and procure time to bring a remedy for those that were to be apprehended. In one word, I resolved to prevail upon the king to embrace the Roman catholic religion *, and to persuade him to it by degrees. I was sensible, that by this means I should give disgust to two sorts of persons, the protestant neighbours of France, and the French calvinists. But as to the first, France, when united with itself, had no occasion for any foreign assistance: and it was easy to give the second such advantages, as would make them behold this change without murmuring. With regard to both, I depended upon that gratitude which a prince like Henry could not fail of having for persons to whom he owed such powerful obligations.

THESE reflections wholly employed my mind from the moment I left Compiègne, and I was still absorbed in them when the king

* The duke of Sully would then find his salvation as much forwarded by the romish as the protestant religion.

1592.

arrived at Mante. The first thing he did, was to send for me to come to him with the usual precautions. Jaquinot introduced me into his chamber before day, and we immediately entered upon our subject. Henry, who on his side had made a thousand reflections on the perplexing situation he was in, began by drawing a very natural representation of it; irreconcilable interests in the princes and nobility of the kingdom; hatred amongst themselves, and rage against him; mutiny and disobedience in all minds; inactivity in the foreign allies; intrigues and animosity on the part of the enemies; treachery within; violence without; rocks and precipices on all sides. The end of this pathetic discourse was to demand what remedy I was able to apply to these evils.

I REPLIED that, without taking upon me to give his majesty advice, I saw only three things for him to do, and he might determine upon which he pleased. The first was to satisfy every one's demands at his own expence, or rather at the expence of the state; the second was not to make concessions to any, but to endeavour to wrestle vigorously with them all; the third, which held a medium between these two, was to take away all obstacles that opposed his advancement to the crown, by turning Roman catholic. The king then told me, that what I had said to him was my opinion only, and commanded me to tell him plainly what I would do in his place. I endeavoured to make him comprehend the full extent of the three different methods I had proposed to him, by examining them one after the other. I made him perceive, that by following the first, he would reduce himself to nothing, and that if there was a necessity to gratify wholly the rapaciousness of Spain, and the French leaguers, he would scarce out of so great a kingdom keep a few provinces for himself. As to the second, I represented to him, that as soon as he should give room to believe, that he depended only upon the claim his birth gave him to the crown, the desertion of all the catholics, and the unbridled fury of a whole nation of enemies both within and without the kingdom, would draw upon him a terrible storm. The inconstancy of fortune, and the usual reverses of war, although this prince had not yet experienced them, found their place in this reflection. As to the third, I was silent, only telling the king, that being a protestant myself, I could say nothing upon this subject.

WHILE I was speaking, I perceived the perplexity, into which the present conjuncture had thrown the king, to increase every moment.

I did

1592.

I did not doubt, but the review of all the difficulties would bring him to the point I desired. I was sure that he would not pause one moment upon the first of my proposals. I knew him too well to believe him capable of agreeing to an accommodation which would leave him only the semblance of a king, a subject or dependent upon Spain, or reduced at last to a small part of France. It was the two others only that embarrassed him. On one side, he said, by continuing in his religion he saw united against him all the princes of his blood, the nobility of the kingdom, and those that were at the head of all affairs, and the finances, such as messieurs de Epernon, de Nevers, de Longueville, de Biron, d'O, de Rieux *, de Villeroi, de Manou, de Châteaueux, de Vitry, d'Entragues, and de Sourdis. It would be too tedious to mention them all. He saw them ready to resolve upon forming against him a body independent of the league, or, what was most probable, and likewise most dangerous, to unite themselves with the league, and deprive him of the possibility of ascending the throne. On the other, he objected the complaints of the dukes of Bouillon and la Tremouille, and the outcries of the protestants whom he was going to abandon; those who were so dear to him, and from whom he had so long drawn his only assistance. He represented them as passing from discontent to a resolution which despair at being sacrificed by an ungrateful prince would inspire, which was to elect another leader, canton themselves out in France, and oblige him to turn his arms against them. He ended with these words: "I can never use them ill, nor declare war against them, for I shall always love them." This sentiment, which discovered a sensibility so seldom to be found in the hearts of princes, moved me extremely. I thanked him, in the name of all the protestants, by bending upon one knee, and kissing his hand. The reasons with which this prince opposed his change of religion, and the manner in which he delivered them, were what alone dissipated my apprehensions, and confirmed me likewise in the opinion, that no other remedy could be applied to the present evils. I told him, that messieurs de Bouillon and de la Tremouille, and all of merit and distinction in the calvinist party, would not be so unreasonable as to take arms against him, for a resolution which necessity only had forced him to embrace, when he continued to treat them with that esteem and respect which was due to

* René de Rieux, lord of Sourdeac. John d'O, lord of Manou, brother to the superintendent. Lewis de l'Hôpital, lord

de Vitry. Francis de Balzac, lord of Entragues. Francis d'Escoubleau, marquis of Sourdis. Joachim de Châteaueux.

1592.

their persons and services. I explained all my thoughts on this subject to the king, and added, that the foundation of all religions which believe in Jesus Christ, being essentially the same; that is, faith in the same mysteries, and the same notions of the divinity, it seemed to me, that one who from a catholic became a protestant, or from a protestant became a catholic, did not change his religion, but followed, for the interest of religion * itself, that which policy suggested as the most proper means to compose all differences: but although my opinion should be erroneous, yet this must be allowed to be an incontestible truth, that the embracing the catholic religion did not include the necessity of persecuting all others; on the contrary, that God perhaps disposed the king to this change to give a new example to Europe, and one more worthy of religion itself: That the difference of religions had long produced the most tragical effects in France, and was a perpetual source of disorders and calamities, by the aversion with which it inspired people against those of a contrary faith from their own, which was equally the case with the protestants as well as catholics. I told the king, that he might cure this dangerous evil, by uniting those who professed these different religions in the bands of christian charity and love; or, if this was impossible, prescribe to them rules so just, as might make both parties contented with what was granted them. I did not doubt but this prince would be influenced by that single thought of immortalizing his memory, by restoring peace, plenty, and security, to a kingdom wasted with intestine divisions, and of meriting, by the use of those abilities he had received from heaven, the glory of giving happiness to France, after she had begun to despair of it, and to look upon her wounds as incurable. I am certain, that this motive was more interesting than

* Add to these words of the duke of Sully what he says some pages before, and what has been observed a little higher, where he speaks of the duty and authority of kings in religious matters; it may be determined that he was a calvinist without rigour, and considered all religion as indifferent which agreed in essentials. It is thus, that the author of the MS. which I have quoted in the preface of this work, speaks of it, and it is even the chief of those arguments which he makes use of to justify the duke of Sully for having given to Henry IV. such advice, as, without this,

would agree but ill with the laws of conscience and natural rectitude. "It being his opinion," says he, speaking of the duke of Sully, "that the king might as easily work out his salvation in our religion as in his own, he offered no great violence to his conscience, in persuading him to this change; on the contrary, it was effectually serving the state, nay, christianity itself, without hurting his reputation." Happily, Henry the Great did not adopt the neutral opinions of his minister, as he himself confessed very sincerely.

that of his own quiet; which, however, I did not forget: and I obliged Henry tacitly to confess, that his spirits, after being exhausted, if I may use that term, with war, demanded a situation less turbulent, and more tranquil.

1592.

THE strongest proof of the reasonableness and justice of the arguments I used upon this occasion, was, that the king, who possessed that happy sagacity of distinguishing immediately the truth or falsehood of any position, confessed to me that my discourse had penetrated to the bottom of his heart, which, he added, still resisted strangely, but that he believed he should follow no other advice. In effect, at the end of three days he had taken his resolution, and he now only endeavoured to remove the difficulties which remained. Some of these regarded his own opinion; for as sincerity and rectitude were fixed in his heart, and regulated all his words and actions, I am persuaded, that there is not any thing which could have prevailed upon him to embrace a religion which he inwardly despised, or even doubted of. A prince who had never deceived mankind, could have no intention to deceive his God.

THE other difficulties related to the leaders of the protestant party, whom the bare proposition of changing his religion would not fail to make revolt, as well through fear, as a point of honour. He assembled them, and addressing himself to the most distinguished amongst them, which were *monsieurs de Bouillon, de Sancy, Du-Plessis, de Salignac, de Morlas, de Constans, and Salettes* *; I also being present. He told them (with an intention to sound their inclinations) that he had brought them together to know their opinions upon what he had to communicate to them. He said he had received certain advices, that *Bellozanne*, and the two *Durets*, agents for the third party, had had an interview with *Villeroi* and † *Jeannin*, and that it was agreed

* — Salettes was president of the parliament of Pau, and counsellor of state at Navarre. Morlas, his natural son, was member of the privy-council, counsellor of state, and superintendant of the magazines of France. They were both converted. Henry IV. when he was informed of the death of Morlas, who was a man of great merit, said, "I have lost one of the wisest men in my kingdom." *Chron. Novenn. book viii. p. 545.*

† After having diligently collected all that the most judicious of our writers have said concerning these two men, of whom the duke of Sully speaks so disadvantageously in many places of his *Memoirs*, I think I may be able to assure the reader, with absolute certainty, that, on one side, their great and only object was to preserve the catholic religion in France, by excluding the king of Navarre from the throne, till he abjured calvinism, or to force him to
upon

1592. upon to unite all the forces of the league and the other catholics against him; that the time which the catholics had so often threatened him with was now come, for they were going to abandon him entirely; their common design being now to place the cardinal of Bourbon upon the throne, to marry him to the infanta of Spain, and to endeavour by all possible methods to rid themselves of his person. That the cardinal, indeed, had expressed great reluctance to comply with this last proposition, but, by all appearances, they would soon gain his consent, when they convinced him, that the crown could by no other means be secured to him. He conjured them to tell him sincerely what they thought he ought to do upon this occasion, especially upon the desertion of the catholics, which would reduce his party to the last extremity.

By the noise and confusion this declaration raised in the assembly, it would seem that all those who composed it, having never made any reflections upon what might happen, incapable of conducting their designs prudently, of keeping one determined object in view, or of preserving any sincere attachment to the king, had till then thought only of living from day to day; of gaining time, and profiting by their master's abilities for war. They could never agree, nor form any resolutions fit to be approved of. They did not know whether to wish for peace, or continue the war. One said, that there was nothing to be done but to resume their arms, and risque all at one cast. Another was of opinion, that by arresting eight or ten of the principal catholics, who were not yet upon their guard, particularly the contrivers of the plot, they might prevent the execution of it. Others more moderate, or perhaps more doubtful, contented themselves

abjure it; and, on the other, to prevent the effect of the Spanish policy, the design of which was, either to deprive the royal family of the crown, or to dismember the kingdom. These are clearly proved to be the views of Villeroy, by the conduct he observed in the conference at which he assisted, by the advice he frequently gave to the duke of Maienne, not to confide in the council of Madrid; by the reserve with which that chief of the league communicated to him his secret designs; by the account of the president Jeannin's negotiations in Spain; by the behaviour of both in the states of Paris, and still more by the

hatred the Sixteen bore them. Their prudence, their moderation, and their abilities in regulating affairs, made them the soul of the party, even in opposition, if one may so speak, to the party itself: without them this party, actuated by a blind and furious passion, would have plunged the state into absolute ruin. Consult Matthieu the historian, vol. II. page 66, 69, 86, &c. Chron. Novenn. book ii. &c. De Thou. Memoirs of Nevers. Villeroy's Memoirs, &c. See also what has been said upon this article in the preface to this work.

with

with saying, that it would be necessary to accommodate matters by negotiations, without advising how. I took this hint, and by annexing it to some reasonable expedients, carried all the votes for a negotiation. They were not ignorant that I had some influence over the count of Soissons, and that I had free access to the cardinal of Bourbon. This cardinal often said in public, that although I was a huguenot, there was no person in the world for whom he had so strong an inclination as me. I offered to use my mediation with these two princes, to prevail upon them not to listen to the persuasions of the king's enemies; and the better to ensure success, I promised I would endeavour to gain their dependents and counsellors, especially the abbot de Bellozanne, the Durets, confidants to the count of Soissons, and a lady called madam des Rosieres, an intimate of the cardinal's.

No person opposed this advice, doubtless because the protestants, who had heard the declaration, sensible that they were too weak actually to renew hostilities, thought that at present there was nothing better to be done. The king, on his side, was not sorry at its being unanimously voted by the protestants, that he should address himself to the princes of the blood, and hold a commerce with the catholics of the league. According to my plan, I began with the abbé de Bellozanne. I knew that jealousy had made him the secret enemy of the Durets, and believed that by taking him on this side, confirming him in his hatred, and flattering him with having shortly the chief part in all affairs, I should bring him to my purpose. I introduced myself with telling him, that I was come to thank him, in the name of the king, for having in his favour so generously opposed the attempt of the Durets, which could only proceed from the rectitude of his heart, and his good-will towards the king, which his majesty, although he had but a small acquaintance with him, esteemed as he ought: so that he might expect the most convincing proofs of his affection, which would certainly be the procuring him a cardinal's hat, or at least, one of the richest benefices in the kingdom, when those rewards were in his power, by his change of religion, which was likely to happen very shortly.

THIS introduction, which flattered his vanity extremely, gave me occasion to enter, as if undesignedly, into the secret proceedings of the Durets, which I pretended to be well informed of, in order to learn them from him, and to engage him to oppose them more absolutely.

In

1592.

In effect, I had scarce dropped a few words on this subject, when my man, giving way to his inclinations, fell severely upon the Durets, and spoke so much to their disadvantage, that I fell into the other extreme, and believed that he was induced by his hatred of them to accuse them falsely. The hint of the cardinal's hat and the bishopric producing its effect, Bellozanne pretended to feel the zeal for the king's service, which I had affected to attribute to him. He endeavoured to persuade me, that he would oppose the violent resolutions of the catholics, whose intrigues and views he informed me of. I flattered myself for some time, that I had brought over this man to the king; but rogues soon resume their natural character. Immediately after he had made this protestation to me, he made one quite the contrary to the cardinal of Bourbon, and afterwards to Villeroy and Jeannin, to whom he repeated all the conversation he had just held with me. If he drew advantage from his treachery, by the increase of favour it procured him, I, on my side, perhaps, made better use of it for the king, than if he had kept the secret: besides finding means from thence to inform these gentlemen of the king's disposition to embrace their religion, which drew them secretly towards this prince, Bellozanne's imprudence produced likewise another good consequence, which was the inspiring them with a desire of supplanting each other in their endeavours to acquire his favour. I willingly therefore pardoned Bellozanne's double knavery, and even drew a third fruit from it, with regard to the Durets.

THESE gentlemen, perceiving the honour Bellozanne had gained by the new secrets he had disclosed to his patrons, and the increase of favour they had procured him, were the more ready to hear the propositions I went afterwards to make them. I told them, the king, offended at the knavery of Bellozanne (which in reality he was, because he had carried it so far as to give umbrage to the protestants) would have no commerce for the future with a man so little to be depended on, and was disposed to make use of them in the measures he would shortly take. I confided some papers to their care, the reading of which I was certain would have a wonderful effect. This was the scheme for an agreement between the league and Spain, and the answer in consequence of it, which they had no knowledge of, and which I shewed to them that moment. This was a mortifying stroke for them; they thought themselves despised, and the project so reasonable as to fear it might be executed, and affairs brought to a conclusion without their participation; which to these sort of men seems

1592.

seems the greatest of all misfortunes. They hesitated not a moment in offering me earnestly their services for the king. The change of religion, which I had also insinuated to them, seemed to remove all the opposition that could be made to this prince. They were charmed at being employed in a scheme, the intention of which appeared to them more happy than that which the duke of Maienne had proposed to Spain: or rather there remained no other part for them to take, after the advantage Bellozanne had just gained over them. In effect, they kept the secret better, and laboured in it to more purpose.

I APPLIED myself afterwards to the abbé Du-Perron*, who by his character, his fame, and his eloquence, had more power with the cardinal of Bourbon, when he wanted him either to take or change a resolution, than all the artifices of Bellozanne and the Durets. We had been acquainted a long time, and he had received some favours from me. I concerted my discourse beforehand, as having to do with a man for whom eloquence, great sentiments, and deep reasoning, had powerful charms†; and I introduced into it as much or more of politics and worldly views as of religion. My brother, the governor of Mante, was present at this conversation, when after having slid into my discourse some mention of the king's future abjuration, I undertook to prove to Du-Perron, that except Spain and some turbulent persons in France, it was the interest and advantage, not only of France, but of all Europe, that the king of Navarre should ascend the throne, and possess the kingdom in the same extent, and with the same power, which had been enjoyed by the kings his predecessors.

I BEGAN with the pope. I told Du-Perron, that he who had so perfect a knowledge of the court of Rome, knew better than any other person, that Clement VIII. now in possession of the holy see, was neither so violent as Sixtus V. nor so mutable as Gregory XIV. That the pope considered the present affairs of Europe and christianity in a clear and impartial view. That it was not his intention, by breaking the necessary balance between the houses of Austria and Bourbon, to subject France to Spain, because he was not ignorant of any of the views of this last power for universal monarchy. That the pope

* James Davy-Du-Perron, afterwards bishop d'Evreux, and then cardinal: he will be mentioned hereafter.

† The duke of Sully's character of the

cardinal Du-Perron seems more conformable to truth, than that given him by Joseph Scaliger, who treats him only as a babler, *locutuleius*, or *locutu levis*.

1592.

would in this find not only his interest as common father of the catholics, but also his temporal interest in particular, because Italy and the patrimony of St. Peter would soon follow the destiny of France, and the other kingdoms; and the pope would be in danger of seeing himself one day reduced to the quality of chaplain to the kings of Spain. That besides, his holiness had too much judgment not to open his arms to a king, as soon as he should express his desire to be received there, without troubling himself about that mighty phrase a relapse, with which fools only were affected.

THERE WAS still less difficulty to be apprehended, with regard to my proposition, from the other crowned heads of Europe; I therefore did not dwell long upon them, that I might be at liberty to resume the conversation upon Spain. I asked the abbé Du-Perron, if he did not agree with me in the opinion, that those deep politicians who gave rise to all the disorders in France, began to despair of the success of the great project they had formed to conquer all France, and this upon the knowledge they had, as well of the king and the protestants in his interest, as of the French catholics. Could the king of Spain ever seriously intend to make a Spanish province of France, and flatter himself that his domination would be endured by a people, who had always emulated and hated Spain? Of all this there was already more than bare suspicion.

By the king of Spain's conduct it was plain, that he imagined the dukes of Maienne, Guise, and Mercœur, sought only to make him their dupe; nor had he a more favourable opinion of the dukes of Savoy and Lorraine, whom he saw make use of his troops and money without shewing any greater respect for him. One convincing proof that these were the real sentiments of Philip was, the propositions he had made, and often renewed, to the king of Navarre, by D. Barnardin de Mandoce, Moreau, and the count de Taxis. For, in reality, this prince seeing that all he could pretend to from the troubles in France was, at the most, the possession of two or three of its provinces, it was of little consequence to him, whether he obtained them from the king or the league. It is true, that if he divided France amongst the chiefs of the league, he gained hopes of one day getting it all to himself, by separately attacking those petty kings: but that, in effect, he purchased these hopes at a very high price, by that scarcity of troops and money into which the greediness of the league had thrown him. And although the king should be able to maintain the war but a short time, Philip perceived that he might be obliged

to recall the supplies he lent to France, having but sufficient for himself in Flanders, where the war raged more fiercely every day.

1592.

OBSERVING that Du-Perron listened to me attentively, and seemed to be convinced of the reasonableness of all I said, I did not so soon quit the subject of Spain. I told him it was not probable that so many brave men, fond of their liberty, their laws, and customs, would ever be easy under a foreign slavery, and resolve to bear away no other reward for their gallant actions, than the honour of being dependents upon the grandees of Spain, or at best pensionaries of a king, who although he had greater obligations to the prince of Parma than to any other person, suffered him to expect no reward of his services till his death: That the whole view of the French lords, by seeming to join the king of Spain, was only to procure the grant of greater rewards from Henry, while he continued in the profession of the protestant religion; after which they would abandon, without any difficulty, that hacknied reproach of a relapse, as well as the design of chusing a king from amongst themselves, the marriage of the infant, and all the rest of their idle projects. For a proof of the truth of what I said, I produced the treaty which the league had proposed to Henry, by Villeroy and Jeannin, soon after the raising of the siege of Rouen, which I have not given a full account of in its place, but shall lay before the reader immediately. After this, turning suddenly towards Du-Perron, I asked him if he was not of the interest of all good Frenchmen, and would not be the first himself to prevent such designs from being effected; whether the good of the state required, that by destroying in a moment an edifice which had cost the kings of France such labour to raise, and which some of them had cemented with their blood, France should be again filled with those little tyrants, ambitious and cruel, who claimed a right of giving law to their prince, and who were always ready to fly before the first enemies that attacked them? And lastly, if he did not confess that a monarchical government, by which all the members are united, and under the direction of one only head, was the most glorious and most advantageous of any, and for the French nation in particular?

I cut short my discourse upon this third party of politicians, by observing to Du-Perron, that one of these two things must necessarily happen, either that they would unite themselves to the league, and so deprive it of all assistance from Spain; or take measures separately from it, which would produce the necessity of destroy-

1592.

ing, or being destroyed by it. In any of these cases, nothing could happen that would not be for the king's advantage. To conclude with what related to the king himself, I found no difficulty in making the abbé confess, that this prince was absolutely fitted to reign over the French. I represented to him, that his reputation was so well established every where, that the league had great reason to fear, and the third party (whose interest and credit were but very small) still more, that in the provinces, where no one delivered himself up so blindly to the caprice of the league as in Paris, they would put themselves entirely under the protection of this prince, when their intoxication was over, and had given place to that love of rest so natural to those who have suffered a great deal. That the provinces began already to discover their discontent openly; but without that, could not the king, brave and experienced as he was, and assisted only by the protestants and foreigners, maintain the war a long time, and guard against domestic attempts upon his person? They had seen him when he had not ten cities in his party, and with only a handful of men, make a stand against all the forces of the kingdom. I concluded with saying, that instead of giving the enemies of France the pleasure of seeing her waste and destroy herself, it was the general interest, to favour and support a prince, who appeared capable of restoring her to her former tranquility, and of raising her to a new degree of splendor.

THE abbé Du-Perron had no reply to make to these arguments; he was convinced of their force; and, as I had expected, knew well how to bring over the cardinal of Bourbon to his opinion, by adding to them all those which his own penetration suggested to him, and which he did not fail to adorn with all the persuasive charms of eloquence. The remainder of this year, and the beginning of the next, were employed by him and I in going backwards and forwards, and in conferences of this kind. As soon as a negotiation was begun, we had more negotiators than we wished.

IT is certain, that Villeroy and Jeannin had a long time before presented the king with the scheme of a treaty, in the name of the league, by which they offered, upon certain conditions, to acknowledge him for king. This piece is curious enough to deserve an abstract should be given of it. The true spirit of the league discovered itself there plainly. The king's abjuration was at the head, as the first and principal condition. They required, that in the space of three months he should make a public profession of the catholic religion; that

that he should restore it in all those places from whence the superiority of the reformed had banished it; that he should break off all alliance with them; that they should have no share in the dignities, embassies, and employments of state of any kind whatever: in a word, that their continuance in France should be tolerated only, and for a certain time.

1592.

MANY other articles seemed to be inserted there only to persuade the people that the chiefs of the league, by treating with Henry, had nothing but the service of religion and the state in view. Such were the clauses of naming to benefices, conformable to the canons; that of holding the states from six to six years; and many others.

THESE were all specious conditions, but they added (which was the most essential point for the authors of the project) That the king should acknowledge, authorise, and support the league with all his power: That he should leave a certain number of towns in their hands, without even putting a garrison into them; the meaning of which was, that he should reign under them: That he should distribute all the governments of France amongst such of his principal officers as they should name to him: That he should keep a sufficient number of troops to maintain the roman-catholic religion there: That he should not dispose of the taxes, imposts, and other revenues of the crown; but they should be all applied to this use, according to a division proportioned to the quality and occasions of those governments: That all the garrisons which should be put in the fortresses of the kingdom should be paid in the same manner. The distribution of these governments was as follows: Provence was to be given to the duke of Nemours, Languedoc to the duke of Joyeuse, Bourbonnois and Marche to the duke of Elbeuf, Bretagne to the duke of Merceur, the two Vexins, with the title of governor, to d'Alincourt, part of Normandy to Villars, the Isle of France to the baron of Rosne, Orleanois and Berry to la Chatre, Picardy to the duke of Aumale, Champagne to the duke of Guise, with the post of high steward, and all the dignities and benefices which his family had enjoyed.

THE duke of Maïenne had, with reason, the largest share. To the government of Burgundy, which was allotted for him, they added those of Lyonnois, Forêt, and Beaujolois; and in all these provinces gave him a power that hardly left the king the shadow of any authority: the right of disposing, as he pleased, of governments, lord-

lieute-

1592.

lieutenancies, and other employments, not only in the army, but also in the finances, and courts of judicature; and what was still more, the nomination to ecclesiastical dignities and benefices: and to all these extraordinary advantages, they added the post of constable, or lieutenant-general of the crown. It was this only that seemed worthy of the duke of Maienne's acceptance. They likewise kept in reserve four *marchals batons**, and the league, at their own leisure, were to name the persons on whom they were to be bestowed; besides very considerable pensions to the most distinguished amongst them, they carried their violence so far as to lay the king under an obligation of clearing the debts of some considerable persons of their party whom they should name, to the number of twenty. And, to conclude, with absolutely tying up his hands, they added, that he should allow the league to chuse the foreign princes that were to accede to the treaty, and be guarantees for its execution. The pope's name only was expressed; doubtless, the blanks were to be filled up with the king of Spain amongst the rest. By this they too plainly acknowledged the views of the Spaniards. Charles V. required nothing else than such a scheme when he said, that he had been falsely accused of hating a king of France, since instead of one, he wished there had been twenty.

No person believed that the league, by treating with the king on conditions so injurious to this prince, could persuade themselves that he would submit to them. It was more than probable therefore, that they did it in order to make his refusal give disgust to the dregs of the people. The king likewise, far from treating these proposals as a serious matter, or answering them privately, as he would have done had he thought it possible to have come to any accommodation, sacrificed them immediately to the protestants, who gave this treaty all the epithets it deserved; it even turned the catholics against the author; for these catholics finding that all there was badly designed; that it was full of articles which, being only snares, would prove an inexhaustible source of difficulties; and that there were some which it was impossible to execute, they took no notice of what made the strongest impression upon them, which was, that by the distribution of favours and rewards, nothing remained for them.

* These four *marchals batons* were given the following year to Rosne, la Châtre, Bois-Dauphin, and Saint-Pol, each of whom will be mentioned hereafter.

On this occasion there is a *bon mot* related of Chanvalon. Sir, said he one day to the duke of Maienne, you have made bastards, which will be legitimated at your expence.

THE king making no other use of these proposals than to bind those who served him more closely to his interests, gave a very short and cool answer to the president Jeannin. It was at the camp before Caudebec. There is no necessity to repeat the contents.

1592.

CIVIL wars, especially those wherein religion has a share, give a freedom and boldness which on any other occasions would be very surprizing. Jeannin, offended at the ridicule with which his project had been treated, answered in writing, which he addressed to the king himself, That he was greatly astonished at his behaviour towards him: That if his project was well considered, he would find that he had not yet stipulated for sufficient advantages for the league: That the only fear he had when he drew it up was, that it would be disfavoured, especially by the duke of Nemours, who, instead of a government, had already formed a principality for himself in Lyonnois, with the approbation of the king of Spain: And he had still more reason to believe the duke of Maienne would be displeas'd at it, whose interests had been too much neglected in this treaty (certainly this moderation of Jeannin's was truly admirable :) That, in his opinion, he had shewn the king his readiness to serve him, by not mentioning his giving the league any towns as a security for the performance of his word (as if those which were to be bestowed upon the governors did not answer the same purpose :) That, to please the king, he had eluded the question, of making those governments hereditary. This indeed was true, but after the privileges he had invested them with, would it be difficult for them to seize this also?

JEANNIN afterwards observed to the king, with great freedom, or rather an excess of insolence, that the catholics having with justice taken arms against him, he ought not to make use of the words crime, and abolition; for they were entitled to treat with him upon the foot of an equal, because they did not look upon themselves as enemies subdued, nor him as king, while the cardinal of Bourbon, the only acknowledged king in France, was alive; nor even after his death could he claim that title, on account of his religion; therefore it was the body of the monarchy which treated with a foreign prince: that, for the same reason, the king's acceptation could not be called an edict of pacification, granted to a king by his subjects, but an amicable contract with a people, who freely chose a king after the reasons for refusing him were removed. Many other impertinences with which this letter was filled, do not deserve to be repeated. Jeannin concluded, by absolutely rejecting all assistance from messieurs de Bouillon, Du-Plessis, and the other protestants whom the king had mentioned

1593.

mentioned in his letter, and declared he would have no intercourse with them.

WHILE the king deliberated upon what resolutions he should take, the States were held at Paris*. The hint of assembling them came from the prince of Parma; and it must be confessed, that by the methods he pursued there, in order to accomplish his designs, a resolution more dangerous for the king's cause need not have been taken. This general intended to have summoned them at Rheims, and to have renewed all his endeavours to make himself master of the deliberations within; while, with a superior army without, he retained the people in his party, and the nobility in their duty, he persuaded himself that he should obtain an election entirely agreeable to the king of Spain, and cause the elected monarch to be crowned immediately. This whole plan was the effect of deep politics †: quick dispatch, great liberality, a well-chosen opportunity, and, above all, an army capable of inspiring awe, these were indeed the true means of bringing affairs to an issue, and of excluding the king for ever from them. But the prince of Parma dying just as he was upon the point of executing these projects, they all expired with him, or were afterwards conducted neither with order, diligence, or other necessary measures. It is true, that the count of Mansfield, who succeeded him, came at last with an army as far as Noyon; but at that time, the same submission was not made to Spain, as had been before they had entertained hopes of seeing the king abjure calvinism; and the count of Mansfield returned without having done any thing; besides, there was now an alteration in a circumstance, which to the prince of Parma had always appeared of great consequence; this was, that instead of getting the states assembled at Rheims, the duke of Maëne had prevailed upon the pope and the Spanish plenipotentiaries, who were don Diego d'Ibarra, the duke of Feria‡, Inigo de Mandoce, and count John-Baptist de Taxis, to consent that they should be assembled at Paris. Each of these persons hoped, that in a city which was entirely in their interests by their alliances, their intrigues, and their presents, they might practise a thousand artifices to engage all the suffrages for themselves:

* The States were ordered to meet the 25th of January, but they were not opened till next day, in the Louvre, which was prepared for that purpose. All the speeches, acts, and ceremonies of this assembly, may be found in many of the historians. See particularly de Thou, book cv. Davila, book xiii. Memoirs of the league, vol. V. Villeroi, Mem. of State, vol. IV. Mem.

of Nevers, vol. II. Matthieu, vol. II. Chron. Novenn. for the year 1593. book v. Satyre Menippée, &c.

† See the duke of Parma's letter on this subject to the king of Spain, Chron. Novenn. book iv. fol. 5.

‡ Laurent. Saurès de Figueroa y Cordua, duke of Feria.

1593.

but when this great disorderly body was assembled, they found themselves crossed by so many, and such different interests, that the Spaniards having only their own voices, like the rest, and destitute besides of the means of making them be heard by force, found that they should meet with more obstacles than they had foreseen; and from that time they feared, that they should draw no other advantage from all their intrigues and secret practices, than the embroiling affairs some time longer; till this entanglement of so many different views, and the impossibility of ever uniting them, would at length oblige them to obey the dictates of reason.

How would they be able to bring the pope into their measures, or rather his legates, who had each his particular design, the king of Spain, the dukes of Savoy and Lorraine, the dukes of Maïenne, Nemours, Merceur, and Guise, in fine, the princes of the blood, who had also their different designs *, of which they were no less tenacious? All those factions, when the states were opened, reflecting that this was the last effort of the party, had recourse to a thousand stratagems which destroyed each other, and according to the notion of what is called policy, involved and concealed themselves under false measures to bring others to the purpose they desired. To the great number of counsels already so perplexing, they added a flux and reflux of opinions, which formed a maze where no person knew where he was. No one declared his sentiments at first, but seemed to speak only to hide his emulation, and to make his real designs be guessed at.

THE Spaniards at this juncture regulated their conduct by their usual maxim, and the particular cast of their nation; or perhaps their design was to sound the inclinations of the French, to discover if they would bear willingly a foreign prince to reign over them. When they perceived that by this delay they were in danger of losing what they had been so long aiming at, they at last made the most reasonable proposition in their power, which was the marriage of the infant

* "The league was of this advantage to France," says le Grain, "that every one was willing to command in it, and none to obey."

† Clara Eugenia of Austria, second daughter of Philip II. of Spain. Catherine, the eldest, was married to the duke of Savoy, but not till after the cardinal of Placentia, legate, and cardinal de Pellevé,

had endeavoured, in vain, to bring France under subjection to Spain, by the marriage of this infant with prince Ernest of Austria, the eldest of the emperor's brothers. Villeroy's Memoirs of state impute to the court of Madrid, as an error, by which Spain lost the crown of France, their not suffering this infant, the future queen, to come to France, unless the prince whom

1593.

with the cardinal of Bourbon. All the French nobles, with the Guises at their head, waited only for this step of the Spaniards, and concurred in one common design, which was, to make use of this proposal to kindle between the king and cardinal all the hatred that could animate two declared rivals, and consequently between the king and the leaders of the contrary party, the count of Soissons, the duke of Nevers, Longueville, and others. They suffered this proposition to be carried so far, as to have the articles drawn up and sent by Bellozanne to the cardinal; but the nobles afterwards uniting, knew how to put a stop to it, which they did, with a design that may be easily penetrated into, in order that what these lords took away from the cardinal and the princes of the blood might fall into their own power, as the princes of the blood, by seeming to resign their hopes in favour of the cardinal, had an oblique view towards themselves; which shewed them, that after him the crown would more easily revert to them, than if a foreigner had first possessed it. The Spaniards comprehended the meaning of all the intrigues of the princes of Lorraine, and, one may easily imagine, never forgave them.

THIS common interest of the nobles, which united them against Spain and the princes of the blood, divided them afterwards into as many factions as there were persons. Each thought himself most worthy of the diadem. Jealousy and malice soon actuated the whole party to such a degree, that each disputed for the crown, for the sole pleasure of hindering another from obtaining it. Some of these parties objected to one person only, and comforted himself for not being able to succeed in his own designs, if he could overthrow his. Of this class was the clergy, which, without naming any person for the throne, used only their utmost endeavours to hinder the king of Navarre from being elected. Another undertook to supplant two, three, or more of the competitors: but there was not one from any of these motives who was capable of forming a party so much supe-

they desired for her husband was declared and acknowledged; but I doubt whether the arrival of this princess at Paris would have removed all obstacles. According to de Thou, the duke of Guise's party was so powerful, by the union of Spain and the clergy of France, that had not his own uncle, the duke of Maienne, secretly opposed him, and the king of Navarre declared very seasonably his resolution to em-

brace the catholic religion, in all probability this prince would have been declared king. "The duke of Guise," says father de Chalons, after Matthieu, Hist. of France, vol. III. p. 227. "was praised for the moderation he discovered on this occasion. He gave no indications of his having flattered himself with such agreeable hopes, nor shewed any solicitude for so great a fortune."

rior to the others, as to bear down all its opposers. The people, although generally the slaves of prejudice to one particular candidate, were here, by the number of them, hindered from determining. And upon this occasion it happened, as has been often experienced, that adopting the style of that sort of indifferent and neutral persons who are always to be found in public assemblies, an affair of this importance was turned into a mere shew, and caused only laughter at the unhappy candidates who were rejected.

BUT these intrigues, this play of falsehoods, could not last long; in such sort of debates, the first resolutions, and the first motions, are suggested by the passions. If by a concurrence of causes they are prevented from succeeding, reason, though it slowly appears in tumultuous assemblies, yet forces itself at last to be seen and acknowledged, and after long opposition is followed through necessity. The first thing that was done on this occasion was by means of the parliament, which weighing deliberately the different proposals that were brought upon the carpet, either for a Spanish king, or one of Lorraine, found that it would be an everlasting reproach to them, to suffer a law so fundamental as the hereditary right of succession to be infringed, and began, without knowing what would be the consequence, by granting an edict * which forbid the carrying the crown out of the royal family. This was far from being a new thought; there was not one whose mind had not suggested it to him, and who was not conscious of the injustice of acting contrary to it.

THE claims of royal family began to appear sacred to a thousand persons, who a moment before had not reflected on them. Spain, whose attempt was frustrated by this edict, might have still warded off

* The edict was passed the 28th of June. "This action," says Villeroy, vol. II. page 58. "was the more applauded by all good men, as the danger that attended it was so great; it was certainly of great use, and I must say, that the kingdom owed its safety to the courts." John le Maitre, although made president of the parliament of the league by the duke of Maienne, the president Edward Molé, the counsellors William du Vair, afterwards keeper of the seals, Stephen Fleury, Peter d'Amours, Lazarus Coqueley, &c. were the chief promoters of this edict: in con-

sequence of it, the president le Maitre, with the counsellors de Fleury and d'Amours, were deputed that same day, to make remonstrances to the duke of Maienne, as lieutenant-general of the crown. The duke complained bitterly of this affront from the parliament; and the archbishop of Lyons, who was with him, having repeated the word *affront* in a passion, and treated the deputies with bad language, the president le Maitre silenced him with great authority and dignity. See vol. IX. of the Memoirs of the league. Memoirs of Nevers, vol. II. page 635.

1593.

the blow, had she united with the Lorrains, whom it equally struck at; but the more she thought she was entitled to depend upon their suffrages, the more irreconcilable was her enmity toward them, when she found they had betrayed her. They made her no offers, and their constant misunderstanding insensibly paved the way for the victory of their common adversary.

To accomplish this, there remained but one step to be taken, which was prevented by the strong opposition of the clergy*. A stop therefore was put to the affair for some time: they resumed, as if for amusement, some of their former worn-out projects. Different hopes were again raised to be soon and effectually extinguished; for there was not one person who did not tacitly confess, that if the king † abjured calvinism, all contest would be at an end. Every one voted for the engaging him to comply with this demand, and they applied themselves to it, not slightly as before, but from a more clear and distinct view of the true interest of the state: a view which from this moment became that of the parliament, and the whole people, and which met with no more opposition, but what some nobles for their personal interest were pleased to give it.

THE dukes of Maienne, Nemours, and Mercœur, were the most difficult to be persuaded into these measures, as was most natural, considering that they, of all others, had flattered themselves with hopes of the greatest advantages: but bad as their intentions were, they could not hinder a conference with the king from being proposed, and passed by a plurality of voices in the states. It was, however, in their power to destroy or suspend the effect, and they did not fail to do so: for this purpose they used their utmost endeavours, they set their emissaries to work, took advantage of the king's ‡ bad fortune at

* All the Memoirs of these times confirm the violent proceedings and outrageous behaviour of the cardinal de Plefance, legate, and of almost all the bishops of France, and curates of Paris and the Sorbonne. “*Débourbonnez-nous, Seigneur,*” was the explication a preacher gave of these words of scripture, *Eripe me, Domine, de luto factis*. There are an infinite number of such circumstances, the malignity of which cannot surely be excused by zeal for the true religion. De Thou observes, that

the clergy was the only one of the three estates that persisted in voting for a war.

† It is clear at this time, that Henry IV. was not only the lawful heir to the crown, that was never disputed, but also that in his person the three races of our kings were united. See a proof in a new work entitled, Genealogical histories of all the sovereign families, in the 22d genealogical table.

‡ The journey which Henry IV. took towards Tours, and the necessity to which Selles,

Selles, caused Mansfield to advance, who took Noyon, gave all the force they were able to the pope's refusing to allow the cardinal de Gondy *, and the marquis de Pisany, whom the king had sent to him, to enter Rome, or any of his holiness's territories. Could they flatter themselves, that the irregularity of these proceedings would not be commented upon, after having so often protested, that in all their actions they had only the interest of religion in view, and that they were ready to submit to Henry as soon as he should quit his erroneous opinions. No person was deceived; and although they prevented all the consequences which the conference held at Surêne, in the month of April †, might have produced, it was thought the last effort of an expiring power. It appeared plainly, that if the king, after having consented that no protestant deputy should appear at that conference, had not yet entirely complied, it was because the leaguers raised more difficulties about temporal, than the king about spiritual matters. The people, especially, were disposed to do him justice, and the sweets of a truce, which was the only benefit resulting from his conference, drew them entirely into his interests. But I now return more particularly to this prince.

1593.

HE made Manté the place of his constant residence, where all his prudence was scarce sufficient to keep a party, composed of persons so opposite in their sentiments, together. He had been alarmed, at first, with the convention of the states; and with so much the more reason, as the first thought which suggested itself to his mind on that occasion, was, that an assembly, in appearance so august and respectable, would soon find a remedy for the disorders of the state. Under this apprehension, the king began to flatter the catholics more than usual; and, as we have just seen, made some efforts to gain the pope, to the end that he might not extinguish in both parties the only hope that could hinder them from coming to an open rupture with him. It may be easily imagined, that this could not be done

he reduced himself of raising the siege of the city of Selles in Berry, were then thought very considerable faults.

* Peter de Gondy, bishop of Paris. John de Vivonne, marquis of Pisany.

† In the latter end of April, and during part of the month of May. See in the records, vol. 8889 of MSS. in the royal library. Villeroi's Mem. of state, vol. IV. Matthieu and Cayet, *ibid.* &c.

The archbishop of Bourges, who pleaded the king's cause, maintained that obedience is due to pagan princes, and supported this assertion by the authority of St. Paul, the privileges of the Gallic church, and by many other unanswerable proofs. Weak as the arguments alledged by the archbishop of Lyons to the contrary were, they carried their point in this conference.

without

1593.

without awakening the discontent of the huguenots. But the king by his wisdom was beforehand with them, and it appeared, that nothing was done but in consequence of that general council of the protestants, of which we have already seen that the result has been to turn every thing into art and negotiation. When their complaints grew too loud, and the king found reason to fear that they would carry things to extremity against him, he knew how to appease them by some new military expedition, which he likewise engaged in, to convince the people still more, that a prince, who, by his kind and gracious behaviour appeared deserving of their love, was, by his valour and abilities in war, no less worthy of their obedience.

As soon as he was informed of the disunion that raged in the states, the confusion and opposition that every word gave rise to, he looked upon this assembly to be the happy means by which his designs would be accomplished, and all his perplexity now was the regulating his conduct with the great number of mediators who meddled in his affairs, as soon as it was proposed in the states to treat with him. This prince would at that time have met with no obstacle to retard his gaining possession of the crown, if he had appeared willing to satisfy the excessive demands which the nobles and other members of the league began to make him; but he was resolved that posterity should never reproach him with his having owed the royal dignity to his meanness in submitting to the rapaciousness and caprice of his subjects. That he was thus able to resist his natural inclination and ardor to ascend the throne, was a convincing proof of his being worthy of it.

I OUGHT here to do justice to some of them (the number indeed is not very great) but I am well assured that * messieurs de Belliévre, de Belin, and Zamet, had no view to their own interests in those applications which they made to the king. Some others there might be who behaved in the same manner, but of them I cannot speak with any certainty. As to the rest, I shall content myself with naming the principal agents deputed to the king, as well by the league and the states, as by the clergy and French nobility. I shall not repeat names already mentioned, but add to them only the cardinal de Gondy, the marechals d'Aumont and de Bouillon, the admiral de Biron, messieurs d'O, de Vitry, de Lux, Du-Plessis, la Verriere, de

* Pomponne de Belliévre. Francis de Foudoas d'Averton. Sebastian Zamet.

Fleury, and the abbé de Chesy. A great many others remained undistinguished in this croud, although there was not one amongst them, who was not persuaded in his own mind, that he should be one day mentioned in history, as the person who had brought affairs to a conclusion. I once counted over to the king, by their names, above a hundred of those persons. These that remained would make a very fine figure here, if one could for a moment only open and display the hearts of these ardent counsellors. Vanity, the desire of favour, self-interest, vile artifice, jealousy, knavery, and treachery, would be all one would discover there.

1593.

THERE were some, who till the last moment did not quit their disguise, by which they abused the privilege of conferring with this prince, in order to betray him more securely, and to spread snares for him, which any other could not have escaped. It is with regret, that I name Villeroy * and Jeannin here, but the fact is too well known, and the confusion they were afterwards in, when the king publicly reproached them with it at Fontainbleau, is a full conviction of it, as well as the interested conduct Villeroy afterwards observed. Two days only before the king's abjuration, these gentlemen pro-

* In the first volume of Villeroy's Memoirs of state, which consists only of a justification of this secretary's conduct, he candidly confesses that he would never have been prevailed upon to engage in the party of Henry IV. if he had not beforehand taken all the necessary measures for the security of the catholic religion. He confesses also, with the same sincerity, his connections with the league and Spain, and the political principle which he had espoused, that in making peace, it was most advantageous for the king to separate him from the interest of England, and unite him with Spain. With regard to other accusations, he defends himself with great force: He protested, that he never received any money from Spain; and whatever arguments he offered, either in the states or any other councils, were sincerely meant for the king's advantage, and to forward the peace. See the note upon this subject some pages above, and what is said in the preface to this work. As to the oath taken by the league, which the duke of Sully

here mentions, and which is the heaviest article against Villeroy, he is so fully justified in Matthieu, vol. II. p. 153. and following, Chron. Novenn. book v. fol. 229. and some other historians, that it must be confessed, that this is an error in our Memoirs. According to these historians, Villeroy had not only no part in this oath, but was also absolutely ignorant of it, till Henry IV. showed him this writing at Fontainbleau, and charged him to remonstrate the baseness of such a proceeding to the duke of Maienne, whom Villeroy was at that time by the king's command, honestly endeavouring to separate from the league. But it is still more certain that Villeroy reproaching the duke of Maienne with this criminal design, Maienne answered him in these words, "I would neither tell you, nor the president Jeannin of this oath, because I promised the Spaniards and the league to the contrary, and was not ignorant that you would never be brought to approve of such a remedy." Matthieu, p. 155.

cured

1593.

cured a secret assembly to be held, composed of the pope's, and the king of Spain's ministers, and the chief partisans of the league, either in person, or by proxy, for the dukes of Nemours and Mercœur, men then absent. In this assembly, the legate made them all swear, upon the cross, the evangelists, and even the host, to maintain the league, till they saw, upon the throne of France, a king agreeable to Spain, and, above all, never to acknowledge the king of Navarre for such, though he should, to the claim his birth gave him, add that of a sincere abjuration. This very pious and charitable oath, signed by the whole assembly, was inclosed in a packet, and sent to Rome. It was from a letter wrote by the cardinal of Placentia to some members of parliament, the bearer of which was taken up at Lyons by the king's soldiers, that we came to the knowledge of this oath. In this manner did they sport with fidelity, virtue, and religion. This circumstance, though anticipated, seems to me not improperly mentioned here.

AMONGST that croud of negotiators and counsellors there were many who imagined they could deceive the king, while in reality they deceived themselves. The king let them remain in this opinion, not to persuade these schemers, but the people, that he might be easily brought to the point they wished. This I had from the king himself. I remember one night, which was, I believe, on the 15th of February, when all the courtiers had quitted his apartment, he sent Feret, his secretary, to bring me to him, who introduced me into his chamber, where I found him in bed. He owned to me, that he was under a necessity of using this precaution whenever he had an inclination to converse with me, that he might not give disgust to the catholics, and the protestants likewise, who hated me still more, perhaps, through jealousy, than the former did through a natural aversion. After complaining of this restraint in terms very obliging to me, he talked to me of those affairs which were at present upon the carpet, and of the intrigues of the courtiers to obtain each separately the honour of the decision. I had said before, and it has been repeated to the king, that I was afraid his easy disposition would make him give up more than he ought to do. But the manner in which this prince represented to me the state of affairs, and painted the different characters of all the pretenders to his favour, convinced me I had been deceived. I was surprized at that justness of penetration with which he immediately discerned truth amidst the shades that obscured it. Nor was I less charmed, when submitting his knowledge to mine, he insisted upon

upon my prescribing to him the manner in which he should finish an affair which, to confess the truth, was not without danger till the last moment. I endeavoured to excuse myself from accepting this honour, but all I could obtain was a delay of three days to take my resolution: it was during this conversation that the king first mentioned to me his design of entrusting his finances to my care.

AFTER three days deep reflection, I waited upon the king with the same secrecy as before. I did not approve of any of these schemes that had been recommended to him, and which differed only in the proportion of those rewards which were to be granted to the members of the league, and other interested persons. My opinion was, that matters were not yet ripe for a conclusion, which I supported with the following reasons: That the king was freed from that only fear which could induce him to put a precipitate end to the present negotiations, by which I meant the fear that all these competitors for royalty should unite resolutely in favour of one particular person, because the misunderstanding which had already risen amongst the princes, the nobles, and the Spanish ministers, gaining strength every day, we might expect to see them soon destroy each others pretensions. From whence it must necessarily happen, that those who were disinterested, and had right intentions, would bind themselves more closely to the king's party: That this effect was already indisputable, with regard to those cities of France which were at too great a distance from the league, and the cabal, to be influenced by that eagerness and warmth which actuated them: That the heads of the league themselves, through hatred, jealousy, or even a consideration of their own interest, would one after the other, throw themselves into the king's party: That the bare hopes only which this prince would suffer them to entertain, would give him beforehand most of those advantages he could gain from the accomplishment of them, without hazarding any thing: That the dangers of a too precipitate execution were, first, an open desertion of the protestants, who were not yet sufficiently prepared for this change, which might produce the most fatal consequences, since the king, not being yet secure of all the catholics to oppose them, would remain at the mercy of both parties; and, secondly, the necessity he laid himself under, by throwing himself into the arms of the catholics, of granting all their demands, however exorbitant they were, which, both for the present and the future, was of dangerous consequence: That it was necessary to allow these schemers, and all the chiefs of the league, time to give a distinct form to their demands, by

1593.

which they would perceive, that they were encroaching upon each other, and they would be obliged voluntarily to reduce their extravagant pretensions, to agree that by setting too high a value upon slight services they would put it out of the king's power to satisfy them, and at length to seek their own interest in the general interest of the state. I told the king, that he would find the first who took this step, would be those, who, having only been influenced by the foreign powers to demand rewards which they were perhaps desirous of sharing with them, would begin to be sensible of the injustice of their proceedings in proportion as their hatred of those foreigners increased: and that those very foreigners, finding the king so ready to comply with the demands that were made upon him, would prevail upon others to ask for what they did not believe they could obtain for themselves.

I shewed the king, that, whatever change should happen in his affairs, it could not be so sudden, but he would have it in his power to prevent it, since the speaking a few words only would answer that purpose; whereas, by gaining time, he would discover all their designs; and secretly breaking those connections between them, all that remained to put an absolute end to the treaty, would be to bestow rewards upon those who had a right to demand them. To bring affairs happily to this end, I saw nothing better to be done, than for the king to persist in the conduct he had hitherto observed. To receive every one kindly, promise little, seem desirous of bringing matters to a conclusion, ascribe always the fault of delays to obstacles, and earnestly endeavour to remove them. This, in my opinion, is the manner in which one generally ought to act in political affairs which are a little perplexed. It is well known that the difference between precipitation and diligence is, that this last, as much a foe to inaction and sloth as the other, engages in nothing without having first consulted judgment upon it; while in the practice they are almost always confounded.

In these arguments which I made use of to the king, his supposed conversion was always the foundation I built upon; and his majesty, by contradicting none of them, gave me to understand, that he would not be stopped by that formality. I added only one thing more, which was, that he would not suffer this negotiation to degenerate into mere debates, as his adversaries did, but join some military expedition to it. Having many other reasons to add, I offered the king to give them to him in writing. His majesty replied, there was no occasion for it; that he believed he comprehended all I could have

have to say to him; and that when he had more leisure, he would discourse with me upon a system, by which it seemed to him, that after having united himself to the catholics, it would not be impossible to reconcile them to the protestants.

1593.

THAT this resolution might be fully executed, the king, at his return to Mante, after the breaking off the conference of Surène, caused others wholly upon the subject of religion*, to be held between the catholic priests, and the protestant clergy, at which he was always present; and, on the other hand, made preparations for opening the campaign, in the month of April, by some action of importance, rather indeed to keep up his reputation with the people, than with design to continue in earnest a war, which for want of money he was unable to support.

THIS designed expedition was the siege of Dreux, for which the king borrowed a large sum of money from the city of Mante; and leaving that place about the beginning of April, came to pass the river of Eure at Serisy, while I on my side assembled, and led the necessary artillery. The admiral de Biron †, by the king's order, invested the city, which made little resistance: all the difficulty lay in taking the castle, and especially the tower Grise, which was impenetrable to the cannon. I promised the king to carry it, if he would give me four English and Scots miners, and a certain number of workmen. My enterprise did not fail to furnish matter for laughter and contempt to my enemies, who eagerly seized this occasion to mortify me. The king, though very doubtful of my success, granted my request. I led my miners and pioneers to the foot of the tower, where to guard them against the fire, and efforts of the besieged, I covered them with mantlets, and strong pieces of wood, and made them apply so closely, and with such eagerness to the work, that out of six and thirty pioneers, which was my whole number, four only could labour at a time: the excessive hardness of the stone exhausted their strength, and covered them with sweat the instant they began to work, but I caused them to be relieved immediately by four others; so that the work was not discontinued for one moment, although the enemies within endeavoured to destroy them, by throwing down large pieces of stone, and firing incessantly upon them.

* At la Villette, at Pontoise, at Mante, and elsewhere.

† Charles de Gontaut, son to the mar-

chal, to whom the king gave the title of admiral.

1593.

WHEN I found that, notwithstanding this vigorous defence, I had the very first day made an opening five feet in height, three in width, and four in depth, I believed the success infallible. Six days were consumed in this work. I enclosed three or four hundred pounds of excellent powder, in several cavities of six or seven feet square, in the thickest part of the wall, which I shut up with strong stones cemented together with plaster, leaving a passage only for two large saucifles of dry hides filled with good powder, the end of which reached to the powder within, and joined on the outside of the tower a train to which the fire was to be put. The duke of Montpensier, desirous of seeing the disposition of this machine, received a musket shot there in his face. Every one waited impatiently for my confusion, which was all the result expected from this great work. And when they were informed of the time when I was to set fire to it, they eagerly assembled to behold the effect, which was not indeed immediate: for at first a low sound was heard, accompanied with a thick smoke, during which a thousand contemptuous glances were cast upon me, and I was forced to endure as many strokes of raillery upon my mine; but I soon had my revenge. A few minutes after, a thick cloud of smoke rose as high as the tower, and, at the same instant, we saw it divide exactly into two parts, one of which fell, dragging men, women, and children with it, who were buried under its ruins. The other part continued still standing, but in such a condition, that we could behold under its uncovered roof all those that were within, who terrified and astonished at such an horrible accident, and at our soldiers firing immediately upon them, sent forth most lamentable cries. The king, moved with compassion, ordered the fire to cease, and sending for those miserable objects, gave a crown to each of them. The castle instantly surrendered, and this once I was sure, that the government of a city, taken almost wholly by my means, would not be refused me. But d'O enjoyed the triumph of gaining it from me, and I yielded it to him, after the king had represented to me, that the terms he was upon with the catholic party made it impossible to disoblige them on so slight an occasion.

THE king stopped only to perform a few more such little expeditions, and returned immediately to Mante, to resume his conferences. This alternate succession of war, and debates, lasted all the time that the states continued to be held, and even till the day that the king abjured the protestant religion. I should betray the cause of truth, if

I suf-

I suffered it to be even suspected, that policy, the threats of the catholics, the fatigue of labour, the desire of rest, and of freeing himself from the tyranny of foreigners, or even the good of the people, though highly laudable in itself, had entirely influenced the king's last resolution. As far as I am able to judge of the heart of this prince, which I believe I know better than any other person, it was indeed these considerations which first hinted to him the necessity of his conversion; and I confess that I myself suggested no others to him, fully persuaded, as I have always been, although a calvinist, from what I have gathered from the most learned of the protestant clergy, that God is no less honoured in the catholic, than in the protestant church. But at length the king was fully convinced that the catholic faith * was the securest. That native candour and sincerity which I always observed in this prince, persuades me, that he would not have been able, during all the remainder of his life, to carry on such a fallacy.

THE confession I make here ought not to be judged harshly of. It is not surprizing that Henry, who never heard any arguments about religion, but in these conferences, and continual controversies †, should suffer himself to be drawn on that side, which they took care to make always victorious. For it must be observed as an effect of the king's prudent delays, that every one, even the protestants, nay more, the protestant clergy who were employed in the conferences, were at last thoroughly convinced that the king's change of religion was a circumstance absolutely necessary for the good of the state, for peace, and even for the advantage of both religions; so that there was a kind of general combination to draw him to it. The protestant cler-

* This is the answer M. de Perfixe says he made to a protestant minister, who in a disputation with the romish doctors, was driven to confess that a man might be as well saved in their communion. The confession here made, lays Sully open to a very sensible attack.

† All these discourses of the cardinals and prelates of France, whether intended to enlighten his understanding, or increase his zeal, may be found in the volume of MS. in the king's library, marked 9214.

The sincerity of his conversion is there proved by the following circumstances, his

respect for the pope, the cardinals, and the whole clergy, his sollicitude for the conversion of the young prince of Condé, his alliance with the pope, by marrying the princess of Florence, his endeavours to cultivate a good intelligence between the sovereign pontif and the queen of England, the marriage of his sister with the duke of Bar, the erection of the hospital for sick, and other buildings, the sepulchre of our Lord, and the holy places, the satisfaction which he shewed at the victory gained over the calvinists by the bishop of Evreux, &c.

1593.

gy either defended themselves no longer, or did it so weakly, that their adversaries had always the advantage.

THE abbé Du-Perron, whose triumph there was complete, was not a man that would lose the fruits of his victory. With that soft and insinuating conversation, that strong and persuasive eloquence, that inexhaustible fund of learning, supported by a wonderful memory, he could neither be overthrown, nor convicted of falsehood, but by the help of a whole library; a sort of languishing defence. With princes, the progression from complaisance to flattery is very easy. Some of the protestant clergy, who were most about the king, and whom he consulted upon his difficulties, formally betrayed * their faith; or, by a designed perplexity, flattered that religion which they already looked upon to be their king's.

THE leaders of the protestant party were not so easily brought to comply with the present exigency. They were often absolutely untractable. It was in vain to remonstrate to them, that by their obstinacy the king would lose the crown, and that since it was necessary it should be possessed by a catholic prince, it was an advantage to them, that this prince was the same who had so long been affectionately united with them, and upon whose friendship they had all the reason imaginable to depend. They had flattered themselves, that they should see a prince of their own faith upon the throne, and that calvinism should be the established religion in France. They thought it hard to be deprived of this advantage. Self-love in all religions makes such a loss be looked upon as irreparable †.

THE king experienced this excess of discontent, when some of the chief cities in the kingdom, that had been suffered to groan under the oppression of an infinite number of little tyrants, first applied to his majesty, and deputed the count of Belin to demand of him the freedom of commerce. Henry was either at Mante, or at Vernon, when

* D'Aubigné names some of those protestants; he observes also, that the marchioness de Monceaux, the king's mistress, acted the same part, in the hope of becoming queen herself, if Henry should be declared king. Vol. III. book iii. chap. 22.

† "If I follow your advice," replied Henry IV. to a clergyman named la Faye, who addressed him in the name of the pro-

testant party, "there will in a little time be neither a king or kingdom in France. It is my desire to give peace to all my subjects, and quiet to my own soul; consider among yourselves what is most necessary for your own security, you shall always find me ready to satisfy you." Chron. Novenn. *ibid*.

the count of Belin came to make him this proposition, which he would not receive but in the presence of his whole council. There was not a protestant there, who appeared willing he should grant it; and what is still more surprizing, it met with equal opposition from the catholics, without their being able to assign a lawful, or even a plausible reason, for such a conduct. All these persons were perplexed in their debates, and perceived plainly that their opinion would signify nothing, yet could not prevail upon themselves to alter it. The king looking at me that moment, "Monsieur de Rosny," said he to me, "what makes you so thoughtful? Will not you speak your mind absolutely no more than the others?" I took the word, and was not afraid to declare myself against all those that had voted, by maintaining, that it was necessary not to hesitate a moment in completing the gaining the people over to the king's interests, by an instance of kindness which he might revoke if they made a bad use of it. This advice raised a cry of disapprobation, which I have always regarded as a retaliation for that consent I had extorted from the council (which has been mentioned before.) The king was obliged to yield to their importunity, and the count of Belin returned without success.

HENRY, reflecting upon this refusal, and judging that there wanted but little more of the same nature to alienate the people's affections from him, without a possibility of regaining them, and to induce them to go over to the party of his enemies, he resolved to defer his abjuration no longer. He was now convinced that there was no probability of his subduing the reluctance of several of the protestants, or of ever obtaining their free consent to this proceeding*; but that it was necessary to act independently of them, and hazard some murmurs, which would end in nothing. As for the catholics of his party, the king endeavoured only to remove their fears that, looking upon them as persons of whom he was already secure, he would apply himself wholly to the gaining the rest, by bestowing all rewards upon them. He therefore at last declared publicly, that on the 20th of July he would perform his abjuration, and named the church of St. Denis for this ceremony.

* Henry IV. was always sensible, that his abjuration would expose him to great dangers, which made him write in this manner to mademoiselle d'Éstrées. "On Sunday I shall take a dangerous leap. While I am writing to you, I

"have a hundred troublesome people about me, which makes me detest St. Denis as much as you do Mante," &c. See the new edition of Henry the Great's letters.

1593.

THIS declaration threw the league into confusion, and filled the hearts of the people, and the catholics of the royal party with joy. The protestants, although they had expected it, discovered their discontent by signs, and low murmurs, and did for form's sake all that such a juncture required of them; but they did not go beyond the bounds of obedience. All the ecclesiastics, with Du-Perron, intoxicated with his triumph, at their head, flocked together; every one was desirous of a share in this work. Du-Perron, for whom I had obtained the bishopric of Evreux, thought he could not shew his gratitude for it in a better manner, than by exercising his function of converter upon me. He accosted me with the air of a conqueror, and proposed to me to be present at a ceremony, where he flattered himself he should shine with such powers of reasoning as would dissipate the profoundest darkness. "Sir," replied I, "all I have to do by being present at your disputes, is to examine which side produces the strongest and most effectual arguments. The state of affairs, your number and your riches, require that yours should prevail." In effect they did. There was a numerous court at St. Denis, and all was conducted with great pomp and splendor. I may be dispensed with dwelling upon the description of this ceremony here, since the catholic historians* have been so prolix upon that subject.

I DID not imagine I could be of any use at this time; therefore kept myself retired as one who had no interest in the shew that was preparing, when I was visited by Du-Perron, whom the cardinal of Bourbon had sent to me, to decide a dispute that had arose on occasion of the terms in which the king's profession of faith should be conceived. The catholic priests and doctors loaded him with all the trifles their heads were filled with, and were going to make it a ridiculous, instead of a grave and solemn composition. The protestant ministers, and the king himself disapproved † of the puerilities and trifles with which they had stuffed this instrument, and it occasioned debates which had like to have thrown every thing again into confusion.

* See, besides the abovementioned historians, Mezerai, and the volume of MS. marked 8935, in the king's library, where may be found likewise the letter written to his holiness by the king, the commission given to M. Du-Perron, when he went to Rome to make a tender of obedience

to the pope, and the king's declaration of the motives on which he was converted, &c.

† "There is no necessity to mention a requiem," said Henry IV. "I am not dead yet."

I WENT immediately with Du-Perron to the cardinal of Bourbon, with whom it was agreed, that none of these articles of faith which were controverted by the two churches, should be omitted, but that all the rest should be suppressed as useless. The parties approved of this regulation, and the * instrument was drawn up in such a manner, that the king acknowledged there all the roman tenets upon the Holy Scripture, the church, the number and ceremonies of the sacraments, the sacrifice of the mass, transubstantiation, the doctrine of justification, the invocation of saints, the worship of relics and images, purgatory, indulgences, and the supremacy and power of the pope †. After which the satisfaction was general ‡.

* See the original of it in the old Memoirs. Du-Plessis Mornay, and Mezerai after him, reproached the king and the catholics, apparently without any cause, that this first instrument which they suppressed, was however the same that was sent to the pope, as if the king had composed, written, and signed it with his own hand, but in reality counterfeited, by monsieur Lomenie. These are his own words, book i. p. 198. book ii. p. 207.

† Another act of equal validity, by which Henry IV. acknowledges the pope's authority, is the declaration which he made after his conversion, that it was necessity and the confusion of affairs that obliged him to receive absolution from the prelates of France, rather than from those of the holy father. This declaration is recorded in the third volume of Villeroy's Memoirs of state, p. 61.

‡ It was Renaud, or Beaune de Samblançai, archbishop of Bourges, who received the king's abjuration; the cardinal of Bourbon, who was not a priest, and nine other bishops, assisted at the cere-

mony. Henry IV. entering the chapel of St. Denis, the archbishop said to him, "Who are you?" Henry replied, "I am the king." "What is your request?" said the archbishop. "To be received," said the king, "into the pale of the catholic, apostolic, and roman church." "Do you desire it?" added the prelate. "Yes, I do desire it, replied the king. Then kneeling, said, "I protest and swear, in the presence of almighty God, to live and die in the catholic, apostolic, and roman religion; to protect and defend it against all its enemies, at the hazard of my blood and life, renouncing all heresies contrary to this catholic, apostolic, and roman church." He afterwards put this same confession in writing, into the hands of the archbishop, who presented him his ring to kiss, giving him absolution with a loud voice, during which *Te Deum* was sung, &c. See a particular account of the ceremony in the historians. Cayet, book v. p. 222. and following. Matthieu, &c.

M E M M O I R S

O F

S U L L Y.

B O O K VI.

1593.

THE ceremony of the king's abjuration was followed by a deputation * of the duke of Nevers to Rome, who, together with the cardinal de Gondy, and the marquis de Pisany, were to offer the pope the submissions usual in such cases. Although this change was a mortal stroke for the league, the Spaniards and the duke of Maienne still held out: they endeavoured to persuade their

* Clement VIII. refused to acknowledge and receive the duke of Nevers as ambassador, and would oblige the French bishops to go and present themselves to the grand inquisitor, pretending that they had no power to absolve the king. M. de Thou blames, with as much reason, the pope's inflexibility upon this occasion, as he extols the courage, prudence, and the whole conduct of the duke of Nevers, book 108. See tom. II. Mem. de Nevers, MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi, and in the historians mentioned above, the particulars of the embassies of Nevers and Luxembourg, and the negotiations of fa-

ther Seraphin Olivari, de la Clielle, of the abbots Du-Perron and d'Oslat, with the holy father. The pope still deferred a long time an absolution which he had a great desire to grant, and received very ill la Clielle, who presented to him the letters of Henry IV. Father Seraphin, who was present, and plainly perceived that the pope's anger was only feigned, said to him merrily, "Holy father, if the devil himself was to come, and ask an audience of you, and you had any hopes of converting him, you could not in conscience deny him it." This speech drew a smile from his holiness.

partisans.

partisans that there still remained resources capable of making it ineffectual; but they spoke at that time contrary to their own opinion, and this feigned confidence was only designed to obtain greater advantages from the king, before he was securely fixed on the throne.

1593.

THIS is not a mere conjecture only, at least with regard to the king of Spain, since it is certain that he ordered Taxis and Stuniga to offer the king forces sufficient to reduce all the chiefs of the league and the protestant party, without annexing any other condition to this offer, than a strict alliance between the two crowns; and an agreement, that the king should give no assistance to the rebels in the Low Countries. Philip II. judged of Henry by himself, and considered his conversion only as the principle of a new political system, which made it necessary for him to break through his former engagements. It may not perhaps be unuseful to mention here an observation I have made on the conduct of Spain, which is, that although before and after the death of Catherine de Medicis she had put a thousand different springs in motion, changed parties and interests as she thought most expedient to draw advantages from the divisions that shook this kingdom, the protestant party was the only one to which she never made any application: she has often publicly protested, that she never had the least intention to gain or suffer their alliance. It is by an effect of this very antipathy that the Spaniards have constantly refused the new religion admision into their states: an antipathy which cannot be attributed to any thing but the republican principles the protestants are accused of having imbibed. The king being fully convinced, that to stifle the seeds of schism in his kingdom, it was necessary to give none of the different factions occasion to boast that his power was at their disposal; and that to reduce all parties, he must be partial to none; he therefore steadily rejected these offers from Spain, and those which the duke of Maienne made him to the same purpose: but at that very time appeared willing to treat with any of the chiefs or cities of the league which would surrender, and reward them in proportion to their readiness and services: and it was this prudent medium that he was resolved to persist in. Although he now professed the same religion as the league, yet his aversion to the spirit which actuated that party, and to the maxims by which they were governed, was not lessened; the very name only of the league was sufficient to kindle his anger. The catholic leaguers supposing that his abjuration authorized them to abolish, in those cities which depended upon them, the edicts that were favourable to the huguenots;

1593.

the king caused them to be restored; and though in some places the leaguers had obtained the consent even of the huguenots themselves (determined to purchase peace at any price) for this purpose, yet the protestant party murmuring at it, Henry cancelled all that had been done to that effect*, and shewed that it was his design to keep the balance even.

THE duke of Maienne, finding that in this last scheme, which he had believed infallible, he was disappointed as well as the rest, placed all his future dependence upon his old friends the Parisians, and neglected no method by which he might awaken their mutinous disposition. But so far was he from succeeding in this attempt, that he could not hinder them from discovering their joy at what had just passed at Saint Denis. They talked publicly of peace, and even in his presence; and he had the mortification to hear a proposal to send deputies to the king to demand a truce for six months, and they obliged him to give his consent to it. The truce for three months, that had been granted them at Surène †, had only inspired them with an inclination for a longer one.

The king gave audience to the deputies in full council. The greatest number of those who composed it, listening to nothing but their jealousy of the duke of Maienne, whom they feared as a man that had the means in his power of purchasing favour and rewards, were of opinion, that no regard ought to be shewn to this demand of the deputies, because the person who sent them persisted in his revolt against the king, even after his abjuration. Notwithstanding the justice of not confounding the duke of Maienne with the Parisians, I saw that this advice was likely to be followed, and certainly it might have produced some terrible misfortune. I insisted so strongly upon the advantage of letting the people, already recovered from their first terrors, taste the sweetness of a peace which would interest them still more in the king's favour, that this prince declared he would grant

* The king, on the 12th of December this year, held an assembly of the protestants at Mante, in which he publicly declared, that his changing his religion should make no alteration in the affairs of the protestants. Mem. de la ligue, tom. 5. And the calvinists having asked many things of him, he told them he could not comply

with their requests, but that he would tolerate them. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. i. p. 164.

† Or at Villette, situated between Paris and St. Denis, as it is observed in the Memoirs of the league. It is dated the 31st of July, and was published the next day at Paris.

the

the truce they demanded of him, but for the months of August, September, and October, only.

1593.

THE next day a prodigious concourse of the populace of Paris assembled at St. Denis. The king shewed himself to the people, assisted publicly at maffs; wherever he turned his steps the croud was so great, that it was * sometimes impossible to pierce through them: at the same moment, a million of voices cried, *Long live the king.* Every one returned, charmed with the gracefulness of his person, his condescension, and that popular air which was natural to him: "God bless him," said they, with tears in their eyes, "and grant that he may soon do the same in our church of Notre Dame in Paris." I observed to the king this disposition of the people with regard to him; tender and sensible as he was, he could not behold this spectacle without a strong emotion.

THE Spaniards had now recourse to their usual artifices. D'Entragues came to me one morning, and told me, that a Spaniard was just arrived at St. Denis, charged with dispatches of great importance from Mandoce, who had ordered him to make his applications directly to me, being the only person who had any knowledge of the proposals which he had a long time ago made to the king at Bearn, by Moreau and the viscount de Chaux. This Spaniard, whose name was Ordognès, or Nugnès, had been a domestic of d'Entragues, whose service he had quitted for that of Mandoce; d'Entragues corresponded, by his means, with the Spanish ambassador to the league: This is what I learned of this man by the recital, whether true or false, that d'Entragues made me. I did not confide much in this Spanish emissary, and less in d'Entragues, whose turbulent disposition I was well acquainted with; I received him therefore coldly enough, for I did not doubt but this was all a Spanish stratagem: but d'Entragues seemed so affected with my suspicions of his fidelity, and added so many assurances of the veracity of his Nugnès, that I permitted him to bring him to me that evening. The king, whom I informed of

* "They are wild," said Henry, "to see a king." Etoile, *ibid.* In a letter which he wrote to mademoiselle d'Estrées, upon this or some other such occasion, he says, "A pleasant adventure happened to me at church; an old woman of 80

"years of age, seized me by the head and killed me; I was not the first who laughed at it; to-morrow you shall sweeten my mouth." Recueil des lettres d'Henry le Grand.

1593.

d'Entragues's visit, had the same opinion of it that I had; however, he commanded me to hear what the envoy had to say.

D'ENTRAGUES did not fail to return at the time appointed, accompanied by the Spaniard, who after some vague conversation about the joy there was in the court of Spain for the king's abjuration, and a great many protestations of kindness, which I had no reason to believe very sincere, at length told me, he had a commission to propose a marriage between the king and the infanta * of Spain, with some other articles, which he declared he had been ordered to explain only to the king, to whom he intreated me to present him. Henry being willing to hear him, I told Nugnès, without any ceremony, that since he came from so suspected a place, he must purchase the honour of an audience from his majesty, by submitting to a few precautions that would perhaps be a little mortifying. He thought nothing too hard. I therefore began to search him myself, and afterwards caused two of my valets de chambre to make a more rigid scrutiny about his person and cloaths; one of them having been a taylor, acquitted himself of this task with great exactness. When he came into the king's apartment I made him kneel, and held both his hands betwixt mine. He added nothing to the proposals he had already made me, but talked of the alliance between the two crowns in terms so specious and lofty, that the king, who at first would hardly listen to him, could not hinder himself from approving of the Spaniard's proposal, to send some person on whom he could rely, to enquire of don Bernardin de Mandoce himself, if what he had said could be depended on.

THIS deputation, which would have the appearance of a mystery, I could not approve of, and still less of the choice his majesty made of la Varenne for this occasion, a man remarkably vain †. The

* Clara Eugenia of Austria, second daughter of Philip II.

† We shall mention him again, in the sequel of these Memoirs; his name is William Fouquet, and he derives the title of la Varenne from the marquise of la Varenne in Anjou, which he bought. His first employment was that of a cook to the princess Catherine, and his chief excellency in it was larding meat. If it be true,

that this princess met him one day after his preferment, and said to him, "La Varenne, thou hast gained more by carrying my brother's poulets *, than by larding of mine," one may conclude, that the means by which he gained the king's favour were not very honourable. He was first made cloak-bearer to this prince, afterwards counsellor of state, and comptroller-general of the post-office, and

* *Porter le poulet*, in French, signifies to carry love-letters; the jest lies in the ambiguity of the word *aulet*, which signifies either a pullet or a gull.

king, to whom I discovered all my apprehensions, thought he should avoid any appearance of an engagement or negotiation with Spain, by giving la Varenne no commissions in writing, and making the regulation of some boundaries upon the frontiers of Spain the pretence for his journey. La Varenne had no sooner received orders to depart, than he boasted of his commission, assumed the ambassador, and represented himself as such to Mandoce; who, on his side, paid him greater honours than he had required. This produced the effect which the Spaniards designed it should. It was for some time believed in England and Germany, that Henry sought to gain the king of Spain's friendship, and to break his alliance with the protestant powers; which might have produced an open rupture, if the king had not taken measures immediately to convince them of the contrary.

1593.

THE last resource the league now depended upon, and which was the cause that they always protracted an agreement or rupture with the Spaniards, was the horrid resolution of assassinating the king; a resolution with which they knew well how to inspire a small number of determined men, whose heads they had turned with the alluring prospect of great rewards, if they succeeded in their enterprize, and the hopes of meriting a crown of martyrdom if they sunk under it. Nature itself recoils at the reflection, that those who boast of being the supporters of religion, should so impiously violate its most sacred injunctions, that this passage ought to be blotted from all histories; were it not likewise certain, that there is not any society of men, who bear the name of christians, that would suffer the imputation of authorizing such a crime; such, indeed, that no body of men, or even any individual, ought to be accused of it, without a proof too clear to be contested.

always lived in great familiarity with Henry IV. who ennobled him. La Varenne appointed a gentleman to attend his son. "What," said this prince to him, "if thou hadst given thy son to a gentleman, I should have understood what you would be at, but to give a gentleman to him, is what I cannot comprehend." They say likewise that la Varenne having obtained some favour of the king which the chancellor de Bellièvre made some dif-

ficulty to grant him, la Varenne said to him, "Sir, don't have such a high opinion of yourself: I would have you to know, that if my master was twenty-five years younger I would not change places with you." See d'Aubigné, *General. de Sainte-Marthe. Mem. de m. le duc d'Angoulême. Mem. de Du-Plessis, &c. Menagiana. Cayet, ibid. tom. V. p. 276.* speaks of the embassy of la Varenne into Spain, in a quite different manner from our Memoirs.

1593.

THE king had but too * many in those journeys he took from St. Denis to Châlon-sur-Marne, to Fort de Gournai, to Brie-comte-Robert, to Melun, and afterwards to Meulan and Fontainebleau. Upon this article, the monks especially have contracted a stain which they will not easily efface. Henry, while at Melun, had like to have perished by the hand of one of these enthusiasts, whom the jesuits and capuchins every where suborned for that purpose. Amongst other informations which were sent him upon this subject, he received advice, that one of these villains had set out from Lyons †, with a resolution

* Cayet. Chron. Novenn. liv. v. p. 280. speaks more positively of those conspiracies against the life of Henry IV. Marriot says, that a Flamand, called Avenius, came to St. Denis with a design to stab the prince, but observing with what devotion he behaved at mass, he threw himself at his feet, and implored his pardon; but afterwards, refusing his first intention, he was broke upon the wheel in the year 1593. Chap. 33.

† It was Peter Barrière, or Barre, a waterman of Orleans. Davila relates this fact a little differently, book iv. The Memoirs of the league accused a jesuit of Paris, and a capuchin of Lyons, of this bloody design, but name neither of them. De Thou says expressly, book cvii. that this jesuit was father Varade, rector of the college of Paris, and takes an opportunity from thence of inveighing most bitterly against the whole society. Mezerai, book lxii. speaks in the same terms, and thence shews, that he has only copied de Thou; but besides that the evidence of an enemy ought to be of no weight, it is proper to observe here, once for all, that when the duke of Sully and the other calvinist writers lay such crimes to the charge of the jesuits, as well as to messieurs de Villeroi, Jeannin, d'Ossat, &c. they only mean, that such or such a thing happened in consequence of the principles, writings, public disputations, and sermons, of the confederates; in a word, that it was owing to the wrong notions of the league; and to the spirit that governed them; and don't mean, that such a jesuit, or such a person,

was the perpetrator or contriver of such an action. This will appear more plainly in the sequel of these Memoirs. See how we have explained ourselves on this matter in the preface of this work.

As to the fact related here, whatever de Thou, Cayet, book v. p. 240. and Mezerai say, it is certain, that Barrière being put to the rack, in order to extort from him the names of those who had solicited him to attempt the king's life, did not name father Varade; it is also certain, that this jesuit was not prosecuted at all; that he was brought into no manner of trouble during the whole course of this process; and that he remained in Paris even after the king had entered that city. When, in the following year 1594, Antony Arnaud, in his plea for the university, reproached the jesuits for the supposed crime of father Varade, those monks denied it, and the counsellor did not prove the charge. Hist. of the university of Paris, tom. vi. p. 884. Lastly, the king, in 1604. giving an answer to the first president du Harlay, who was representing to him, that it grieved the parliament to register the edict for the re-establishment of the jesuits, cleared them in particular upon the article which concerned Barrière, saying, that none of them were privy to that designed parricide. Mem. Chronol. and Dogmat. for the History of the church, tom. 1. p. 28. Mess. de Thou, Cayet, and Mezerai, have then advanced a most notorious falsehood, when they wrote, that father Varade had advised Barrière to kill the king. It was father Scraphin Banchi who discovered the plot; and the gentle-

1593.

to come thither and assassinate him. Fortunately, before he left Lyons, he declared his design in confession to a priest; who, terrified at this frenzy, revealed it to a gentleman of Lyons. This gentleman posted away immediately to get to Melun before the murderer, and described him so exactly to the king, from the picture the priest had drawn of him, that he was known and seized amongst the croud at Melun, confessed his intended crime, and received punishment for it. The king, ashamed even for his enemies, who by this wickedness discovered the true bent of their dispositions, equally alarmed with all these attempts against his person, and tormented with the precautions he was obliged to take, often complained to me in the most affecting manner of his uneasy situation.

HE would not have been unhappy if the behaviour of the catholics in his court had at least compensated for that of the catholics in the league; but the king's abjuration had produced no more change in them than the others, and they thought they were entitled to make him comply with their inclinations in all things. They bore with impatience the king's not breaking off all commerce with his old protestant servants, and openly murmured if he but conversed with any of them, especially with me. The apprehension of my bringing him back to his former religion affected them much less than their suspicions that, in those conversations I had with the king, I should prevail upon him to rectify the abuses in the government, especially the confusion of the finances. Henry, who was not yet in a condition to assert his authority, so far complied with their caprices, as to avoid all private conversation with the huguenots, resumed his conferences upon religion with the catholics only, and continued them at Andrefy † and In Beauvai- Milly. I took this opportunity to ask the king's permission to go is.

man who travelled from Lyons to acquaint Henry IV. with it, and knew again Barriere at Melun, was called Brancaleon. Chronol. Nov. *ibid.* Henry IV. talking of this intended crime with F. Matthieu, his historian, told him, that the villain had at three different times an opportunity to kill him, *viz.* in a hunting match, when he was gathering some fruit from a tree, and in the church of St. Denis; and that Barriere, as well as Clement, had agreed with his accomplices to involve in his accusation a multitude of innocent persons,

and particularly several French princes and noblemen. Matthieu, tom. II. book i. p. 150.

† And likewise, at Pontoise, and Fleury, a castle in Gatinois, belonging to Henry Clause, chief-justice in eyre. The Roman catholics who were there, were, according to M. de Thou, messieurs de Schomberg, de Villeroy, de Belin, de Revol, Jeanin, and de Thou himself, who gives us also to understand, that their discourses turned more upon politics than religion.

1593.

to Bontin, where I had grain to sell to the value of five or six thousand crowns. He granted it, and told me, that at my return he might perhaps be able to form a more exact judgment of the state of his affairs, and that he would then talk farther with me.

I CAME to Bontin, with my wife, at a time when grain bore a very high price. All the great cities, taking advantage of the truce, hastened to fill their magazines, whatever might happen, and paid for what they bought with the money which the Spaniards had scattered throughout the kingdom. Spanish pistoles were then so common, that commerce was generally carried on in that money.

I HAD scarce sold half of my grain, when a letter the king wrote to me from Fontainebleau obliged me to return. He had, in my absence, opened three letters directed to me, from which he could draw no intelligence, because two of them, one of which came from madam de Simiers †, sister to Vitry, and a great friend of admiral Villars, and the other from la Font, were written in cyphers; and all that the third, which came from a man named Desportes, of Verneuil, contained, was, that he had something to communicate to me relating to the proposal I made him in my abbey Saint-Taurin of Evreux. The king, rigidly watched by the catholics, could only give me these letters, the contents of which I afterwards acquainted him with. Desportes was the agent employed by the baron de Médavy † to treat of an accommodation with him, and the surrender of Verneuil. The letter from madam de Simiers, and that from la Font, turned only upon some favourable circumstances which now presented themselves, to engage Villars in the king's interest. But affairs soon took another turn with regard to him; the loss of Fescamp so affected this governor, that for this time he broke off all measures towards an accommodation. I was informed of it by letters from madam de Simiers and la Font, in answer to mine, at the very moment when, by the king's command, I was preparing to go and confirm Villars in his good resolutions.

A port and
fortress in
the country
of Caux.

THE manner in which Fescamp was surprized is so remarkable, that it well deserves a particular recital here. When this fort was

* Louisa de l'Hôpital-Vitry, wife to James Simiers, chief groom of the stole to the duke of Alençon.

† Peter Rouxel, baron of Médavy, count

of Grancy, lieutenant-general in Normandy, and counsellor of state, died in 1617. He was remarkable for an uncommon strength of body.

taken

taken by Biron from the league, in the garrison that was turned out of it, there was a gentleman, called Bois-rosé*, a man of sense and courage, who making an exact observation of the place he left, and having concerted his scheme, contrived to get two soldiers, whom he had bound to his interest, to be received into the new garrison which was put into Fescamp by the royalists. That side of the fort next the sea is a perpendicular rock six hundred feet high, the bottom of which, for about the height of twelve feet, is continually washed by the sea, except four or five days in the year, during the utmost recess of the sea, when, for the space of three or four hours, it leaves fifteen or twenty fathom of dry sand at the foot of the rock. Bois-rosé, who found it impossible by any other way to surprize a garrison, who guarded with great care a place lately taken, did not doubt of accomplishing his design, if he could enter by that side which was thought inaccessible; this he endeavoured by the following contrivance to perform.

HE had agreed upon a signal with the two soldiers whom he had corrupted, and one of them waited for it continually upon the top of the rock, where he posted himself during the whole time that it was low water. Bois-rosé, taking the opportunity of a very dark night, came, with fifty resolute men, chosen from amongst the sailors, in two large boats, to the foot of the rock. He had provided himself with a thick cable, equal in length to the height of the rock, and tying knots at equal distances, run short sticks through, to serve to support them as they climbed. The soldier whom he had gained, having waited six months for the signal, no sooner perceived it, than he let down a cord from the top of the precipice, to which those below fastened the cable, by which means it was wound up to the top, and made fast to an opening in the battlement with a strong crow run through an iron staple made for that purpose. Bois-rosé giving the lead to two sergeants whose courage he was well convinced of, ordered the fifty soldiers to mount the ladder in the same manner, one after another, with their weapons tied round their bodies, himself bringing up the rear, to take away all hope of returning; which indeed soon became impossible, for before they had ascended half way, the sea rising more than six feet, carried off their boats, and set their cable a floating. The necessity of withdrawing from a difficult enterprize is not always

* — De Gouffimnil, or Gouffinil, lord of the manor of Bois-rosé. See Chron. Novenn. book v. p. 94.

1593.

a security against fear, when the danger appears almost inevitable. If the mind represents to itself these fifty men, suspended between heaven and earth, in the midst of darkness, trusting their safety to a machine so insecure, that the least want of caution, the treachery of a mercenary soldier, or the slightest fear, might precipitate them into the abyss of the sea, or dash them against the rocks; add to this, the noise of the waves, the height of the rock, their weariness, and exhausted spirits; it will not appear surprizing, that the boldest amongst them trembled, as in effect he who was foremost did. This serjeant telling the next man that he could mount no higher, and that his heart failed him, Bois-rosé, to whom this discourse passed from mouth to mouth, and who perceived the truth of it by their advancing no higher, crept over the bodies of those that were before him, advising each to keep firm, and got up to the foremost, whose spirits he at first endeavoured to animate; but finding that gentleness would not prevail, he obliged him to mount by pricking him in the back with his poignard; and, doubtless, if he had not obeyed him, he would have precipitated him into the sea. At length, with incredible labour and fatigue, the whole troop got to the top of the rock, a little before the break of day, and was introduced by the two soldiers into the castle, where they began to slaughter without mercy the centinels and the whole guard; sleep delivered them up an easy prey to the enemy, who killed all that resisted, and possessed themselves of the fort.

BOIS-ROSE immediately sent notice of this amazing success to admiral Villars, and thought the government of the citadel he had so dearly bought was the least reward he might expect. However, he heard that Villars, or rather the commandeur de Grillon*, had a design to drive him out of it. Amidst the first transports of his rage for this injustice, he delivered the castle of Fescamp to the king, whose conversion he had just been informed of. Villars, at this news, broke off the negotiation which he had permitted madam de Simiers and la Font to carry on in his name, and sent forces to invest Fescamp. Bois-rosé, finding himself too weak to make a long resistance, called the king to his aid, who instantly set forward for Dieppe, and came to St. Valery in Caux. When this hostility broke out, the three months truce was expired; but the king had been prevailed upon to prolong it for two or three months longer, upon the duke of Maienne's representation, that

* Thomas Bertou, governor of Honfleur, and brother to Grillon.

it was necessary he should have more time to settle an affair of such importance as his treaty, and that of the league, with the king. He failed not to exclaim against this violation of the truce, and sent the count of Belin, governor of Paris, to the king, to complain of it. Belin came to St. Valery, acquitted himself of his commission, and demanded a farther prolongation of the truce for three months, which he said was no more than necessary for the duke of Maïenne to make known his last intentions at Rome and Madrid, whither he had sent cardinal de Joyeuse * and Montpezat for that purpose. The king, who perceived he only wanted to amuse him, rejected the count of Belin's proposals; and, without listening to any more complaints of the action, which his enemies had been the first cause of, marched directly to Fescamp, forced the troops of Villars to retire, and provided this fortress with plenty of all things necessary for its security.

1594.

THE king, at his return to Mante, being informed that the marquis de Vitry was inclined to receive him in Meaux, to favour the good intentions of this governor, he came to Lagny, where all things were so ordered, that he made his public entry into Meaux † on the first day of the year 1594. La Châtre immediately followed this example, with the cities of Orleans and Bourges.

Lewis le
l'Hôpital,
Marquis of
Vitry.

Claude de la
Châtre.

THE truce being at an end, the king laid siege to Ferté-Milon. I would have taken this opportunity to finish the business that had carried me to Bontin, but his majesty commanded me to review some battalions of Swifs at Montereau. I sent to madam de Rosny to meet me at this place, from whence I intended to carry her to Mante: she waited for me there to no purpose. Two days before that in which I was to review the Swifs, I received new dispatches from madam de Simiers and la Font, which informed me, that the man (meaning Villars) was appeased, and that nothing hindered me from resuming

Between
Meaux and
Soissons.

Montereau
saut-yonne,
in Cham-
pagne.

* Francis, the second of the seven sons of William de Joyeuse. Henry Des-Prés, sieur of Montpezat.

† The duke of Maïenne upbraiding Vitry for having betrayed him, in delivering the city of Meaux into the king's hands, Vitry said to his messenger: "You press me too much: you will at last make me speak as becomes a foldier. Suppose a thief had stolen a purse, and confided

" it to my care; if afterwards, coming to the knowledge of the right owner, I should restore it him, and refuse to give it back to the thief who had intrusted me with it, do you think I should commit a wicked and treasonable action? I did nothing else when I delivered up the city of Meaux." *Memoirs for the History of France*, tom. II.

1594.

the scheme that had been laid aside. This affair the king thought of such importance as not to admit of a moment's delay. The count de * Chaligny just then coming to the army with a passport for Paris, intreated the king to send a person whom he could depend upon, to conduct him to that city; and the king was willing that I should take advantage of this opportunity, which offered me the means of procuring a more certain knowledge of the designs of the duke of Maienne and the league, and of getting to Rouen securely.

ACCORDINGLY, I accompanied the count de Chaligny to Paris; from whence, after having an interview with the duke of Maienne, I went to Louviers, to the house of the sieur de St. Bonnet, about two leagues from Rouen: from this place I sent notice of my arrival to the persons who managed our interview: they came to fetch me the next evening, and introduced me into Fort St. Catherine, where captain Boniface received and treated me very magnificently while we waited for Villars, who came at night, attended only by one servant; I likewise having none but my valet de chambre with me. We did not part till after a conversation that lasted two hours, which left me entirely satisfied of the intentions of this governor. Our interview was conducted with the utmost secrecy; for, besides that the governors of the chief royalist cities in the neighbourhood of Rouen would not have failed, either through jealousy or self-interest, to cross the negotiation, and perhaps have done something worse, as in effect they did, as soon as they had any suspicion of the affair; there were in this province a great number of forces, as well foreigners as those belonging to the league, over whom Villars had no authority, and which might in a little time be joined by such considerable supplies, as to make him repent of the measures he had engaged in.

I STAYED five days in Fort St. Catherine with the same privacy; during which time I had several conferences with Villars, and entered upon the principal conditions for an accommodation. Interest was not here the greatest difficulty to get over; he was less solicitous to gratify mercenary views, than to be convinced that the king, by treating with him, fought not only to gain the capital of a province, but to bind to his interests a man whom he knew to be equally willing and able to serve him. It has been already observed, what idea Villars had conceived of the king: as soon as my discourse had confirmed him

* Henry de Lorraine, count of Chaligny, of the family of Moüy.

in it, I could perceive the treaty to be in great forwardness; but I could not then go any farther, not having in writing the necessary powers for concluding it. 1594.

BUT to give a more perfect knowledge of this governor's character: his whole conduct was influenced by one or the other of two qualities that predominated in him, or was produced by their concurrence: these two qualities were, courage and integrity; the first inspired that elevated generosity, that inborn noble pride *, which in great souls is only a perception of their own worth, without the least mixture of mean vanity, or the intoxication of self-love; the second produces sincerity and truth, makes its owner incapable of artifice and surprize, and always ready to yield to reason and justice: he who unites these two qualities, has seldom any other fault than being too quickly moved to sudden eruptions of anger.

SUCH was Villars: and what I have still to say concerning him will justify the truth of this character: there was too great a conformity between his disposition and the king's, to suffer him to continue long in a state of enmity with him. The only difference between them was, that Henry, by often reflecting on the fatal effects of anger, by a habit acquired in a long course of misfortunes, by the necessity he was under of gaining friends; and lastly, by the native tenderness of his heart, converted his first violent sallies of rage into such † emo-

* M. de Thou, speaking of admiral de Villars, says, that he was of a harsh and insolent disposition, book ciii.

† Here is a piece of private history, extracted out of the Memoirs of the life of the president de Thou, which proves what the author says here concerning the character of Henry IV. and which has also some relation to what had been said before upon the siege of Rouen. "One day that Grillon came into the king's closet to excuse himself upon his being reproached, that his going backwards and forwards, to treat with the admiral, had afforded him an opportunity and the means of making that furious sally which has been mentioned, he passed from excuses to disputes, then fell into a passion and uttered blasphemies. The king, being exasperated at this behaviour, command-

ed him to go out; but as Grillon was coming back every moment from the door, and they perceiving that the king grew pale with anger and impatience, they were afraid he would seize upon somebody's sword and run the impudent fellow through. At last, being come to himself, after Grillon went out, and turning towards the lords who attended him, and who, with de Thou, had admired the patience with which he bore this insolence, he said to them, Nature has formed me passionate, but since I have been sensible of this fault, I have always endeavoured to guard against the dictates of so dangerous a passion; I know by experience that it is a bad adviser, and am glad to have such good witnesses of my moderation." "It is certain, that his constitution, the

1594.

tions as were wholly under the government of his reason, and seldom appeared in his countenance or gesture, and still seldomer in his words.

Feb. 17,
1594.

THE king was just come to Chartres, which place he had chosen * for the ceremony of his coronation, when I joined him to give him an account of my journey, and to procure full powers for concluding the treaty with Villars. I had expected to depart again immediately, and did not imagine he would detain me with him ten or twelve days, which was really the case. He was then endeavouring to reconcile the count of Soissons and the duke of Montpensier, whose enmity was first occasioned by some disputes relating to the prerogatives of their rank as princes of the blood, and strengthened and confirmed by their competition for the same posts, the same governments, and, above all, for the same mistress, who was the princess Catherine, sister to the king. The duke of Montpensier had certainly the advantage in the king's favour, as well as in fortune, for he had immense estates; he appeared at the coronation with a train of four or five hundred gentlemen, while his rival could with difficulty maintain a dozen: but, poor as he was, without places, without governments, and disliked by the king ever since his escape from Rouen, he had this advantage over the duke, to possess entirely the heart of the princess. The countess of Guiche † was their confidant; she was acquainted with all their secrets, managed their correspondence when they could not see each other, and so confirmed their mutual affection, that she made them

“ fatigues he had endured, and the many vicissitudes of fortune to which he had been subjected, had given him a firmness of soul, that was proof against the efforts of rage, but not the allurements of pleasure. It was remarked, that while Grillon was thus contesting with him, marshal Biron, who was then in the king's room, sitting upon a trunk, pretended to be asleep; and as the dispute grew warmer, his sleep became more sound; though Grillon came near him in order to abuse him, and cried aloud in his ears, that he was a mangy snarling dog. The company were persuaded that the marshal only affected that deep sleep, that he might not expose himself to the brutality of such a fiery hot-brained man; which would infallibly

“ have happened if he had seemed to hear him. It was also believed, that he was willing to leave the king all the fatigue of the conversation.”

* Against a frivolous decree of the states of Blois, which annuls this ceremony unless it is made in the city of Rheims. It was decided, that his majesty should be crowned by Nicholas de Thou, bishop of this city, and not by the archbishop of Bourges, who claimed that honour as lord almoner; and that no use should be made of the *Sainte-Ampoule*, or holy bottle. See this ceremony described in the historians.

† The same who had been mistress to Henry IV. but she was grown very fat, coarse, and red-faced. Journ. of the reign of Henry III. tom. i. p. 270.

both

both sign a contract of marriage, which the confusion only of the times prevented them from solemnizing.

1594.

HIS majesty was so passionately desirous of reconciling these two princes of the blood to each other, that the treaty with Villars was suffered to stand still, whilst he applied himself wholly to this affair. He had no regard to my remonstrance, nor to the danger there was in delaying it; he insisted upon my undertaking the difficult task of making them friends, conjointly with the bishop of Evreux, whom he had pitched upon at first, but found he was not able to succeed alone, in so delicate an affair. It is certain, I still preserved a great share of the count's esteem, but I was well acquainted with his insolent and haughty disposition, and that the fear only of seeming to yield to a rival who was his superior, would not only confirm him in his pretensions, but perhaps induce him to form new ones. I will not tire the reader with a detail of the disputes, refusals, and sallies of ill humour which we were obliged to endure; we were more than once upon the point of giving up our task, as hopeless of ever accomplishing it: however, by the force of arguments, founded upon the king's command, with much patience, and many importunities, we prevailed upon the two princes to see each other, and to embrace. I was not to answer for the sincerity of this reconciliation: the article of their passion for the princess, and her marriage, which I carefully avoided mentioning, continuing still undetermined, left the seeds of division in their hearts: but this I looked upon as an insurmountable obstacle.

I WAS extremely well satisfied at having succeeded so far, without touching upon this article, and I now saw nothing to delay my journey to Rouen. But I was deceived: the king's extreme sollicitude to reconcile these princes was with a view of obtaining another end, which he still more ardently desired; and this was the very same that I thought I had so prudently laid aside, the marriage of the princess his sister. Unfortunately I was the person his majesty fixed upon to accomplish this design. I was commissioned to get the contract of marriage, which I have just mentioned, out of the hands of the parties concerned; that, this obstacle being removed, the king, who was resolved to refuse the duke of Montpensier nothing he demanded, might be able to make use of his authority to prevail upon the princess to receive him for a husband, and by that means deliver himself from the apprehension of seeing a marriage concluded, which, though clandestinely, would be no less dangerous, since the count of Soissons would

1594.

become his heir, whether he consented to it or not, and make use of his own riches against him: and if this marriage produced any children, as there was no doubt but it would, that would give his majesty, who had none, another cause for uneasiness.

I TREMBLED when I received the king's order for this purpose. I would have represented to him, that Villars would certainly engage himself in the enemy's party for ever, as would also Médavy, and several other governors in Normandy, unless I went immediately to those places. The affair was resolved upon; the king would not hear me, and only granted me what I asked to insure the success of his scheme, which was, to give no suspicion of my being employed in it, and to leave me the choice of what measures I thought necessary to take.

WHEN I was alone, and had reflected upon the nature of the commission which I had received, I confess I was thrown into the utmost perplexity. From the knowledge I had of the princess Catherine's disposition, from whom it was necessary to get this contract, I was convinced it was not in the power of human eloquence to make her approve of the king's designs with regard to her. How difficult a task! to persuade a woman, and a princess, to renounce the man she loved, and bestow herself upon one whom she hated. There was no probability of succeeding but by artifice. I endeavoured to vanquish my scruples by reflecting, that in deceiving the lady, tho' I did not consult her inclination, yet I was attentive to her real interest; and that it was to free the king and kingdom from the bad consequences that might attend her irregular conduct, which induced me to act in this manner. I flattered myself that the princess would one day think herself obliged to me for having, by an innocent stratagem, prevented the ruin of her fortune, together with the loss of the king her brother's friendship. Specious as these reasons were, I cannot help confessing, that I did betray her; and this gave me pain. The impossibility of succeeding by any other means, and the hope that even she would one day pardon the deceit, and confess that I had done her a real service by it, was what at last determined me. As for the count, having no occasion to make any application to him, and being likewise but little attached to him, the respect that was due to his person ought to be laid aside, when it opposed the public utility, and what the service of the king my master required of me. However, this affair, in the end, was the cause of great uneasiness to me, which
my

my scruples, and the reluctance I had to engage in it, should have preserved me from.

1594.

THERE was still another difficulty to be removed. I saw the princess very seldom, on account of the multiplicity of business in which I was engaged, and I knew her discernment too well to doubt that whatever measures I made use of to obtain the contract in question, my unusual assiduity would, in a mind naturally distrustful, create suspicions which would put her upon her guard against all I could say or get others to say to her: I therefore endeavoured to act in such a manner that she should prevent me herself. For this purpose I made use of the two Du-Perrons, who I knew (especially the youngest) were of a humour to make their court to the Great at the expence of betraying a secret. I was intimate only with the bishop of Evreux, the eldest: but one risks nothing in depending upon the good opinion all men have of their own merit; on this article they are always their own dupes first. I went therefore to visit the younger Du-Perron; I flattered him; I insinuated myself into his favour by feigning to impart secrets to him. He began to think himself a man of vast importance, and, through vanity, believed every word I said to him. When I perceived him intoxicated with self-admiration, I told him (with all the appearances of the utmost sincerity, exacting at the same time an oath of secrecy from him, which I should have been very sorry he had kept) that the king had imparted to me in confidence his intentions with regard to the princess; that he was resolved to marry her to the count of Soissons; and that some little difficulties, which still remained to be got over, prevented his majesty from publicly declaring his design. I was assured two days only would be sufficient for Du-Perron to get rid of this weighty secret, in such a manner that it would reach the princess Catherine. Accordingly, a moment afterwards he told it, with injunctions of secrecy, to monsieur de Courtenai, and two other of the count of Soissons' most intimate confidants. They ran to inform the count of it, and he the princess and the countess of Guiche.

Gaspard de Courtenai.

I DID not doubt but the princess, flattered with such an agreeable hope, would make me the first advances; and I was not deceived. Going to take leave of her, as a man just ready to undertake a long journey, I had a complete proof of Du-Perron's fidelity. The princess received me with more than usual respect; and the countess of Guiche, not willing to lose so favourable an opportunity, after some conversation

1594.

upon indifferent matters, made haste to bring the affair of the princess's marriage with the count, who was present, upon the carpet, and embracing me in a transport of friendship, "See," said she to the lovers, "a man who is able to serve you." The princess then, addressing herself to me, told me, that I knew the count and her had always esteemed me greatly; and that she in particular would be extremely obliged to me, if I would assist her endeavours to restore herself to the favour of the king her brother. She spoke only these few words, and left the care of saying more to that insinuating and graceful air, which she knew better than any other woman in the world how to assume when she pleased. I seemed to be absolutely gained, and after thanking the princess for the honour she did me, I added, that if I might depend upon the secrecy of all that were then present, I would inform them of some circumstances which would not be indifferent to them. Women make no scruple to promise secrecy, though they have been always accused of performing that promise very ill. The princess and her confidant added an oath to the assurances they gave me; but it was not my design to explain myself farther at that time. I asked them for three days delay: they assisted me in finding an excuse for deferring my journey to Rouen; and I took leave of the company, who impatiently expected the time I had prescribed.

I WAS punctual to my appointment, and waited upon the princess at the expiration of the three days. I suffered myself to be pressed a long time before I would disclose my secret; at last, seeming to yield to the importunity of the two ladies, I told them, that having several times founded the king upon the marriage in question, he at first shewed some reluctance to it, without caring to explain himself farther; but my earnest intreaties had at length prevailed upon him to open his heart to me upon this subject; and he confessed, that far from feeling any repugnance to conclude this marriage, he thought it a very proper one; and since ~~that~~ he had no issue of his own, he should be overjoyed to see the offspring of his sister and a prince of his blood, whom he would look upon as his own children: that the gentle and complying disposition of the count of Soissons and the princess was highly agreeable to him, but that he would find it very difficult to forget that the count had endeavoured to deceive him, and to obtain his sister without his consent. This speech, every word of which I had concerted before, produced the effect I designed it should: the two lovers and their confidant began to confess they had acted indiscreetly, and to condemn themselves for conducting the affair with such a spirit of

inde-

independence. This was what I waited for: I seized this opportunity to convince them that I believed the offence might be soon repaired; that the king was naturally kind, and easily forgot past injuries; all that was now necessary to be done, was to behave in a quite contrary manner, to solicit his favour, seem absolutely dependent upon him, leave him master of their destiny; in fine (and this was the most difficult point of all) sacrifice to him the contract they had both signed, as being what he was most offended with; and not to fear giving him even a declaration in writing, in which they should both bind themselves not to marry without his consent: after this condescension, I told them, on their side, I believed I might assure them, that in less than three months the king would himself prevent their desires, and unite them for ever.

I FOUND no difficulty in gaining credit to these assurances, and that very instant they promised to resign the contract of marriage, possibly because they thought it would be of no use to them, if the king, when he became absolute master in his dominions, should not agree to it. The countess of Guiche said she had left it at Bearn, but would send for it immediately. They did not so easily yield to the declaration I demanded afterwards, and without which their resigning the contract signified nothing, since the parties might whenever they pleased renew it. This was the very argument I made use of to enforce the necessity of giving it, and I convinced them, that without this the king could neither depend upon their sincerity, nor be assured of their obedience. This article was strongly contested; and when at last, by the force of remonstrances, I obtained a writing, by which the princess and the count cancelled all promises that had passed between them, released each other from any engagement, and submitted themselves absolutely to the king's disposal, the consequences of this writing alarmed them, and they had recourse to a medium, without which it is probable the affair had rested as it was: this medium was, that I only should be intrusted with it, and should not suffer it to go out of my hands, not even though the king should require it. Luckily they did not add, that it should be returned to the princess, if matters took an unfavourable turn. I promised them, upon my word and honour, that I would not part with it; which satisfied them entirely, and the writing was delivered to me, in form, signed by the princess and the count, and sealed with their arms. The king's joy for my success, which he durst hardly flatter himself with the hopes of, was considerably less, when he found the writing was to remain in my hands: he

1594.

he often intreated me earnestly to give it him; but finding, by my persisting to refuse him, that the obedience I owed him could not influence me to a breach of my promise, he no longer solicited me to it. The two lovers seeing the agreeable hopes I had given them still unaccomplished, could not, as it may be well imagined, pardon me for having deceived them: the succeeding part of these Memoirs will shew how they resent it.

AFTER the conclusion of this affair, which I cannot remember without pain, I was wholly employed in preparing for my journey to Rouen. I was apprehensive, and not without reason, that so long a delay had absolutely broke all my first measures with admiral Villars: however, I obtained full powers* from the king to conclude a treaty, not only with this governor, but also with all the other governors and officers of the province. Just as I was going to set out, Desportes arrived, and stopped me once more; he was sent by the baron de Méday to the bishop of Evreux, to desire that he would lend him his house of Condé for a little time; and also prevail upon me to come thither, that he might confer with me upon the conditions of his treaty, and that of Verneuil. I left Chartres, and came in the evening to Anet, madam d'Aumale having long earnestly solicited me to visit her there.

THIS lady, who had more understanding and prudence than her husband, conjured him incessantly to break with the league, and resign himself wholly to the king. She was sensible, that not only his duty and safety required that he should take this step, but his interest likewise; for the duke d'Aumale's † domestic affairs were in such disorder, that there was no other way to avoid approaching ruin, but by being amongst the first that returned to their duty and obedience on this occasion, and were therefore distinguished with very considerable rewards. I alighted at an inn at Anet, and while my supper was preparing, went to wait upon madam d'Aumale, attended only by one page. To the joy that animated the countenance of this lady the moment she perceived me, she added the favour of a most obliging and friendly reception; and that she might not waste moments

* The present duke of Sully has the original of this full power in his possession, as likewise many of the originals of Maximilian de Bethune's letters upon this subject.

† Charles de Lorraine, duke of Aumale, who died in 1631, in his retirement at Brussels; his wife was Mary de Lorraine, daughter of René, duke of Elbeuf.

so precious, took my hand and made me walk with her in those fine galleries and gardens which make Anet a most enchanting place : here she expressed to me her earnest desire to have her husband return to the obedience he owed his sovereign, and named the conditions upon which he might be induced to consent to it. I omit all the propositions, either approved or rejected, that passed between us. Hitherto I had seen nothing but what did honour to the master of a house truly royal ; and I should have been ignorant of the deplorable extremity to which the duke was reduced, if she had not intreated, and even forced me to sup with her, and to stay there all night. After a repast, which we waited for a long time, and when it came was as bad as the attendance we had at it, I was conducted into a very large chamber, all shining with marble, but almost destitute of furniture, and so cold, that I could neither get heat, nor sleep in a bed, where the short narrow silk curtains, one thin coverlid, and damp sheets, were sufficient to benumb one with cold, even in the midst of summer : not able to continue in bed, I rose, and thought to secure myself against the inconveniences of my damp lodging by making a fire, but I could find no other wood to burn than green holm and juniper, which it was impossible to kindle : I was obliged therefore to wear my gown the whole night, by which means I was very early awake, and joyfully quitting so disagreeable a lodging, I went to join my attendants, the meanest of whom fared better, and passed the night more comfortably than their master.

I MADE myself amends for this fatigue at Condé, where I found every conveniency that could contribute towards an agreeable reception : as soon as I arrived, I got into a good bed, Médavy not being expected till noon. At first he regulated his behaviour according to that notion, that in such a conjuncture as the present the most inconsiderable nobleman has a right to set ten times a greater value upon himself than he is worth ; he performed his part perfectly well, by an air of false distrust, and an affected superiority, which he imagined would procure him some advantage. I contrasted his vanity with a frankness that shewed it to himself, and told him calmly, that if he waited till the great cities came to an accommodation, he, who had only Verneuil to offer, his sacrifice would immediately lose half of its value ; and that afterwards perhaps his proposals would not be listened to, and no reward granted him. My sincerity forced him to be candid likewise ; he appeared more reasonable, and we soon agreed : he only intreated me not to make the affair public till the end of March,

1594. March, because he had engaged to Villars to do nothing without his participation. He sent Desportes with me to Rouen, to pay this compliment to the governor, and to observe, at the same time, whether I concluded the treaty with Villars, whose accommodation drew his along with it, in some measure necessarily.

I CAME to Louviers the next day, from whence making known my arrival to admiral Villars, he sent the captain of his guards to receive me at the gate of the city. I did not enter secretly as before, but publicly, and with a kind of pomp. The streets were filled with the people; and the hopes of a peace, by which quiet and commerce would be restored to their city, drew loud acclamations of joy from them as I passed. Villars had caused the finest house in Rouen to be prepared for the reception of me and my train, which consisted of twelve or fifteen gentlemen; and had given all the necessary orders for treating us magnificently. La-Font, who had the care of my reception, waited to conduct me thither: he outdid his master, and at night gave me the music, and the diversion of dancers, and jugglers, whom I could not prevail upon to receive either money or presents. I sent Du-Perat to make my compliments to the admiral, madam de Simiers, and the abbé de Tiron *, who all had a great share in the management of this affair: they returned me the same civility a few moments after by the sieur de Perdriel, and desired him to tell me, that I must rest this day, and we should enter upon business the next. This, however, did not hinder the abbot from visiting me in the evening, without ceremony; indeed his whole conduct upon this occasion discovered a degree of rectitude and sincerity rarely to be found in such negotiations.

I FOUND by his discourse that the king had been within a very little of losing Villars irretrievably. A deputy from Spain, named don Simon-Antonio, and another called Chapelle Marteau †, from the duke of Maienne, came to Rouen some days before my arrival, and had made very advantageous proposals to this governor; he had likewise daily received letters from the catholics, even those in the king's party, which tended to raise unfavourable suspicions of his majesty's designs, and to prejudice him against a negotiation entrusted to a protestant agent: this argument had great weight with Villars, always zealous for his

* Philip Des-Portes, abbot of Josaphat, Tiron, and Bonport.

† Michael Marteau, sieur de la Chapelle.

religion, and would have infallibly determined him for the enemies party, if in this perplexity his mind had not been ballanced by other letters from the cardinal of Bourbon, the bishop of Evreux, and the marquis de Vitry, who all assured him he might depend upon the king's word and my sincerity. Tiron shewed me part of each of these letters, and thought it necessary to warn me, that the admiral, having been perpetually beset by deputies from the league, and offended likewise at the delays that had been used with him, I must not expect to vanquish his irresolution without suffering some of those sallies of rage, so natural to him, and which with a little patience it was easy to allay.

I WENT to wait on * Villars, well prepared to sustain all these little assaults, and at first perceived plainly that the sight of me awakened some remains of distrust and anger in his mind. My behaviour soon dissipated this cloud, and he with great calmness and serenity proposed his conditions, which were comprized under the following heads: That he should continue still in his post of admiral, which had been bestowed on him by the league; and in his government of Rouen possess a power independent of the duke of Montpensier, governor of that province, at least during three years; and that this power should extend over the bailiwicks of Rouen and Caux: That the exercise of the protestant religion should not be allowed in this capital, nor six leagues about it: That all the officers posted by the league in the cities belonging to his government should be continued there, with fifteen hundred foot, and three hundred horse, to be maintained by the king for the security of those cities: That his majesty should give him the sum of an hundred and twenty thousand livres to pay his debts, and a yearly pension of sixty thousand: That Fescamp should be delivered to him: And lastly, that he should have the disposal of the abbies of Jumiéges, Tiron, Bonport, la Valaée, Saint-Taurin, and that of Montivilliers, which he designed for a sister of madam de Simiers.

If all these articles had as much depended upon me as that relating to the abbey of Saint-Taurin, which was my own, and which I immediately yielded to Villars, the treaty had been concluded without any farther delay; and this I assured him of with regard to those wherein

* M. de Villars, in the Memoirs of those times, is represented to be of a haughty disposition, and subject to frequent transports of anger. It is there observed, that the baron de Rosny was the

only one that could succeed in these negotiations. Memoirs for the history of France, vol. II. These negotiations of the baron de Rosny are also commended by M. de Thou, b. cix.

1594.

1594.

the king was absolute master. But however full and extensive the powers I had received from his majesty were, I could do nothing in those articles which regarded the duke of Montpensier, and Biron, who was invested with the post of admiral, and in possession of Fescamp, which he had got from Bois-rosé on a promise of indemnification, that had not yet been fulfilled; and I did not think I had a right to settle this affair without informing the king of it. As I did not hesitate upon any of those conditions which depended immediately upon the king to grant, I expected that Villars would have been satisfied with my conduct; but this governor going out with the deputies from the league at the very moment that I was endeavouring to make him comprehend my reasons, he interrupted me hastily with these few words, pronounced with great fury: "That I might spare myself the trouble of talking to him any more, since he was determined either to finish the treaty upon the spot, or break it off entirely."

ALTHOUGH I was a little stunned with this unforeseen blow, I answered Villars calmly, that I was persuaded the king would grant him the three articles in question, as well as all the others (that of Fescamp making two, because Bois-rosé was concerned in it:) That this needed not hinder us from drawing up the treaty, and even signing it that moment, as if every thing was agreed to, inserting only this note in the margin over against the three articles, *To be determined by the king*. And to convince him that I sought not to gain time, in order to betray him afterwards, I offered to remain in his power as an hostage, till his majesty returned an answer. Villars still started new difficulties, but he could not resist madam de Simiers, the abbot Tiron, and la Font, who all supported my arguments. I had the treaty drawn up in haste, we signed it; and I sent a copy of it immediately to the king, with a long letter, in which I gave him an account of all that had passed. But before the answer could be brought to Rouen, an incident happened, which we once imagined would have rendered it useless.

MOST of the governors of the small forts in the neighbourhood of Rouen, far from returning to the duty and obedience they owed their king, persisted in their revolt, because, in the present confused state of affairs, they acquired gains, which they foresaw would cease with the war. The most artful amongst them made themselves equally necessary to each of the contending parties, and exacted bribes from both. Du Rollet, governor of Pont de l'Arche, was one of those that acted on these principles with the greatest subtilty. He had for more than

than a year flattered the king with hopes that he would fall upon means to deliver the city of Rouen and its governor into his hands, provided he would give the government of this place to him, which his majesty at all events gave him a written promise of. Du Rollet failing in an enterprize which exceeded his abilities, took it into his head to blast my negotiation, which he attempted in this manner.

1594.

HE commanded an officer named Dupré to mingle with my train as I passed through Pont de l'Arche, and to enter Rouen with me. I had been informed that du Rollet was disaffected, but I had no reason to suspect this officer of having any bad designs, nor could I hinder him from following me. I was likewise absolutely ignorant of this Dupré's being the very same person that had been employed by du Rollet before to cabal against Villars in Rouen *. He was no sooner entered, than, renewing his former acquaintance, he put himself at the head of a party of rash inconsiderate persons, with whom he had laid a plot to seize the old palace, and secure the governor's person; persuading them that he acted thus by my orders. As he had no other design than to alarm the governor, and to inspire him with the utmost detestation of me, he was not at much trouble to keep the affair secret; in effect, Villars was informed of it immediately.

THE excess of anger this news threw him into, and the injurious thoughts it inspired him with against the king, and especially me, may be easily imagined. Convinced that he had now an incontestible proof of my treachery, he would not examine the matter any farther, but sent d'Infencourt to me that moment to desire I would come to him. I had dined that day with la Pile, attorney-general of the chamber of accounts, and had just received letters which pleased me exceedingly. The king granted Villars the three articles that had been referred to him, and engaged to procure the consent of the parties concerned. Over against these articles, I had written upon the margin of the original treaty which I had carried with me, *To be agreed by his majesty's command.* I promised myself great pleasure in thus surprizing Villars, who could not expect such quick dispatch; and went out of la Pile's house with the treaty in one hand, holding a white scarf which I had put into my pocket in the other, intending to throw it about Villars's neck, and

* During the siege of Rouen, du Rollet endeavouring to throw himself into that city, was taken and shut up in the old

castle, where however, it is probable, he still continued to carry on intrigues for the king's interest. Cayet, b. iv. p. 14.

1594.

embracing him, to salute him admiral and governor of the districts of Rouen and Caux. The contrariety of reflections that employed our minds as we advanced towards each other had, I believe, something in it very uncommon.

My gaiety was soon overcast, for Villars perceiving me at a distance, came towards me with hasty strides, his face swelled and inflamed, his eyes sparkling, and all his looks and gestures expressive of the most violent transports of fury. He began by snatching the paper out of my hand, and not giving me time to speak, with a voice so altered by this inward agitation that it was scarcely articulate, he stammered out these words, too remarkable, not to be related exactly.

“ So, sir, where, in the devil’s name, are you going so airy, and so full of mirth? By heavens you have not yet attained your purpose, and before the game is ended, you may perhaps have no cause to smile, at least if I treat you as you deserve. You are out in your reckoning, you, and your king of Navarre also, for by my soul he has got a —— in the basket, and if he can find no other footman than Villars, I fancy he will be but badly served.” Saying this, he tore the treaty in a thousand pieces, and threw them into the fire. Having given the reins to his fury, he added an infinite number of invectives in the same tone, and equally extravagant, intermingling them with oaths, the rage he was in furnishing him with an inexhaustible source of them.

THAT I suffered him to go on thus, without interruption, was at first owing to my astonishment, or rather indeed to the necessity I was under of hearing him, and afterwards to the reflection that these sorts of dispositions cannot bear contradiction: at length stopping of himself, he began to traverse his chamber, which was very long and wide, like a man out of his senses. “ Well, sir,” said I, when I found he was silent, “ have you done yet talking at random? You have reason to be satisfied at having thus behaved like a madman, without being contradicted in your extravagancies.” Perceiving that the calm manner in which I spoke to him obliged him in spite of himself to listen to me, I proceeded to tell him, that what he had just said and done in my presence appeared to be nothing but an artifice he had conceived to retract the word he had so solemnly given; but that this turn would always dishonour him, and greatly lessen my opinion of his wisdom and integrity. “ ’Sdeath,” cried he, stopping short, “ I never did, nor ever

“ will deserve or suffer such a reproach. I am a man of too much honour; such evasions are only fit for those that betray their friends, and endeavour to get them assassinated.” Hitherto he had said nothing so plain as this last word, by which, though I could not comprehend the whole extent of his meaning, yet I was able to guess from whence so furious a behaviour proceeded.

1594.

I DEMANDED an explanation, and protested to him, with that air of sincerity and confidence with which even the most prejudiced cannot help being affected, that I was absolutely ignorant of his meaning; and that if I could be convicted of any unfair proceedings with regard to him, I was ready to deliver myself into his hands, without desiring either pardon or favour. Thus obliging him to be more explicit, he reproached me with having employed Dupré to assassinate him, and seize upon the old palace. The violence of his agitation not permitting him to speak otherwise than in broken and interrupted sentences, the affair appeared to me utterly improbable, and I could not hinder myself from entertaining some suspicions of his sincerity, nor from telling him, that he had been seduced by Spanish pistoles to contrive such a slight pretence for breaking with me. “ Who I?” cried he, relapsing again into a rage. “’sdeath, must I confess that I have acted treacherously with you, and broke my oath? I would rather die than be guilty of such baseness.” “ By heaven, sir,” answered I, “ you teach me to swear, it is only by your fulfilling or breaking off the treaty, that I shall know whether to believe you an honest or a perjured man.”

WE continued thus expostulating a long time, which increased rather than lessened our mutual dissatisfaction; so that at last we both became equally enraged. During this contest the abbot de Tiron came in, and entering immediately into the occasion of our quarrel, reduced us both to reason. “ Depend upon it, sir,” said he to Villars, “ the baron de Rosny is not guilty of the schemes that have been laid against you; he is a man of too much honour; and, in such a case, too prudent to throw himself into your power.”

THESE few words explained every thing. I turned calmly towards Villars, telling him, that I was convinced anger alone had been the cause of all the injurious things he had said; and that I expected, as soon as it was allayed, he would repair his fault, by performing his first promise. “ Well, sir,” said he, already half pacified, “ I will keep
“ my

1594.

“ my word : but take care also not to fail of yours, with regard to the three articles yet undetermined.” I answered, that if it had not been for his fury, which made him throw the treaty into the fire, he might have seen that the king consented to grant him them all.

WE were upon these terms when madam de Simiers was introduced. “ Don’t be angry with me, madam,” said he, as he went to receive her: “ all is over, we are good friends again ; but by heaven, the traitor that made all this mischief shall die before I eat or drink.” He kept his word, for causing Dupré to be brought before him, after he had confessed the whole affair, he ordered him, without the formality of a trial, to be hung up at a window.

VILLARS intreating me afterwards to shew him the king’s letter, I did not scruple to tell him, that his majesty’s secrets ought only to be communicated to his open and declared servants. To make Villars of this number, nothing more was necessary but to draw up the treaty again, which we signed, and each of us kept a duplicate of it. It was agreed between us, that the affair should remain a secret for some time, on account of the league and the Spaniards, against whom this governor took new measures, by reinforcing the troops he had in Rouen. After this, I no longer made any difficulty in shewing him all my letters, as well those which I had written to and received from the king before, as that in which I informed him of the ratification of the treaty, and his majesty’s answer to it. The courier who carried these last dispatches was not more than four hours on his journey.

THESE letters gave great satisfaction to Villars, particularly the last, written with the king’s own hand. His majesty in that thanked me more like a friend than a sovereign, for the service I had just done him, and concluded with these words, “ Come to me at Senlis, or the 20th of March, or at Saint Denis on the 21st, that you may help to cry *Long live the king* in Paris, and afterwards we will do the same at Rouen:” for I wrote to him that his presence there was necessary. “ Shew this letter,” added he, “ to the new friend you have acquired me, that he may see I do not forget him, and be convinced that I love him, and know how to prize and reward such brave men as he is.” “ By heaven,” said Villars at this place, “ this prince is too gracious and obliging to remember me, and speak of me in such advantageous terms.” From that moment, Villars continued firm in his obedience and affection to the king ; nor had his majesty amongst his

his most ancient servants one more absolutely devoted to his interests than him. He desired me to be satisfied with his word for the faithful execution of all the articles comprehended in the treaty, and I accepted it as the best security he could give me.

THE remainder of the time that I staid in Rouen was employed in regulating some affairs of the same nature. I usually spent the day with the admiral, and at night retired to my apartment, to give audience to all the officers as well of the city and parliament, as of the army, that were scattered throughout that province, and who came to me privately to concert measures for separating the people from the interests of the league. Méday was of this number, and I concluded the treaty with him. Verneuil not being a city of such importance as to make it necessary to use the same precautions with it as with Rouen, the king ordered Méday to publish his treaty, for an example to the other governors.

As I was solicitous not to neglect meeting his majesty at the place he had appointed me, I made haste to leave Rouen. After receiving from the governor every instance of gratitude and respect, I took a leave equally affectionate of the abbot de Tiron, and madam de Simiers, promised them to return soon, and assured madam de Simiers, I would bring her brother, the marquis de Vitry, along with me, with a body of troops sufficient to put Villars into a condition to explain himself without danger. The obligations I owed to them were great enough to demand this service of me, although his majesty's interest had not been an additional motive to it.

It was upon some correspondencies the king carried on in Paris that he founded his hopes of being soon admitted there, and he was on his way thither from St. Denis when I joined him. His party in that city was so firmly united, and so many persons of equal courage and fidelity had joined, that it was almost impossible but that it should succeed. Ever since the battle of Arques, when the count Belin was taken prisoner by the king's forces, and had an opportunity of discovering the great qualities of that prince contrasted with the weakness of his enemies, the duke of Maienne perceived the inclinations of this governor to lean secretly towards the king. Full of this suspicion, he did not hesitate a moment about depriving him * of the government of so

* The parliament upon this occasion count of Belin. The citizens are there exhorted rather to partake than suffer his ban-

1594.

considerable a city as Paris, and sought for a man whose fidelity to himself and the league could be depended upon, to entrust the care of this great city to, at a time when the necessity of his affairs obliged him to repair to the frontier of Picardy; accordingly he fixed upon Briſſac*, and bestowed this government upon him.

BRISSAC, at first, answered his purpose perfectly well. The study of the Roman history had inspired this officer (who valued himself greatly upon his penetration and judgment) with a very singular project, which was, to form France into a republic upon the model of ancient Rome, and make Paris the capital of this new state. Had Briſſac descended ever so little from these lofty ideas to an attention to particular circumstances, which in the greatest designs it is necessary to have some regard to, he would have perceived that a scheme, however happily imagined, may, by the nature of the obstacles which oppose it, by the difference of the genius, and character of the people, by the force of those laws they have adopted, and by long custom, which, as it were, stamps a seal upon them, become alike chimerical and impracticable. Time only and long experience can bring remedies to the defects in the customs of a state whose form is already determined; and this ought always to be attempted with a view to the plan of its original constitution †: this is so certain, that whenever we see a state conducted by measures contrary to those made use of in its foundation, we may be assured a great revolution is at hand; nor do the application of the best remedies operate upon diseases that resist their force.

BRISSAC did not go so far; he could not for a long time comprehend from whence the general opposition his designs met with proceeded, for he had explained himself freely to the nobles and all the chief partisans of the league: at last he began to be apprehensive for his own safety, lest while, without any assistance, he was labouring to bring his project to perfection, the king should destroy it en-

nishment from the city. *Memoirs for the history of France, vol. II. Memoirs of the league, vol. VI.*

* Charles de Coſſé, count of Briſſac, marshal of France.

† The sense in which the duke of Sully understands this maxim, and the true one in which it ought to be taken, is, that the

ancient form and fundamental principles of government are to be changed as little as possible; he does not mean, that we are to admit the abuses which ignorance or necessity have introduced in the different institutions relating to the finances, politics, &c. He will treat this subject more largely in the sequel of these *Memoirs*.

tirely,

1594.

tirely, by seizing his capital. Possessed with this fear, the Roman ideas quickly gave place to the French spirit of those times, which was to be solicitous only for his own advantage. When self-interested motives are strengthened by the apprehension of any danger, there are few persons who will not be induced by them to betray even their best friend. Thus Brissac * acted: he entered into the count of Belin's resolutions, but from a motive far less noble and generous; and thought of nothing but making the king purchase, at the highest price, the treachery he meditated against the duke of Maienne, in his absence. St. Luc †, his brother-in-law, undertook to negotiate with the king in his name, and having procured very advantageous conditions, Brissac agreed to admit Henry with his army into Paris, in spite of the Spaniards. The troops of the league were absolutely at his disposal, and they had no reason to apprehend any opposition from the people.

D'O ‡ lost no time in making application for the government of Paris, and the Isle of France, and obtained his request; but now a conflict between his interest and ambition so perplexed this superintendent, that, notwithstanding his new dignity, the reduction of Paris was amongst the number of those things he most feared should happen: he would have had it believed, that the true motive of this fear was, lest the finances should become a prey to the men of the sword and gown, by whom, he said, the king, as soon as he was possessed of Paris, would be oppressed for the payment of pensions, appointments, and rewards. But this discourse deceived none but those who were ignorant of the advantage he found in keeping the affairs of the finances in their present state of confusion, and with what success he had hitherto laboured for that purpose.

THE king, upon this occasion, put all the friends of the count of Belin in motion, on whom he had no less dependence than upon Brissac; and at nine o'clock in the morning presented himself, at the head of eight thousand men, before Porte Neuve, where the || mayor

March 21.

* The duke of Maienne, as de Thou observes, was informed of Brissac's treachery by the duchess of Guise his mother, but he would not believe her. See the reduction of the city of Paris, Matt. vol. II. b. i. p. 174. Chron. Novenn. b. vi. p. 334. and other historians.

† Francis d'Épinay, lord of St. Luc, master-general of the ordnance.

‡ Our Memoirs make no mention of monsieur d'O's being deprived by the league of this government, which Henry III. had bestowed upon him. Peref. 2d part.

|| This mayor of Paris was John l'Huillier, who when Brissac said to him, "We must render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," he replied, "We must

1593.

of Paris, and the other magistrates, received him in form. He went immediately and took possession of the Louvre, the Palace, the Great and Little Châtelet, and found no opposition any where; he proceeded even to the church of Nôtre Dame, which he entered to return thanks to God for his succès. His soldiers, on their side, fulfilled with such exactness the orders * and intentions of their master, that no one throughout this great city complained of having received any outrage from them. They took possession of all the squares and cross-ways in the streets, where they drew up in order of battle. All was quiet; and from that day the shops were opened with all the security which a long and continued peace could have given.

THE Spaniards had now only the Bastille, the Temple, and the quarters of St. Anthony and St. Martin in their possession; and there they fortified themselves, being about four thousand in number, with the duke de Feria and don Diego d'Evora at their head; all greatly astonished at such unexpected news †, and firmly resolved to defend themselves to the last extremity, if any attempts were made to force them from those advantageous posts. The king relieved them from their perplexity, by sending to tell them, that they might leave Paris, and retreat in full security. He treated the cardinals of Placentia and Pellevé with the same gentleness, notwithstanding the resentment he still retained for their conduct with regard to him. Soissons was the place whither these enemies of the king ‡ retired, protected by a

“ render them, indeed, but not sell them to him.” F. l'Etoile's Journal ascribes this repartee to Henry IV. L'Huillier was rewarded with the post of president of the chamber of accounts, and counsellor of state; and Martin Langlois, an alderman, was made mayor of Paris in his room. Le Grain, b. vi. It is observed, in the volume of MSS. marked 9033. in the king's library, that Henry IV. entering Paris by the new gate, which has been since called the gate of the conference, he went out again, and returned several times, fearing, notwithstanding the repeated assurances of the mayor and aldermen, that by permitting his troops to enter Paris, their design was to cut them in pieces, and seize his troops.

* The king perceiving a foldier to take a loaf from a baker by force, ran to him and

would have killed him. L'Etoile's Journal. Perefice says, that la Nouë being arrested for debts which his father contracted in this prince's service, complained to him of that insolence. The king, in public, said to him, “ La Nouë, you must pay your debts, I pay mine;” but afterwards, taking him aside, he gave him his jewels to pawn to the creditors, instead of the baggage they had seized of his. Peref. part 2d.

† L'Etoile observes, that this news being brought to the Spaniards while Langlois was amusing them with relating circumstances out of the Roman history, the duke de Feria cried out two or three times, “ He is a great king.” L'Etoile's Journal.

‡ The king had a mind to see them march out, and looked at them from a window over St. Denis's gate. They all strong

strong escort. His majesty then published a general pardon* for all the French who had borne arms against him. When this sacrifice is not extorted by necessity, but, on the contrary, made at a time when vengeance has full liberty to satiate itself, it is not one of the least marks of a truly royal disposition. Madam de † Montpensier being introduced to the king, he received her as politely, and conversed as familiarly with her, as if he had some very important reason for sparing her the confusion which any other person in his situation would have been fond of throwing her into ‡.

1594.

THE king had not yet found an opportunity to converse with me upon the negotiations of Rouen; therefore that evening, when the croud of courtiers had quitted his apartment, he took me aside to a window in the Louvre, and made me give him a circumstantial relation of all that had passed, even to the minutest incidents; to which he listened with the utmost attention. He accused himself of being the cause of du Rollet's unseasonable attempt, by not acquainting me with the proposals he had made him, which would have put me upon my guard against all that could have happened from that quarter.

THE king had not yet mentioned to the duke of Montpensier, or the baron de Biron, the conditions which, at their expense, he had

saluted him with their hats off, bowing profoundly low. The king, with great politeness, returned the salute to the principal officers, adding these words, "Remember me to your master; go, I permit you, but return no more." Peref. 2d part. This anecdote agrees with that in the Memoirs for the history of France; but is contradicted by the Journal written by the same author.

* All the Memoirs of those times are filled with instances of Henry's clemency, and his sprightly and agreeable repartees. See the Memoirs above cited. A leaguer coming to him one day when he was playing at primero, "You are welcome," said the king to him, "for if we win you will be ours" Le Grain, book x.

† Catherina-Maria of Lorraine, widow of Lewis of Bourbon, duke of Montpensier.

‡ Perefice observes, that he played at

cards with her that very evening. L'Etoile adds, that he returned both hers and madam de Nemours's visit; and relates a very extraordinary conversation that passed between this prince and her; at the end of which, madam de Montpensier, whose hatred for Henry was publicly known, taking notice of his entering Paris, she wished that it had been her brother the duke of Maienne who had let down the bridge for his majesty. "Ad-zokers," replied the king, "he might possibly have made me wait a long time, and I should not have entered so early." This lady, pursued he, hearing the populace cry, *Long live the king*, said, laughing, that Brillac had done more than his wife, who in fifteen years had made but one cuckoo sing; whereas he, in eight days, had made more than twenty thousand parrots sing in Paris. L'Etoile, ann. 1594.

1594.

granted to admiral Villars : and this was now all that perplexed him ; for he conducted himself by quite different maxims from those princes, who, in such cases, instead of submitting to make use of prudent measures to pacify the murmurings they may expect, begin by silencing all complaint, and exact an unwilling obedience by the force of authority only. He ordered me to make him, in the presence of these two noblemen, the same relation I had just now done, as if it were for the first time ; and to give them to understand, that the conclusion of the treaty with Villars depended upon their sacrificing to him their rights. This I performed exactly as we had concerted ; after which the king, turning towards them, said, with some emotion, that he would rather lose Villars and Rouen both, than gain them by doing any injustice to two persons whom he greatly esteemed. Montpensier and Biron were so affected with this manner of treating them, that they declared they would willingly resign their pretensions. Henry thanked them, and, as an equivalent, gave the first the governments of Perche and Maine, to be joined to that of Normandy, as soon as it should be entirely reduced ; but then Villars's generosity changed this disposition : and to Biron a marshal's baton, with four hundred and twenty thousand livres in money, to indemnify him for his loss.

THE reduction of Paris engaged the king in new affairs, which obliged him to delay still longer his journey to Rouen. He was employed in receiving the homage of all the different courts *, of the university, and other corporations of the city of Paris ; whose early submission he thought he could not better reward, than by applying his cares to the restoring to them that harmony and regularity which the civil wars had interrupted. He had likewise answers to give to several governors of towns and fortresses, particularly of the Isle of France, who, after the example of the capital, came to make their submissions to him.

Pontoise,
&c.

Jacqueline de
Haray-Sancy.

VILLEROY was not amongst the first : it was necessity alone, that either fixed his irresolution, or forced his inclinations. Some places of little importance still held out for him and his son, with which, by means of Du-Plessis his friend, and Sancy, whose daughter was just married to his son, he made very advantageous conditions for himself :

* The parliament of Paris was recalled by letters patent from the king, dated the 28th of March, 1594.

after

after obtaining, by repeated importunities, two truces, the one of two months space, the other for three months; which he procured to be ratified by the duke of Maienne; after having a long time affected a neutrality, and set a thousand springs in motion to protract, till the last extremity, his separation from his old friends, he at last concluded a treaty * almost after all the rest, and obtained the post of secretary to the king, in recompence for that he had given up.

1593.

THE day after the king's entry into Paris he thought proper to make me set out for Rouen, since he could not go thither himself. I arrived at that city on the 25th of March, bringing with me Vitry,

* This circumstance in our Memoirs is positively contradicted by de Thou, who says, book cviii. that Villeroÿ's treaty with the king was concluded long before, but that his majesty would not suffer it to be made public, because he was desirous that Villeroÿ should make use of his influence over the duke of Maienne, to prevail upon him to join his party. Matthieu, in the places already quoted, is of the same opinion; and Cayet, who likewise supports it elsewhere, does not contradict it by Villeroÿ's letter to the duke of Maienne, dated the 2d of January in the same year; although, in relating the purport of this letter, he casts a kind of reproach upon this minister. In this letter, which was intercepted by the royalists, Villeroÿ, whose design was to inform the duke of Maienne beforehand of his treaty with Henry, which was going to be published, and to endeavour once more to prevail upon him to follow his example, advises Maienne to consider in earnest of a peace for the party in general, and himself in particular, "Be-
" cause," says he, "their cause is despe-
" rate;" and adds, "We have lost all
" confidence in each other," &c. Cayet, book vi. p. 293.

With the key that de Thou and other historians have given us to Villeroÿ's secret transactions with the chiefs of the league, and to the part he played by the king's order, the meaning of those words which they would impute to him as a

crime, is easily comprehended; and it is even plain, that in speaking to the duke of Maienne he could not have expressed himself otherwise. Indeed if on this occasion Villeroÿ could be charged with any fault, it was, in not discovering a little more generosity when he had so good an opportunity for it; for besides those rewards mentioned in our Memoirs, he procured the government of Lyons for Charles de Neufville, marquis of Alincourt, his son. But what French nobleman in those times or even what man, however little distressed in his circumstances, could boast of being exempted from this reproach? Father de l'Etoile does not conceal the covetous and selfish disposition of Villeroÿ. "Hen-
" ry IV." says he in his journal, "going
" one day, with twelve or fifteen of his
" courtiers, to partake of a slight colla-
" tion with Villeroÿ, said to them, when
" they were seated at table, My friends,
" we are an ordinary, let us fare well for
" our money, for we have an host that
" will make us pay dear for our entertain-
" ment." I do not think it will be neces-
" sary for the future to obviate all those in-
" vectives which the duke of Sully, in the
" sequel of these Memoirs, throws upon a
" man who has been highly serviceable to
" this kingdom, till his death in the year
" 1617, having possessed the posts of minister
" and secretary of state under four successive
" kings, Charles IX. Henry III. Henry IV.
" and Lewis XIII.

1594.

at the head of three hundred men. La Font received me at the gate of the city, and conducting me, with all my train, to the house that was prepared for my reception, which belonged to the sieur de Martinbault, the finest in the whole town, and, by Villars's orders, furnished magnificently for me. Simon Antoine and la Chapelle did not approve of such a remarkable distinction. They were yet ignorant of the treaty, but had taken so much umbrage at my first journey, that they made use of all their credit with the governor to prevail upon him to forbid my entrance into the city.

LA FONT, who acquainted me with all their intrigues, apprized me also, that they were that very night appointed to sup with the governor; as were likewise the abbé Tiron, the president Boquemare, Médavy, and d'Hacqueville, two counsellors of the parliament, and some others. I was resolved to take this opportunity to declare myself; and la Font having assured me, that the admiral would not be displeas'd with any thing I did, I was willing to enjoy the confusion of the two deputies from Spain and the league, by telling them what had just happened at Paris.

I WENT immediately to St. Ouen, where Villars was with all his guests; he was talking to the deputies at one end of the gallery when I entered; I did not scruple to interrupt their conversation, by running to embrace him, and told him I was come to invite myself to sup with him, having some news to acquaint him with. Villars, after returning my embrace, pointing to the two deputies, as if he knew my intended scheme and acted in concert with me, told me coolly, that having so many people to sup with him that night, he was afraid I would not find the party well afforded. I replied, that I could accommodate myself to any set of company, and I was persuaded (the animosity of party aside) those two gentlemen would receive the news I had to tell them with pleasure. The governor glancing a look at Simon Antoine, that deputy replied, with an easy air, that he would be very glad to know how the king had treated the Spaniards and the two cardinals: adding encomiums on this prince, and compliments to me, with great art and politeness. "By what I observe, you will oblige me to treat you all," said Villars; adding an apology for the meanness of his entertainment.

THE rest of the company approaching, the president Boquemare pressed me to declare my news; but I would say nothing till we were seated.

feated. "I am," said the admiral (placing himself first at the middle of the table) "a very bad master of the ceremonies." I was resolved not to use any with don Simon, who I knew did not want ambition, which was likewise supported by his rank; lest therefore he should accept, on a bare compliment, of the chief place, which, on an occasion, when I represented the king's person, might have had some consequence, I seated myself, without any ceremony, at the head of the table, telling the Spanish deputy, that if our own persons only were concerned, I would willingly pay him what I thought due to a stranger of his merit: to which he answered with great politeness. La Chapelle observing to him, that the place I had at table was a type of that the king possessed now at Paris, and that things only followed their natural course, "I perceive it," said the Spaniard, "and I am afraid this precedence is but a bad augury for us; however, it shall not hinder us from being merry, and drinking to the health of our masters, who are not enemies, since there is no war declared between them." This answer was equally wise and politic; and, during the whole repast, the Spaniard supported his part of the conversation with great spirit and understanding, seemed charmed with the king's fine qualities, and praised him particularly for the clemency with which he acted towards his enemies, whether foreigners or French. I took notice that Tiron, and a priest named Dadré*, were silent while this subject was discussed.

THE whole company either were, or seemed to be, highly pleased with the entertainment of the evening. When we broke up, Villars, as he attended me out, intreated me not to visit him next day, which he would employ in getting rid, some way or other, of his deputies. He knew not yet how these two men intended to take their leave of him, but told me, that if I wanted to be informed of it, I need only spend the afternoon with madam de Simiers: there I learned, that Villars had been closeted three whole hours with the two agents; that they had made use of reproaches, and very harsh language to him. But this governor was not a man to be easily intimidated or induced to alter his resolution; he told them plainly, that he had concluded a treaty with the king, therefore it was necessary they should retire without delay, either to Soissons, or to the duke of Maienne, whether he would grant them a safe conduct, the only favour he had now in his power to bestow. There was a necessity for coming to this

* John Dadré, penitentiary of the church of Rouen.

1594.

extremity with them: and Villars took care to guard against the effect of their repentment, by giving orders for the newly-arrived troops to enter Rouen; with which he took possession of the palace, the fort, and the castle. This done, he sent la Font to me, to tell me, that the next day, at my first request, he would declare himself for the king, in the presence of all the inhabitants of the city, whom he caused to be assembled for that purpose, with all the form and ceremony that might make this action more solemn.

I NEVER experienced a more perfect satisfaction than what arose from the reflection of having done the king and kingdom so considerable a service; nor enjoyed a more tranquil sleep than that which the succeeding night afforded me. The next morning early I hastened to Villars, at St. Ouen, whom I found walking in the great square, whither he had come an hour before, and which, as well as all the principal streets, was filled with such a prodigious concourse of people, drawn thither by the report of the deputies departure, and the new ceremony, that Perdriel, d'Isencourt, la Font, and the soldiers whom the governor had sent to attend me, could with difficulty open me a passage: the joy was general, and diffused itself on every face.

I WENT up to the admiral, with whom I found the baron de Médavy and the president Boquemare: after the accustomed salutations were over, I told him, that the king being now a good catholic, it was time he should give him some testimony of his duty and zeal. Villars replied, that in his heart he was already faithfully devoted to his majesty's service; and that if, to make an open profession of it, nothing more was necessary than to put on the white scarf, he was ready to receive it at my hand. I took one out of my pocket; and Villars had no sooner put it on, than, without farther thought, "Come on," cried he, with a transport which marked his character, the league is, to cry *Long live the king*. The profound silence that had been held during our conference, was now interrupted at this word by an universal acclamation of, *Long live the king*: at the same time instant, the ringing of the great bell, with all the others in the city; the discharge of all the artillery from the fort and other places; added to this general shout a noise capable of inspiring terror, if the joy which dilated every heart had permitted them to perceive, that there was not a house in the city that was not shook by it. "The sound of these bells," said I to the governor, "suggests to us to go and give thanks to God in
" the

“ the church of Nôtre Dame.” Accordingly, *Te Deum* was sung there with great solemnity, and followed by the celebration of the mass, at the beginning of which I retired. As soon as it was over, Villars took me up in his coach, and carried me to a magnificent entertainment, to which the sovereign courts, all the officers of the army and magistrates of the city were invited. Orders were sent to Verneuil, Pontaudemer, Havre, where the chevalier d’Oise * commanded, and to all those places that acknowledged the admiral’s authority, to follow the example of the capital.

It was my first care, as soon as I was at leisure, to inform the king of what had just happened, and to intreat him to send some of his counsellors to re-establish the parliament. The next day the citizens came in a body to thank me for my services, and to bring me their present, which consisted of a side-board of plate, gilt and finely wrought, of upwards of three thousand crowns value; which I was obliged to accept, notwithstanding all my endeavours to the contrary. It was not long before my courier returned with dispatches from his majesty: he brought a letter for admiral Villars, in which the king stiled him his cousin, admiral, governor in chief of Rouen, Havre, &c. and invited him to come to court in terms which promised him a most gracious reception: that which was for me contained an order to return as soon as possible.

THE admiral, who would not appear there till he had an equipage suitable to his rank and dignities, took time to prepare himself; as for me, I set out before, and lay the first night at Louviers, where I had the following adventure with Bois-rosé, whom I did not know.

THIS gentleman having learned by public report that the king had given Villars the fort of Pescamp, and heard no mention made of any recompence that was to be bestowed upon him, resolved to complain of this hardship to the king; and having occasion for the protection and countenance of some governor who was known to his majesty, came to Louviers a few moments after my arrival, to get a letter of recommendation from du Rollet. He alighted at the same inn which I had chosen, and was told that a gentleman was just come, who by his train, and the discourse of his domestics, appeared to be in great favour at court: my name they did not mention. Bois-rosé believing me to be

* George de Brancas Villars, chevalier d’Oise, the admiral’s brother.

1594.

still at Rouen, could not know it but by inspiration, and did not hesitate a moment in preferring the protection of this lord to du Rollet's. He entered my chamber, and after making himself known, told me that he had great reason to complain of a nobleman of the court, called the baron de Rosny, who, abusing his master's favour, had sacrificed him, as well as the duke de Montpensier, and marshal Biron, to admiral Villars his old friend. He afterwards explained his demands, but with so much emotion, so many oaths and menaces against this baron de Rosny, that I was never so well diverted in my life, as at the figure I made on this occasion.

WHEN he had vented all his rage, I told him that I was well enough acquainted with the affair he mentioned to me, to assure him, that the baron de Rosny durst not have done any thing in it but by the king's express command; and that his majesty would not fail to repair his loss of Fescamp, by a recompence wherewith he would have reason to be contented. I did not think it necessary to carry my civility so far as to promise him to serve his resentment against that baron of whom he complained so bitterly; on the contrary, I told him that if he knew the baron de Rosny, he would confess that a man who, for the good of the state, voluntarily resigned his abbey of Saint-Taurin, could only be influenced by necessity to do what he attributed to injustice. I took leave of him saying, that I should be glad to see him when I arrived at court, where I promised to speak to the king concerning him, and to obtain the equivalent he demanded for the loss of Fescamp. Bois-rosé went away as much pleased with me as dissatisfied with the baron de Rosny; but having enquired my name of one of my pages, whom he met at the bottom of the stair-case, he was thunder-struck to hear the name of a man whom he had talked of in such harsh terms to himself; so that being apprehensive of the resentment he supposed I entertained against him, he mounted his horse again instantly, went to another inn, and set out with all possible expedition for Paris, that he might get thither before me, and secure himself against the bad offices he expected from me, by some powerful protector.

THE adventure did not end here. While Bois-rosé took precautions against me as an irreconcilable enemy, I with more tranquility pursued my route by Mante, from whence I brought my wife to Paris. The first thing I did after my arrival, was to wait on the king, and give him an account of my journey. He, according to his usual custom, obliged me to inform him of the minutest particulars. After having exhausted every thing that was serious, I was willing to divert him

with

with the scene at Louviers; for Bois-rosé had taken no notice of that, and had only conjured his majesty not to be prejudiced by what I might say against him, on account of an ancient quarrel between us. The king laughed heartily at the adventure of Bois-rosé. I sent for him, and he finding I was the person to whom he was referred, believed his affairs desperate: I enjoyed his uneasiness and perplexity for some time, and afterwards drew him out of it in a manner that surprized him greatly. I solicited warmly in his favour, and obtained for him a pension of twelve thousand livres a year, a company with an appointment, and two thousand crowns in hand. He had not hoped for so much; but, his blustering apart, I looked upon him as an officer of great courage and resolution; and afterwards bound him more closely to me, and thought him worthy of the post of lieutenant-general of the ordnance, in Normandy, when the king had made me grand master of it.

I CONCEALED nothing from the king of all that had happened to me at Rouen, except the present of the side-board of gilt plate. He was astonished one morning to see it brought into his chamber. I told him, that, having in vain endeavoured to hinder the city of Rouen from making me this present, I came to bring it to his majesty, as a thing which belonged to him, since I had bound myself by a solemn vow, never on such occasions to accept of any gift from his subjects, while I continued in his service.

AND here it seems not improper to declare my reasons for this conduct, which I am persuaded will not be thought a well concerted stratagem to gain greater riches; for although the rewards I received from the king were very considerable, and even surpassed my expectations, it will be readily allowed that a man, who for so long a time had almost the sole management of the finances and the army, was able to enrich himself by a much shorter method. It is not necessary that I should name it; the past age has afforded but too many examples of it; and notwithstanding all my endeavours to introduce a contrary custom, the future I doubt will supply many more.

INTEREST therefore being out of the question, my resolution to avoid receiving any obligations will be placed to the score of vanity. Against this imputation I can offer only a simple assurance, but a very sincere one; that I acted thus from no other motive, than the desire of teaching those who might succeed me in the conduct of affairs, that

1594.

in this respect there is no difference between them and such as are set over the distribution of justice; for if a judge who appears willing to receive presents, even without any intention of being influenced by them, is looked upon with abhorrence, a minister, and any man invested with a public employment, renders himself equally guilty, who willingly receives gifts, which those who bestow have always in view the indemnifying themselves some time or other, either at the king's or the people's expence. If we cannot depend on the rectitude of intention of those who make us these presents, (it is to my successors I address myself now) much less can we on our own who receive them; and let us accustom ourselves to regard as two things which can never be reconciled, our master's profit, and our own, unless, as I have observed before, it should be himself who bestows gifts on us; and his liberality will always go so far as to leave us no cause to complain of him upon this account, after we have been able to convince him that our expectations are confined to him alone. But unfortunately, being accustomed to calculate and to see immense sums pass through our hands, we are led insensibly to consider as a small matter those that suffice to raise a fortune for one individual.

THE king did not scruple to own that he was not used to this sort of reasoning; and that if this system, simple as it was, could be once established in the finances, it would be a sure method of enriching both the king and the state; a method that before and since has been ardently sought for in vain. He would not have accepted the side-board, but to accommodate himself to my way of thinking, by obliging me to take it from his hand. This present became publicly known, because he granted me a writing*, in which it was specified, that this side-board was a present made by the city of Rouen to his majesty, who had bestowed it upon me; and the next day this prince sent me three thousand

* Rosny's disposition agreed perfectly well with the king's. When he trusted the finances to his care, he desired him to receive no present whatever without his knowledge; and when Rosny informed him of any that were offered to him, the king immediately permitted him to accept of them, being so desirous that he should find his advantage in serving him faithfully, that he often added gifts of his own to those perquisites, to encourage him to persevere

in his integrity. But Rosny never received them till they were duly registered in the chamber of accounts, that every one might know the bounty of his prince towards him; by which means he would avoid the reproach of abusing his favour to empty his coffers. *Peref. pag. 227.* This writer as well as the rest of the world were, through the duke of Sully's modesty at that time, ignorant that he himself was the contriver of this judicious scheme.

CROWNS,

crowns, in his own strong box, to make me sensible that such an action in a minister should not go unrewarded. I now fulfill his views by informing the public of this double donation.

1594.

ADMIRAL Villars appeared soon after at court, with a train of more than an hundred gentlemen, some of whom were of the greatest families in France; but people soon drew off their attention from the magnificence of his horses, and the grandeur of his equipages, to fix it upon his generosity and modesty, in which indeed true riches consist, although they are seldom possessed by the same person. He approached the king with an air perfectly noble, yet full of the deepest respect, and threw himself at his feet. "Admiral," said the king, in pain at this posture, and raising him hastily, "such submission is due only to God;" and resolving to elevate as much as the admiral had humbled himself, he began to expatiate to the courtiers upon the great actions which Villars had performed, and did it with a discernment so just as gave them new merit. The admiral, by protestations of respect, and devotion to his service, endeavoured to stop the course of those praises; and afterwards perceiving the duke of Montpensier, he went up to him, and, kissing his hand, acknowledged him his superior, resigning to him his government of Rouen with so good a grace, that this prince, who had at first received him coldly, being charmed with his generosity, embraced him several times; and from that moment received him into the number of his most valued friends.

THE months of April and May were employed in the same manner by the king and his council, in receiving deputies from the different cities and governors, who came to treat upon conditions for surrendering. Those of Lyons and Poitiers were the most considerable. A strange fall for the duke of Nemours*! This ambitious man suffered the chimerical project of making himself king of France, by marrying the Infanta of Spain, to employ his mind; which the public hatred, and the opposition of his own brother, the duke of Maienne, obliging him to renounce, he soon consoled himself for this disappointment, by erecting, in idea, a principality composed of the provinces of Lyonnais, Beaujolois, Forêt, Maconnois, and Dombes, which he was to hold of Spain. He began by endeavouring to make sure of the capital of his

* Charles Emanuel of Savoy, duke of widow of Francis of Lorraine, duke of Nemours, son of James, and Anne d'Est, Guise.

1594.

new kingdom, but the Lyonnois*, more subtil than he, took care to secure the person of their pretended sovereign, who treated them already like a tyrant; and considering him in that light, kept him confined, without any intention however of breaking with the party. The league was offended at the affront offered to one of their leaders; and Saint-Sorlin †, the duke of Nemours' youngest brother, interesting Spain in his cause, obtained from the duke of Savoy, and the duke of Terra Nova, governor of Milan, a powerful supply of forces, with which he fell upon the Lyonnois. This violence determined them to separate openly from the league; and calling in colonel d'Ornano to their assistance, they declared openly for the king, pulled down and dragged the arms and colours of Spain, Savoy, and Nemours in the dirt, burnt with insulting raillery, in the public square, the effigies of a woman, in the habit of a sorceress, with this inscription on her forehead, *The league*; and allowed only three months time to all the little towns dependent upon Lyons, to return to their duty.

THE duke of Nemours remained in great perplexity during this tumult; and apprehending something worse than confinement from his pretended subjects, to effect his escape, put on the habit of his valet de chambre, whom he resembled in his stature, and going out of his apartment with his close-stool pan in his hand, passed through the ante-chamber where the guards were, without being known, because he turned his face aside, as if to avoid the bad smell; from thence he stole into the street, and gained the fields; too happy, after so much imaginary grandeur, to abandon, like a fugitive, a city which he had destined for the seat of his glory; and convinced by sad experience of a truth to which we are always blind, that there is nothing so difficult as to make effects answer our desires.

AMBITION made also another madman. Balagny ‡ seeing himself governor of Cambrai, a place by its situation of great importance for

* Percefixe supposes the duke of Maienne himself to be the author of the revolt of Lyons, it being his design to snatch this city out of the hands of his half-brother. What the duke of Sully says here of the duke of Nemours, ought not to hinder us from doing him justice in other respects: he is allowed by all the historians, to have possessed very great and amiable qualities, both of mind and person, and to have been one of the most deserving noblemen in all

France. See his panegyric, and that of the marquis de St. Sorlin, his brother, in the third vol. of the Memoirs of Brantome, under the article of monsieur de Nemours, pag. 23. and following; and the account of the affairs of Lyons, in Cayet, book vi. fol. 209, and other historians.

† Henry de Savoy-Nemours, marquis of Saint-Sorlin.

‡ John de Montluc, bastard of John de Montluc, bishop of Valence.

the king, had the boldness to demand his title of governor to be changed into that of sovereign prince, and the misfortune to obtain his request. Hence he flattered himself that he should see his name increase the catalogue of crowned heads, and forgot that he wanted means to maintain himself in that elevated rank. He maintained it, or thought to have done so, by exhausting his purse to appear with magnificence at court, and to send to the siege of Laon two thousand arquebusiers, and three hundred horse. But the glory of this new potentate was of short duration; he, as well as Nemours, split upon the common rock so fatal to ambitious men, who can never be persuaded to believe, that the best concerted schemes are those which afford only moderate advantages, but those advantages subjected to no changes, and secured from all dangers.

THE Spaniards seeing that in the center of the kingdom every thing slipped through their hands, resolved to stop the torrent by some important blow, and laid siege to La-Capelle. The king did not balance a moment upon the necessity of leaving all his domestic affairs, to go and prevent the reduction of this place. His soldiers however were not in the same disposition; weary of war, they sought only to lose the remembrance of it in retirement and ease: so much time therefore was wasted before the king could draw his army together, that although he marched before with a small body of troops, yet he came too late; he found the siege so far advanced, and the count of Mansfield, who commanded it, so advantageously posted, that, weak as he was, he could not venture to force him. But the place being of great strength, he flattered himself that the governor would hold out long enough to give time to the rest of the troops to join him, and then he would be in a condition either to throw supplies into the place, or force the besiegers to a battle. But this governor, following the maxim of those times, attentive only to his own profit in every thing, had been so sparing of provisions, ammunition, and soldiers, to man his garrison, that he was obliged to surrender much sooner than with a contrary conduct he need to have done, and thus saw himself ruined by his avarice.

THE king, by way of reprisal, invested Laon: he was not ignorant In Picardy that the league had put this place, already so strong by its situation and fortifications, into a condition sufficient to make whoever attacked it repent of his attempt. Du Bourg * was governor of it; one of the best

* He chose rather to go out of the Baille, of which he was governor, publicly with the black scarf, than to receive a bribe to put it into the king's hands. F. de

l'Etoile. Cayet, vol. II. pag. 691. He was called Antony du Maine, surnamed du Bourg or l'Espinalle.

1594.

and most experienced officers the duke of Maïenne had in his army : the duke's second son, the count of Sommerive *, with a great number of the nobility, was shut up there. The king therefore, considering that, on this occasion, he had his military reputation to sustain, a reputation to which he owed all his successes, neglected no care or attention, to accomplish his enterprize.

John de
Durefort,
lord de Born.

I ATTENDED him joyfully to this siege, and was charged, according to my taste, with the direction of a battery of six pieces of cannon, conjointly with the elder de Born, who, in quality of lieutenant-general of the ordnance, had the conduct of it in the absence of the count de la Guiche † grand master, and consented to take me for his colleague. Scarce had I taken possession of my new employment, when I was obliged to abandon it. The king was informed by letters from Paris, that the count d'Auvergne ‡, with d'Entragues, his father-in-law, had begun those secret practices against him which afterwards had like to have brought him to a scaffold ; and that many disaffected and seditious persons daily resorted to Paris. A violent dispute had likewise just commenced, between the university and curates of Paris, on one side, and the jesuits on the other ; which, in a government yet hardly established, might produce dangerous consequences.

THIS news convinced his majesty that there was a necessity for having a vigilant and faithful agent in that great city ; yet he delayed mentioning the affair to me, because he knew well that I should not be pleased with an employment which would oblige me to leave the siege. However, a letter which I received from the cardinal of Bourbon, and which I could not avoid shewing him, determined him to propose it to me. The cardinal, without giving a particular account of what had happened at Paris, only expressed himself ardently desirous of seeing me, upon affairs of great importance, which he said I only could succeed in. Although all this had only the air of a com-

* Charles Emmanuel of Lorrain, count of Sommerive.

† Philibert de la Guiche, governor of Lyons, was made grand master of the ordnance in the year 1578, in the room of the marechal de Biron.

‡ He will be mentioned in the sequel. Charles of Valois, duke of Angoulme, grand prior of France, son of Charles IX. and of Mary Touchet, lady of Belleville,

daughter of the lieutenant particulier of Orleans. She died in the year 1638, aged 89 years, and the duke of Angoulme in 1639. He was son-in-law to Francis de Balzac, lord of Entragues, who by his marriage with Mary Touchet, had Henrietta de Balzac, marchioness of Verneuil, mistress of Henry IV. and half sister to the count of Auvergne.

pliment,

pliment, yet his majesty thought he ought not to neglect this advice: and had these affairs related only to the cardinal, the king had so many motives for being solicitous about him, that when he had read this letter, he commanded me to prepare for returning to Paris; which I obeyed, but with great regret at quitting the siege. There was a necessity to fill up the employment I left vacant with a man whose fidelity could be depended upon. I named to his majesty Vignoles, Parabere, and Trigny, and he chose Parabere. I flattered myself that when the affairs which called me to Paris were terminated, I should return to Laon; and I was resolved to use all possible expedition with them; but they were succeeded by others, and that so soon, that from the end of May to the beginning of August, which was the time this siege lasted, all I could see of it was in those little excursions I sometimes made thither from Paris; therefore my account of it will be equally interrupted.

1594.

Joan de
Beaucden de
Parabere.

HAVING received the king's last instructions for my journey, I set out, and reached Crêpy the first night, where I lay, and the next day arrived at Paris. I waited upon the cardinal immediately, and found him * very ill, and as much weakened in mind as body: he embraced me tenderly, and discovered great joy at seeing me; then ordering his chamber to be cleared, made me sit down by his bedside, that I might hear the many important things he had to say to me. Those he began with gave me no great opinion of the rest; but they were such as sat nearest his heart, although they consisted only of domestic uneasinesses, and female quarrels, which I am almost ashamed to entertain the public with. A certain lady, named madam de Rosieres, was the cause of them. The cardinal, either through jealousy, or a disturbed imagination, had taken it into his head, that she hastened his death by magic, to be revenged on him for sowing dissension between her and the abbé de Bellozanne, her favourite: his only consolation was, that if he did not die, his murderers would. My wife had informed him that this madam de Rosieres was dangerously ill; and probably it was upon this information that he had formed his whole dream of magic and death.

HE imparted all these secrets to me with such apparent dejection, that I did not doubt but the full possession, which these extravagant notions had taken of his mind, contributed in a great measure to

* The moment he perceived himself ill, he departed from Gaillon, and came to St. Genevieve, and afterwards to his fine

house of the abbey of St. Germain, according to de Thou, book six.

1594.

hasten his death. I endeavoured to bring him back to reason; and he at last was able to speak to me of his other affairs, which he had like to have forgot. Next to madam de Rosieres, the king was the person of whom he complained with greatest bitterness; for his mind was in such a state, that he inveighed most against those whom he loved the best. He asked the king's permission to dispose of his benefices; and his majesty, he said, had not received his request very favourably, which, he added, could only be occasioned by this prince's not having any regard for him, or that he was not sincerely attached to the catholic religion; (for how indeed could he be a good catholic, and disoblige a cardinal?) Afterwards, without considering whom it was he was speaking to, he intreated me to defend the romish religion to the king, to confirm him in it, to prevail upon him to keep up a close correspondence with the pope, to demand the holy father's benediction, that he might afterwards obtain of him the dissolution of his marriage with queen Margaret of Valois, and be at liberty to marry another princess, by whom he might have children that would secure the crown to the house of Bourbon, and peace and tranquility to France. The end of this discourse was much more judicious than I had reason to expect: nor was the pope's panegyric improperly introduced in it; for it must be confessed that Clement the eighth was not only possessed of great wisdom and justice, but also so good a politician, that the court of Madrid could never boast of having deceived him by their artifices.

THE cardinal afterwards brought the affair of the jesuits upon the carpet; and although, as a man devoted to the court of Rome, he openly favoured them, yet the arguments he made use of to prevail upon me to support them, were founded upon policy and the interest of the king, and so judicious, that I was convinced his understanding was not impaired by sickness, but only on occasions where he was personally concerned. All the steps I took in that affair were in consequence of his eminence's prudent reflections on the danger of banishing the whole society from France in such a conjuncture; for, as we shall soon see, nothing less was in agitation.

A FOURTH affair, which he recommended to me, was to support, against the superintendent, the old archbishop of Glasgow in Ireland, whom he loved and honoured as if he had been a near relation. This archbishop bore the name of Bethune*. The queen of Scotland his

* James de Bethune, archbishop of Glasgow, or Glasgow, in Scotland, and not in Ireland, came to Paris in quality of am-

bassador in ordinary from the queen of Scotland, and died there in the year 1603, aged eighty-six years; having, during fifty-benefactress

benefactress being dead, all he now desired was to spend the short remnant of his life in peace, far from his native country: but in the superintendant he found an enemy, to whose persecutions he was perpetually exposed and who seemed resolved to drive him, if possible, out of France. I never could discover the true cause of this hatred; perhaps it was owing to the attachment this prelate always shewed to the family of the Guises, from whom the queen* of Scotland his mistress was descended. The cardinal said, that it had no other foundation than the interest he took in whatever concerned the archbishop: and it is certain that, as often as his eminence solicited the superintendant in favour of the old prelate, he seemed to be more eagerly bent upon his destruction. The cardinal therefore intreated me to prevail upon the king to take the archbishop under his protection: he had promised to have no concern, for the future, in any affairs, either within or without the kingdom: indeed he was no longer capable of it, nor could his conduct be justly reproached with any fault. To gain me entirely over to his interests, the cardinal told me that this archbishop had so great an affection for me, that he wept continually for my unhappiness in being educated in the protestant religion.

He resumed again the subject of his benefices, with which he concluded his discourse; and earnestly entreated me to obtain for him his majesty's permission to resign them, confessing that the possession of these benefices had given dreadful uneasiness to the deceased cardinal his uncle, from whom he had them, as well as to himself, some of them having been forcibly taken from families who were the lawful proprietors of them; and his eminence thought he should make a sufficient atonement both for himself and his uncle, and pacify his conscience, by restoring them to the injured persons after his death. He

seven years, suffered great vicissitudes of fortune, after the murder of cardinal de Bethune, archbishop of St. Andrews, his uncle, which happened in the year 1546. His epitaph may be still seen in the church of St. John of Latran. Amelot de la Houffaye, in his Memoirs, mentions the process that Nicolas Denetz, bishop of Orleans, had with Maximilian Francis, duke of Sully, in which it appears that they unjustly disputed the right this family had to the name of Bethune. "However this may be," said he, speaking of this archbishop, "the family of Betun in Scotland, from whence were descended the

" cardinal archbishop of St. Andrews, and
 " the archbishop of Glasgow, ambassador
 " from queen Mary Stuart in France,
 " where he died in 1660, or 1601, (here
 " is an error in the date) is acknowledged
 " by messieurs de Sully, and de Charoit,
 " for a branch of their house." Vol. II. p. 68. Therefore, according to our Memoirs, both the archbishop of Glasgow, and the archbishop of St. Andrews' true name was Bethune, and not Betun.

* Mary of Lorraine, daughter of Claude, duke of Guise, married in the year 1530 to James Stuart, king of Scotland.

1594.

had finished all he had to say to me, when his physician entered the chamber. Duret *, for it was he, having recommended silence to his patient, took upon himself the care of acquainting me with all the secrets of the cardinal, whose confidence he possessed; and he acquitted himself of this task like a man who had a great opinion of his own eloquence, for he wearied me sufficiently. I made no other answer to his tedious harangue, than reiterated promises of serving his eminence.

DURING the three days which I passed at Paris, I was sufficiently convinced of the dangerous correspondences carried on by the count d'Auvergne, d'Entragues, and his wife. Their house was the rendezvous for all the king's enemies, either in the league or the Spanish party: every night they held secret councils against the king's interest and service. Till I should have an opportunity of conferring with his majesty upon the measures necessary to be taken to suppress this wicked cabal, I represented to messieurs de Chiverny †, de Pontcarré, de Bellevre, and de Maïsse, that they could not watch too narrowly the motions of these disaffected persons; and I particularly recommended it to Maïsse, whose diligence I was well acquainted with.

I AFTERWARDS applied myself with a particular attention to the affair of the jesuits, against whom a process was actually commenced before the parliament, and vigorously pursued by the university and curates of Paris, who accused them with having monopolized to themselves the education of the youth, and the direction of consciences; represented them as a society very pernicious to the state; and proposed their being banished as such from all the dominions of France. It was far from being certain, that all these enemies of the society would triumph over them, even if the king should not interpose his authority. The jesuits, on this occasion, exerted all their power. The party was already so well supported, that, without laying any stress upon the pope, Spain, and their partisans in the league ‡, who were not few, one half of the parliament was on their side, and openly solicited in their favour. The cause was at last put into the hands of counsel in the highest fame at the bar: the jesuits retained Duret, and Verforis ||; and

* Lewis Duret, lord of Chevry.

† Philip Hurault de Chiverny, or Chevreny, lord chancellor of France. — Camus de Pontcarré, master of requests. Pomponne de Bellevre. Andrew Hurault seur de Maïsse; in the following year he was made ambassador to Venice.

‡ The cardinal of Bourbon, the superintendant d'O, Antony Seguire, king's advocate, and a great many others, publicly solicited for the jesuits.

|| The cause was tried privately, on the 18th of April, 1594. Antony Arnaud pleaded for the university, and their

their adversaries Arnaud and Dollé. In Paris nothing was talked of but these two powerful factions. 1594.

I REFLECTED upon what the cardinal de Bourbon had represented to me, That there was no extremity to which this order would not proceed, stimulated either by revenge, or by the hope of forcing us to repeal their banishment: That by their intrigues they might animate part of Europe against us, make their persecution be looked upon as an injury offered to religion itself, and bring the king under a suspicion of being secretly attached to that which he had just quitted; which, in the present state of affairs, might have very dangerous consequences, Clement VIII. not having yet been able to resolve upon granting the absolution solicited for at Rome; the king being engaged in one of those enterprises, the event of which is always so uncertain, and often so dangerous; and, in a word, the catholics who had most power in the kingdom, as well as those who were at Paris, as those that filled the court, fearing, or seeming to fear, for their own interest, that they had not yet sufficiently provided for the security of the romish religion in France. I was sensible that messieurs de * Longueville, Nevers, and Biron, had publicly expressed themselves to this purpose, and had used all their endeavours to communicate their apprehensions to the cardinal of Bourbon, by means of d'Entragues, d'Humiers, des Sourdis, and others. It is not my design to impute here any bad intentions to these persons; but it is certain, that amongst these zealous catholics there were few who were not actuated by a motive like that of Biron, who did not propagate these sort of discourses till he had lost all hope of obtaining the government of Laon.

BE this as it will, prudence, I thought, required that the authority of the absent king should not be exposed for a quarrel between priests and theologians: and did not doubt but his majesty, in such a case, would

Claude Duret, in few words, for the jesuits. Peter Barne, a jesuit, syndic of the college of Clermont, at present the college of Lewis le Grand, defended them more fully by a *factum*, in which were many solid arguments. He there justifies the obedience his society pays to the pope; denies that in any part of their statutes they are permitted to dethrone kings, or to murder tyrants; which, in reality, was a calumny invented by their enemies: he proves, on the contrary, that they were forbid by the court of Rome to concern themselves with any public affairs, &c. A process had been

commenced against the jesuits in the parliament by the same parties, thirty years before, concerning their establishment in the kingdom; which was still depending: the parliament, instead of a peremptory decree, made one, by which the petitions of the university and clergy of Paris were added to the instruments of this former process, to be decided together: this they might easily have prevented, and yet they did not. De Thou, b. cx. History of the university of Paris, vol. VI. p. 866. and others.

* Henry d'Orleans, duke of Longueville.

chuse

1594.

chuse the most moderate side. I therefore declared to the council, that the king did not think the accusations, which were brought against the jesuits, of sufficient importance to authorise any harsh treatment of them; and that his majesty would be determined by their future behaviour to the state and himself, whether he should banish them, or permit them to continue in France: and that till he had given more positive orders concerning them, he absolutely forbid any violent proceedings against those fathers; that no invectives * should be per-

* Antony Arnaud pleaded with such vehemence against them, that, according to l'Etoile, who had no kindness for the jesuits, he was blamed for it even by persons who hated these fathers; and that the first president obliged him to be silent. By the epithets which M. de Thou gives to the advocates for the university and clergy, it is plain, that he, like all other unprejudiced persons, thought they discovered too much heat in their proceedings against the jesuits; although on this occasion, as well as all others, this historian declares himself absolutely against the society. In the Memoirs of the league I find that the enemies of the jesuits raised another complaint against them, but so improbable, that they were forced to drop it; this was, that they carried children away from their parents, to transport them out of the kingdom.

As to the article relating to the instruction of youth, no one, I believe, will appeal from the decision of a man, whose reflections upon every part of government are known to be superior to all others. Cardinal Richelieu, in his Political Testament, part i. chap. ii. § 10. after weighing, as was usual with him, the arguments for and against the university and the jesuits, decides the question in these terms: "Neither reason nor justice allows, that we should deprive an ancient professor of that he has a right to hold: and the general interest cannot suffer a society, not only respectable for their piety, but celebrated for their doctrine, as the jesuits are, to be deprived from the exercise of a function which they perform with great utility for the public. . . . It is reasonable, therefore, that the university and the jesuits should both be allowed to teach, that each, through an

"emulous desire of excelling the other, may be animated to a full exertion of their powers; and that the sciences may be secured to the state, by being resigned to the care of their guardians; so that if one party should happen to lose so sacred a charge, it may be found with the other."

With regard to the direction of sciences, this great minister gave into the general opinion, that by that, and the instruction of children of quality, the jesuits became masters of the secrets of the hearts, and the affairs of all families: but still thinking it would be unjust, to interdict the society from this office of the sacred ministry, any more than other priests, whether secular or regular; he contented himself with making this one of the arguments for not leaving to the jesuits alone the instruction of the youth of the kingdom. The Chronologic Septenaire, a work of which the French Mercury is the sequel, appears to have done more towards the clearing up this affair, than all the other memorials of those times, by the candour and impartiality with which it is written, as well as the comprehensive manner of treating it. The Septenaire, I say, speaking of the great use the jesuits have been to this kingdom in particular, by their erudition, and their zeal against innovators; by the purity of their theological tenets; and by their missions; from hence it draws up a panegyric, for which we must refer to the book itself, fol. 349, and which is so much the more remarkable, that it was done at the time when jealousy gave rise to the blackest accusations against the jesuits. The author of this piece of history, altho' his name is not prefixed, is the same father Victor Cayet who composed the Chrono-

mitted

mitted in the pleadings against them; and even that their cause should be tried in full court. No person expected to find in me a protector of the jesuits; and I may say, without vanity, that my recommendation of them at that time would not have been useless, although I had not strengthened it with the king's authority. In effect, no farther progress was made in this affair.

1594.

THE respect I owed to the cardinal of Bourbon made me resolve to speak to the superintendent in favour of the archbishop of Glasgow; though I knew well what I had to expect from a man so little solicitous to conceal the hatred he bore to my whole family, and which a late quarrel with my youngest brother had augmented. I hoped to find more justice from the king, and I hastened to join him at Laon, after taking leave of the cardinal, who continued still extremely ill.

AT Bruyeres, where I had left my field equipage, I learned that the duke of Maienne, being in constant expectation of a great army, which count Charles of Mansfield was to bring him, had advanced with some troops as far as La-Fere, and twice attempted to throw a supply of one hundred horse and two hundred arquebusiers into Laon; that the first was defeated by Givry, and the second by the count of Soissons, whose turn it was that day to guard the trench: that the king gave always a glorious example to the princes and officers, and mounted guard in the trenches in his turn.

HIS majesty was in bed when I arrived at his quarters, although it was three o'clock in the afternoon: he asked me if I was not surprised to find him in bed at such an hour: this bed, however, was only two mattresses upon the bare ground. All night, and the preceding day, this prince had been standing at the trench, where he was employed in directing works to be made in the mountain, upon the declivity of which Laon is situated, either to change the place of some batteries, or to shelter the workmen by parapets. He was so greatly fatigued standing upon the ground, which was extremely rugged, that several contusions rose in his feet, which did not, however, hinder him from staying to see the work carried on till all these contusions bursting, each of his feet became one continued wound, which obliged him to be put to bed, and some dressings to be applied to them; these he ordered to be changed in my presence, "That you may be convinced," said he, "I do not act the sick man unseasonably." I

logie Novenaire, where there is an exact relation of this process against the jesuits, Ann. 1594. B. vi. p. 379, 407.

was

1594.

was very far, indeed, from entertaining such a thought, and if I accused him of any thing, it was of the contrary excess. I believe he perceived it; for seeking, as it were, to justify himself, he told me, that he was under a necessity of undertaking and superintending this work, which would give him two days advance upon the besieged city; and that I would not condemn him after I had seen it, or, at least, heard an account of it from the connoisseurs whom he had sent to visit it, and whose return he expected at five o'clock.

I TOOK advantage of this opportunity of being alone with the king to give him an account of my journey, which I did, kneeling on a cushion which he made me bring to the bedside. His majesty, desirous of authorizing what I had done, ordered Beaulieu-Rusé to write three letters instantly; the first, which was addressed to the chancellor, regarded the jesuits, and contained only a repetition of what I had said. In the second, he informed d'O, that it was his intention the archbishop of Glasgow should enjoy the only two abbeys * he had in France peaceably, and justified this prelate's past conduct by the gratitude he owed his benefactress. The third, to the cardinal of Bourbon, was written in the name of Loménie, secretary of state, who made known to his eminence, that the king would approve of the disposition he should make of his benefices, and was ready to ratify it, by signing himself the form he should send him, provided he found in it nothing contrary to the canons, the liberties, and customs of the kingdom. He concluded this letter with an assurance of his protection and friendship; and as a proof of his confidence, sent the two others under cover to him, that he might transmit them himself to the persons they were directed to; and had the complaisance to acquaint him with the contents. I desired Du-Peirat, whom the king sent with these three letters to Paris, to deliver one from me to the cardinal, in which I exhorted him, by every thing that I thought could make any impression upon his mind, to free himself from all his domestic uneasinesses.

THESE affairs were but just over before the arrival of messieurs de Biron, Givry, Saint-Luc, Marivault, Parabere, Vignoles, Fouque-roles, and others whom the king had sent to examine his works of the preceding day, particularly two mines which he had caused to be opened. Every one gave his opinion of them to shew his own skill: they could not agree, and a dispute insensibly arose amongst them: marshal Biron, vain of his great talents for war, by an assuming air,

* Notre-Dame de l'Abbe in Poitou, and the priory of St. Peter of Pontoise.

and

and a superiority of accent which made him always master of the conversation, could with difficulty bear to hear any one declare himself of an opinion contrary to his.

1594.

THE king, perceiving that words grew high amongst them, in order to oblige them to silence, told them he had received notice from three spies, who came one after the other from different places, that the duke of Maienne and the count of Mansfield had resolved, at all hazards, to throw a very considerable convoy of ammunition and provisions into Laon, in order to avoid a battle; and that this convoy was to set out instantly upon its march, supported by a very powerful escort, with a design to surprize the guard, force themselves a passage, and enter into the besieged city. This afforded a new subject for contestation, which ended at last in Biron's favour, who procured the command of a strong detachment, with which he intended to post himself in the forest between Laon and La-Fere, and to attack both the escort and the convoy. He composed the detachment himself, which consisted of twelve hundred French infantry, all chosen men, eight hundred Swiss, three hundred light horse, two hundred troopers, and one hundred gentlemen of the king's household. I asked the king's permission to go along with this detachment, which he refused me several times, alledging, that there were many things which he wanted me to inform him of; but, upon my repeated importunities, he allowed me to go.

WE began our march at six o'clock in the afternoon, and reached the forest at one in the morning, where we advanced cautiously to the extremity of the wood near La-Fere; here we lay in ambuscade: Marechal Biron detained all the passengers we met on the great road; who he thought might carry intelligence of his design into La-Fere; and placed centinels on horseback at the end of the wood; to bring him an exact information of whatever came out of the city. We waited with great impatience till four o'clock in the afternoon, before we heard any news; and then the centinels came to inform us, that the great road from La-Fere to Laon was covered with so long a file of soldiers, and such a vast quantity of baggage of every kind, that they could imagine nothing else but that the whole army of the enemy was advancing. That instant I perceived several of the most resolute amongst us look pale, and whisper to each other, that it was necessary to make our retreat. This many of us opposed; and the commander declaring himself for this last opinion, it was agreed upon

1594.

by a plurality of voices, that some one of the troop should be sent to reconnoitre, and bring back an exact account of what he saw. Fouqueroles, whose valour and prudence was well known, was chosen, with two others, for this employment; and returning a little time afterwards, informed us, that this seemingly formidable line was composed of three hundred carts, laden with ammunition, escorted by four squadrons of one hundred horse each, who marched before the convoy, followed by eight or nine hundred musqueteers, an equal number of Spanish infantry brought up the rear.

THIS number not being equal to ours, it was agreed upon, with one voice, that we should attack them; and we only differed upon the manner of doing it: I, with many others, were of opinion, that it would be better to let the convoy enter the forest, and afterwards fall upon them in the rear. Givry *, Montigny, and Marivault, who were at the head of the cavalry, were for the negative, and maintained so positively, that there was less danger in attacking them in the open field, that they drew marshal Biron into this opinion. At first this method succeeded; the cavalry of the enemy gave way as soon as they were attacked, though at the beginning they shewed great resolution, and retired to the sides of the waggons: but we soon found whom we had to deal with; the enemy's infantry which were in front waited firmly for our troopers, whom Biron sent to attack them, and fired upon them with such excellent order as obliged them to give ground. Biron commanded them to return to the charge by the left flank, while he attacked the right, which was evidently the least dangerous. The onset was so terrible that the enemy's foot was forced to retire, and, like the other squadrons, take shelter in the midst of the carts, from whence they still continued to defend themselves: in the mean time the Spanish battalion advanced from the rear to the front, and formed itself in such a manner, that it was supported on all sides by the cavalry and the waggons, without losing the assistance of the first battalion: they made so vigorous a defence, that all Biron's intreaties and menaces could not hinder our six hundred horse from quitting the fight, extremely weakened. The Swifs and French infantry, who took their place, found equal resistance. The battle lasted a long time. Biron apprehending, that an action which passed so near La-Fere would

* Anne d'Anglure, baron of Givry. He was killed at Laon a few days after this encounter, and greatly lamented by Hen-

ry IV. Francis de la Grange, lord de Montigny: he is mentioned again. Claude de l'Isle, sieur de Marivault.

give time for a considerable supply to be sent to the convoy, if it was not very speedily ended, for a last resource, commanded the hundred gentlemen to dismount, to add to their other arms, which consisted of a sword and pistol, a pike, of which he had brought a great quantity along with us; and to bring up to the charge all our foot, both French and Swiss, which had not yet encountered the Spaniards, Messieurs de Guitry *, de Montigny, de Marivault, de Trigny, d'Arambure, de la Curée, de Lopes, d'Heures, and others, advanced in this manner at the head of three hundred foot; and Biron, with an equal number, followed them. I was in the second battalion. They charged us with such fury that the pike and fusée became useless; we fought hand to hand, and even wrestled with each other. The Spaniards at length gave ground, and, after throwing away their arms †, fled for shelter to the woods and waggons. This last refuge was of no service to them; we pursued them there, and made a horrible carnage of them: no less than twelve hundred were left dead upon the place. We took but few prisoners. Those persons that were of any distinction in the cavalry had time to get back to La-Fere. We neither pursued them, nor the others who had taken shelter in the woods, lest we should be surprized and put into disorder by new troops sent from La-Fere to their assistance: on the contrary, we only thought of rallying, and keeping upon our guard, during the time that was necessary to rest and refresh ourselves with some of those provisions of which we found great abundance in the convoy. In the night we marched back to the camp, and brought thither, without meeting with any obstacle, all the enemy's baggage, but so pillaged by the soldiers, and so carelessly looked after, notwithstanding the commander's strict orders concerning it, that above four hundred war or baggage horses were lamed.

BIRON, with the same supercilious air which he had assumed to procure the command in this expedition, presented himself to his majesty at his return, to receive the praises due to his success. Having a subject so copious to discuss, one may easily imagine what a man, who knew

* This is not John de Chaumont de Guitry, who has been so often mentioned in the History and in these Memoirs; he died in the year 1592. See his panegyric in M. de Thou, book ciii. The person mentioned here was, according to Cayet, called so, because he married the heiress of this family. Chron. Novenn. b. iv. p. 23.

But Cayet is mistaken; John de Chaumont left several sons, who bore arms in the king's service.

† La Curée, who was a good judge in these matters, attributes the Spaniards' defeat to their custom of using too long swords, and waist-belts too short. Vol. 8929. MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi.

1594.

not that on such occasions silence is merit, would say to enhance the greatness of his victory. Indeed his discourse seemed to insinuate that he had that moment fixed the crown upon the king's head: Experience has shewn that this haughtiness which borders a little upon boasting, of itself sufficiently in the French taste, commonly succeeds with a general who has Frenchmen to lead: with them to seem sure of a victory, goes a great way towards gaining it. The king was not ignorant of this disposition; and he had found very happy consequences from it, on those hazardous occasions, when the soldiers fought only in the countenance and words of their leader, the idea they ought to have of the present danger. Hence a seeming confidence of success became habitual to him, which was imitated by all the general officers; and, as it often happens, many of them, but particularly marechal Biron, carried that confidence so far as to become insupportable to all the others, and even to the king himself, who was not on this occasion the less indulgent.

THE obliging reception which his majesty gave to Biron, and those that had followed him, created great jealousy in the courtiers who were not of the party, and completely turned Biron's head. However, he could not obtain the government of Laon, which was what he aimed at by exalting his last action, and arrogating all the glory of it to himself alone, as if the others had had no part in it. The king discovered his thoughts of it freely to me, and seemed on many accounts greatly discontented with this marechal. His majesty told me, that after so many causes of complaint which Biron had given him, after his having dared even lately to threaten him with going over to his enemies, and the discoveries he had just made of the correspondence he carried on with messieurs d'Epéron, and d'Auvergne, he could not resolve to trust him with the care of a place so near the Low Countries as Laon, which ought only to be given to a man * whose fidelity had been tried; but he feared, he said, that Biron would keep no measures after this refusal, and would openly join the party against him, or, what was still more dangerous, continue near his person, while he secretly sided with his enemies. Henry, who from this moment was persuaded that he would one day have all this to fear from Biron, added, that he perceived this marechal had sought my friendship for some time, doubtless with an intention to procure my concurrence to a marriage between his

* This government was given to Marivault.

Brother,

brother, and mademoiselle de Saint-Geniès *, my niece, who was one of the greatest fortunes in France; and he ordered me to take advantage of this new friendship, to penetrate into his designs.

1594.

THE great convoy being defeated, the king, without any obstacle, continued the siege of Laon, till he received notice that the duke of Maëne, and the count of Mansfield, far from being disheartened by this bad success, talked of nothing less than coming to force the lines of the besiegers, as soon as they had received some troops they were in expectation of. Biron treated this news with contempt; but his majesty, who neglected nothing, was not easy about it till Givry, whom he had sent to reconnoitre, escorted by three hundred horse, with strict orders not to return without a perfect knowledge of the situation and forces of the enemy, brought him, at the end of three days, certain intelligence that there was not a single company of them on this side the Oise; and that the Spaniards were more inclined to return to Flanders than to Laon. The king, relying upon the justness of this report, that very evening made a party to go and dine the next day at St. Lambert, a house dependent upon the domain of Navarre, and situated in the midst of the forest, where he remembered to have often gone to eat fruit, milk, and new cheese, during the time that in his youth he had staid in the castle of Marle; and he still promised himself great pleasure in seeing it again.

ABOUT thirty of us attended him to St. Lambert, where, as he had passed part of the preceding night in visiting as usual the trenches, batteries, and mines, he fell asleep as soon as he had dined: his good constitution, joined to a habit of fatigue, had accustomed him to sleep in any place, and when he pleased, and to wake at any hour. The weather being then extremely hot, eight or ten of us went into the thickest part of the forest, not far from the great road leading from La-Fere to Laon. We had not gone farther than twelve or fifteen hundred paces, when a noise that came from that side near La-Fere drew all our attention; it seemed to be a confused mixture of human voices, smacking of whips, neighing of horses, and a noise like the distant sound of trumpets and drums. That we might hear more plainly, we came forwards to the road, from whence we saw distinctly, eight hundred paces before us, a column of infantry, which appeared to us to be

The forest
of Folam-
bray.

* Daughter of Elias de Gontault, lord Bearn, viceroy of Navarre, and of Jacqueline de Bethune, monsieur de Roigny's sister.
foreigners,

1594.

foreigners, marching in good order, and without any noise: that which we had heard proceeded from the servants and vagabonds who followed, and those that conducted a considerable convoy of artillery which guarded it. Extending our view as far as it was possible, so great a number of troops appeared to us to defile after these waggons, that we did not doubt but the enemy's whole army was there.

WE returned immediately, and found the king awake, shaking a plum-tree, of whose fruit he seemed very fond. "Faith, fire, said we, some men that have passed us just now, will prepare other plums for you not quite so easy of digestion." We explained ourselves in few words; and the king the more readily believed us, having, as he told us, heard a noise during the space of a quarter of an hour, which (not being able to imagine that Givry could have acquitted himself so ill of his commission) he thought had proceeded from his own camp. His majesty ordered twelve of us, who were ready at hand, to go instantly to the different quarters of the cavalry (a list of which he always carried in his pocket) to spread the alarm there, and bring them all with the utmost expedition to his quarter, while at the same time others were sent to the infantry to form them into battalions, and post them between the same quarter and the trenches. He gave these orders as he was mounting his horse, and although he rode with great swiftness, he continued giving them to all he met, with the same justice and extent of thought as if he had been long before prepared for a battle. Such was this prince's quickness of apprehension, and admirable presence of mind, that nothing escaped him; whereas any other, in the same situation, instead of forming a well regulated plan, would have been hardly able to have fixed upon a tolerable expedient. The enemies upon their arrival found every one prepared for them; to which perhaps the whole army owed its preservation: for it must be confessed, that if the enemies cavalry, which at the same instant appeared in the front of the camp, where they formed themselves into squadrons with great expedition, had only been able to have thrown the soldiers into a consternation, which the king and part of the officers being absent, must infallibly have happened by an effect of the first surprize; it would have been easy for them, amidst that sudden confusion, to have defeated great part of the army, and probably fear might have delivered up the rest into their power.

THIS example is alone sufficient to prove of what utility it is for a general of an army, not only to possess that quality of the mind which takes

takes in all possible contingencies, but to be well acquainted with the names, abilities, good and bad qualities of all the officers, as well as the different bodies which compose his army, and in his turn to be known by it for him of all the general officers, whose advice (the quality of leader apart) they would chuse in any difficult conjuncture to follow, as the wisest and best; to give that advice with firmness, but without the ostentation which seems to arise from the certainty of having found out the best; to inspire them with a fondness for their occupation; to render their discipline pleasing, by never oppressing them with orders, but at the same time to accustom them never to expect that those already established, will on any occasion whatever be dispensed with or diminished; in a word, to possess the art of making himself be at all times readily obeyed by them, without inspiring that timidity which keeps them silent, when by a seasonable hint they might assist the thoughts of their leader; an inconvenience which has often been the ruin of many armies, and their commanders.

NOTWITHSTANDING the expedition the king used on this occasion, if the enemy's general had taken advantage of the opportunity which chance had given him, it is probable we might have suffered a considerable shock; but knowing the prince he had to deal with, he durst not suffer the van of his army to appear, till the whole was come out of the forest, that one part might be deprived of the assistance of the other, in case the king should be informed of his march, and meet him with his entire army. It happened also, that the march of this army was protracted by the breaking of a carriage, upon which a piece of ordnance was placed, which embarrassed them greatly. The waggon split in pieces when the convoy was defeated, the luggage of which, with the bodies of men and horses, overspread the road, caused a second embarrassment still greater: and lastly, the person whom the duke of Maienne had sent to reconnoitre a place proper for pitching his camp, did not return so speedily as he might have done.

THE king took advantage of all these delays. He drew out from the trenches as many men as were sufficient to cover them, without leaving too few within, and ranged the rest of his army in order of battle before, when the enemies, who no longer hoped to surprize him, gave him time. That day was employed on each side in chusing the most advantageous posts for a battle. It was not however the intention of the two generals of the enemy to engage; they dreaded the king's ascendant, and our cavalry which was almost all composed of gentlemen.

1594.

men. Their whole design by this motion was to oblige the king to raise the siege of Laon by coming to meet them, and afterwards to evade a battle, or throw, at least, in the confusion caused by their arrival, three thousand foot, and three hundred troopers into the place; but as we did not know their intention till afterwards that we were informed of it by some prisoners whom we took, it was not doubted but that there would be a general action the next day; our two camps being so near that we heard distinctly the found of their trumpets, and the shouts of their soldiers.

In the midst of the ground that separated us from the enemies, there was one single hill almost round, which, with regard to the besieged city, might be of great importance, if the enemy should possess themselves of it. The king, who had sent me to reconnoitre it, gave me two pieces of cannon, to support a regiment that were by his order to post and fortify themselves there. I caused a hut to be erected for myself, and when the king came to visit this post, he found every thing in good order. The next day the enemy making a shew of greater resolution than the evening before, began a skirmish with all their small shot, and endeavoured to make themselves masters of a little wood which lay between the two camps. Above fifty thousand small arms were fired, but with so little effect that Parabere, who came to my hut to sup with me, assured me that they had not twenty men slain, nor twice that number wounded.

NIGHT coming on during this tumult; and the two generals of the enemy's army, who thought of nothing less than engaging farther, took advantage of it to retreat, without being discovered, to La-Fere. The king suffered them to fly, contenting himself with the disgrace they had drawn upon themselves by this ridiculous attempt.

M E M M O I R S

O F

S U L L Y.

B O O K VII.

I CONTINUED no longer in the camp before Laon after this event. Some difficulties which arose in the treaties, particularly that with the baron de Médavy, obliged me, in obedience to his majesty's orders, to take a journey to Rouen, which was followed by a second to Paris, and another, more considerable than both, to Sedan.

1594.

THE duke of Bouillon gave daily new occasions of discontent to the king. When, thro' his majesty's interest, he had married the heirefs of Sedan, he promised to bring him a certain number of troops; but he not only neglected to perform this promise, but also retained, without asking the king's permission, the troops which he had lent him to guard his frontier till he was in peaceable possession of his new principality; nor did he make any excuse for not sending them back, or give him any account of the situation of his affairs. His new grandeur inspired him with the vanity of making himself be looked upon as a formidable potentate in Europe. This, which he could not hope from a state so weak and confined as his, he sought to obtain by all sorts of artifices and intrigues in the neighbouring courts. All the malecontents in Europe were sure of finding a protector in him, and

1594.

he was the main spring that gave motion to the cabals of Auvergne and Entragues.

ONE day when the king sent for me so early in the morning that I found him in bed, having only Ozeray and Armagnac in his apartment, and that we were all consulting upon measures to prevent the dangerous designs of so many secret enemies, his majesty dwelt in particular upon the duke of Bouillon, and seemed greatly affected with his ingratitude, after having conferred an obligation on him which ought to have bound him for ever to his interests. In effect, the king, by promoting his marriage with mademoiselle de Bouillon, had given him a proof of friendship so much the stronger, in that he acted against his own judgment, and the advice of all those to whom he had mentioned it. The next day after this conversation had passed, Beringhen presented a gentleman to the king, in his chamber, who brought him a letter from Bouillon, in which the duke informed his majesty of the death of his wife, and excused his delay, by the grief and perplexity into which her death had thrown him. This letter likewise gave the king to understand, that madam de Bouillon had left a will, in which she bequeathed the principality of Sedan and all her estates to her husband, and put them under the protection of the king of France; because it was expected, that her relations would give the duke of Bouillon great disturbance about this donation. "That is to say," said the king, when he had finished reading the letter, "that the duke of Bouillon has occasion for my assistance: Is not this a very honourable way of proceeding?"

To humble and punish the duke, his majesty was strongly inclined to leave him to struggle alone against these difficulties; but the native sweetness of his disposition, and the remembrance of the duke's former services, still influenced him in his favour. He answered the duke by a compliment of condolance upon the death of the duchess of Bouillon; and assured him of his willingness to assist him. If the king had thought that this last mark of his friendship would have recalled and fixed the duke of Bouillon for ever in his duty, the commission of him whom he sent with this letter would have ended in barely delivering it to the duke; and any inconsiderable person might have sufficed for that: but this prince, accustomed to confer benefits only on the ungrateful, would make this deputation answer several purposes. He turned towards me, and told me, that in his opinion I was the properest person to carry this letter, because if of itself it was not able to make

make Bouillon adhere constantly to his duty, the arguments of a man, who had a right to represent it to him strongly, might perhaps accomplish it; and thus, if neither produced the desired effect, it was necessary to penetrate into the duke's secret designs, and to examine carefully the will and the supposed donation of madam de Bouillon.

THIS embassy seemed too like that which had drawn the hatred of the princeſs and count of Soissons upon me; and my first emotions upon receiving it were caused by my grief that the king's service generally engaged me in such affairs. Henry, who guessed part of my thoughts, forgot nothing which he imagined capable of lessening what was disagreeable in this commission: he told me, That the success which fortune seemed to annex to all affairs wherein I was employed, as a reward due to my fidelity, induced him to chuse me, preferably to any other, to transact this business: That none of my services were lost upon him: And that he took extremely kind the attention I always shewed to avoid or break off any connections which were capable of cooling my zeal for him. Speaking these words, he embraced me tenderly; adding, with a kindness that went to my heart, that he earnestly intreated me to be careful of my own security, since I should be obliged to pass through places subject to the Guises, and to preserve myself for a prince who loved me. Princes who behave in this manner cannot be too faithfully served.

IT happened very fortunately that I was at that time very well provided with money, having sent for remittances from Rosny and Moret, where my wife was: therefore I saw myself in a condition to satisfy, without delay, the king's impatience for my departure. Three hours after I had received this order I went to Bruyeres, where my equipage lay, and, followed by five and twenty troopers well armed, in four days I arrived, without meeting with any bad accident, within view of Sedan. The duke, being informed of my arrival, came to meet me as far as the village of Torcy, which separates this little state from France: there he alighted, and assumed a melancholy air to receive my compliments, and to read the king's letter. He loaded me with personal civilities; seemed charmed with the choice his majesty had made; and persisted (notwithstanding my repeated instances) to treat me as an ambassador. I was conducted to very magnificent lodgings, and all the expences of my retinue defrayed. He shewed me, with great complaisance, the fortifications he had raised about his castle of Sedan, by which, he assured me, it would be impregnable. I was

1594.

not of the same opinion: all the expence the duke was at to strengthen this place, could not supply the defect of its situation.

THE siege of Laon, of which the duke enquired some news, afforded us matter for entering into a more particular conversation. After reiterated assurances of his attachment to the king, the duke asked me, if the many subjects of complaint which his majesty had received from the Spanish Low Countries, had not determined him to carry the war there; and spoke to me of this project, as an affair he ardently wished to see executed. He dwelt much upon the advantage of this war; upon the manner in which the provinces of Luxembourg, Liege, and Namur, might be attacked; upon the correspondences which, with this view, he carried on in the principal cities of Flanders; and upon the powerful assistance he offered to lead there. It was not difficult to believe, that he had used his utmost endeavours to promote a war, of which all the advantage would be his: but it was far from being so with the king. His interest was not concerned in it; and with regard to him, this fine project was a mere chimera. Indeed the duke, fearing that at court it would be treated with contempt, omitted nothing which he thought might bring me to approve of it, by painting it in the finest colours, and with an air of disinterestedness capable of imposing upon me. After having thus discoursed upon Flanders, he plunged into politics, and displayed all the powers of his eloquence in proving to me, that, it being the king's chief interest to depress the house of Austria, he could never attain this end but by keeping up a strict union with the protestants. The king's late abjuration he supposed was but a necessary ceremony, which had only changed him in appearance; and which he thought to prove sufficiently, by two or three strokes of raillery upon some superstitious practices of devout catholics, upon the mendicant monks, and the equivocations of the jesuits*.

THE duke of Bouillon stopped here, like a man who was afraid to explain himself too freely, and looked upon me earnestly with a feigned inquietude. Hitherto I had listened to him without interruption; and discovered, without his perceiving it, all the ideas which rose in that ambitious brain. But many things still remained to be known, for

* The duke de Bouillon was generally known for so hot-headed and furious a calvinist, that praise or blame from his mouth, on the opinions as well as on the persons of catholics, was almost of equal weight.

which it was only necessary to let him speak a long time; for it is not possible but that a man, who is at once extremely vain, and a great talker, should, at length, betray all his secrets: I therefore forced a smile into my countenance, and assumed the air of one filled with admiration of his wit, his policy, and his eloquence. The duke's self-love thus agreeably flattered, he did not wait for much intreaty, but refusing his discourse, he went on to make me sensible of the true interest of the protestants, in the situation affairs were at present in France. Here it became necessary for me to supply, by my own surmises, what he left unsaid; either because the duke of Bouillon's expression suffered a little from the constraint he laid himself under, for fear of falling into some indiscretion *, or that he thought the affectation of a mysterious air did more honour to himself and the party, or indeed, that his discourse was built on a system so sublime, and ideas so abstracted, that he likewise was lost in it as well as I.

I RECALLED the duke from this too elevated flight; and he told me in terms more plain, that the protestants were so much disgusted at the king's conversion, that he could allay their apprehensions no otherwise, than by declaring war against Spain conjointly with them; that, unless this was done, it would be impossible to persuade them that they were not made a sacrifice of, and for the future would be always exposed to the violences of the French catholics acting in concert with the pope and the Spaniards. This piece of intelligence, from the proof he brought of it, it is probable the duke himself thought as false as it really was. He said that Villeroy was commissioned by the dukes of Lorraine, Maïenne, and Mercœur, to propose to the king, who was then at Fontainebleau, this union between France and Spain; and that the pope would not have refused the king his apostolic benediction, with a bull, acknowledging him king of France, but because he would

* The true character of the duke de Bouillon, is thus given us: "On set pur-
" pose he used to express himself," says
the writer of his life, "in so dark and
" perplexed a manner, that he could give to
" what he spoke any sense that he pleased.
" He pretended that there were some nice
" conjunctures, in which a man must either
" be silent, or follow his manner of speak-
" ing." Another maxim of the duke de
Bouillon's, according to the same writer,
was, "That a man ought to be very cau-

ious of giving any thing under his hand.
" A man interprets what he has spoken as
" he pleases; and he agrees only to so much
" of it as he thinks proper, retrenching
" more or less. He approves or disap-
" proves as he thinks convenient. But
" the case is not the same with regard to
" what is written, &c." M. de Sully
was of a quite contrary opinion. We may
find some politicians, who will not condemn
the duke de Bouillon; but none who does
not commend the duke de Sully.

have

1594.

have this union the preliminary. To this proof Bouillon added others equally groundless, by which he thought to make it appear that the catholics had wholly estranged the king from the protestants, and had prevailed upon him to use them with great injustice. The grievances of the protestants thus established, the duke was willing to inform me of the remedy they had thought proper to apply. They were preparing, he said, to fortify immediately all their strong towns, to chuse a leader out of the kingdom, and within it (but the place he did not name) to establish a general council for the affairs of religion, to which all the different churches were to address themselves, and which was to determine, in the last resort, all the affairs of the ten other provincial councils, into which the calvinist part of France was to be divided; and that the power of this sovereign council might be absolute and uncontested, a protector or foreign prince was to be put at its head, capable of making it respected.

WHILST he was talking of these subjects, the duke of Bouillon, according to the occasion he had to dazzle, convince, or deceive me, assumed successively the character of a friend and ally of the king's, a good protestant, or a mere relator of facts, but always that of a man consummate in the politician's art, and the depositary of all the secret affairs of the protestants. He could not, however, involve himself so well in mystery, but that I comprehended plainly enough, that all these schemes of high and low councils, these regulations so particularised, might very probably have their rise in the duke's own brain, and not in the synods of St. Maixant, and St. Foi, as he would have had me believe. This foreign prince for protector, especially, seemed to me to be entirely his own invention, and in reality himself, who gave his own views for determined schemes, and whose sole end (for what springs will not ambition put in motion?) was perhaps merely this; that by communicating these designs to the court, as if the calvinists had really formed them, and were ready to put them in execution, I should raise the king's indignation against them; and by this artifice he would oblige the huguenots to take such a resolution as he wished, but durst not openly inspire them with; which was, to chuse him for a leader, whom the hatred and complaints of the catholics pointed out to them for a defender. All that happened in the sequel has but the more confirmed me in this belief.

AFTER having thus, as he imagined, made me subservient to his designs, the duke reflected that he should lose more than he gained, if
the

the king, of whose assistance he stood in need, should entertain any suspicion to his disadvantage; he therefore reserved a most refined stroke of policy for the last. This was to assure me, that these proposals had indeed been made him, but that, far from approving them, or offering his assistance, he had done every thing in his power to prevent such designs taking place; in which he had not the good fortune to succeed. Can any thing be imagined more treacherous and crafty! Certainly, if the duke of Bouillon was able to flatter himself, that these arts would leave me in absolute ignorance of the affairs of the protestants, and the dispositions of the seditious, he could not hinder me from perceiving at least some of his own particular sentiments with regard to the prince whom he betrayed.

I COULD no otherwise answer a discourse so full of artifice, than by confining myself to plain and simple truths, which is the most effectual way to disconcert these so curiously-disguised politicians. I assured him, in few words, that the king was not, nor ever would be, changed with regard to the protestants; that he was willing to grant them all the advantages they could reasonably demand, but that the present situation of his affairs would oblige him to defer some time longer those testimonies of his friendship: that his majesty had not forgot any of those causes which Spain had given him to hate her: and that he would always preserve a lively resentment of them, even if he were not to enter into the common concern of Europe, to put a stop to the design of the house of Austria for universal monarchy; but that, in order to secure success, it was necessary that all should be quiet within his kingdom, since it might be expected that Spain would defend herself in a different manner, when she saw herself directly attacked, than she had done in a war, wherein she had only engaged as an auxiliary.

I TOLD the duke de Bouillon, that I readily believed all he had said to me with regard to himself, since he must be sensible that the principles of honour, justice, and gratitude, pointed out to him too plainly the conduct he ought to observe with the king, to leave him a possibility of mistaking it. He refused me the troops I demanded for Henry, nor would he permit me even to peruse madam de Bouillon's last will; saying, that she had sealed it in a casket, and exacted a promise from him, that he would not open it but with the usual forms of law, if any one should question the validity of it; and that she had afterwards obliged him to confirm this promise with an oath. It was not difficult for me to comprehend that any remonstrances from me would be useless; therefore,

1594. therefore, my commission being now completed, I resolved to return immediately to Laon.

I WAS greatly surprized, on my arrival at the camp, to meet the king, who was going to hunt, passing so near the walls of the city that he was within musquet-shot of it: but I was soon informed that both sides had lain down their arms, the city having capitulated upon condition to surrender in ten days, if within that time they were not assisted by an army, or at least if a reinforcement of eight or nine hundred men were not thrown into the place. Henry made me keep close beside him during the chase, that he might hear all the particulars of my journey. When I told him that the duke of Bouillon refused to shew me the will of the deceased dukes, he replied, that he knew from thence what he ought to think of the donation*. He entertained the same opinion of the duke of Bouillon as I did, "who offers," said he, "to be a mediator in disturbances which he himself has been the author of." Nor was he less displeas'd at his refusing to send the troops he demanded: but in the present conjuncture it was necessary that his majesty should dissemble all these occasions of discontent with the duke; and therefore, in public, he seem'd to be very well satisfi'd

* In order to destroy the suspicions which the whole of this account might raise as to the reality of that donation of the dukes of Bouillon, I will give you what the duke de Bouillon's biographer says on this head. "By her last will," says he, "she appointed the duke de Bouillon, her husband, her universal heir. It was currently reported that, notwithstanding this last will of the dukes, the succession would be contested with her husband: the truth is, Charles de la Mark, the count de Maulevrier, uncle to Charlotte de la Mark, alledged that this succession belonged to him, and that she could not dispose of it, in favour of her husband, to his prejudice. The duke de Montpensier pretended likewise, that the sovereignties of Bouillon, Sedan, Janets and Raucourt, could not be contested with him; as he had been substituted therein by Robert de la Mark, the last duke of Bouillon. The duke de Bouillon thought it more eligible to accommodate matters with these two

claimants, than to engage in a law-suit, which would divert him from the execution of his grand designs: the accommodation was concluded; and the sovereign jurisdiction of Bouillon, Sedan, and Raucourt, remained in property to him." Hist. de Henry duc de Bouillon, par Marfolier, tom. II. liv. iv. This historian likewise speaks of the duke de Sully's journey to Sedan, and of the protection which Henry IV. offered the duke de Bouillon on this occasion. But here we cannot but observe, that it would have been much better not to quote, on this subject, Sully's Memoirs, than to disguise their sense, and conceal, as he has done, the objection that arises from the text of these Memoirs: and this so much the rather (it would be to no purpose to dissemble it, after all that has been said of it, and very lately, by Amelot de la Houffaye, in his Memoirs, in the article Bouillon la Mark) so much the rather, I say, as Henry IV. and the duke de Sully, are not the only persons who seem to doubt of the reality of such donation.

with

with his conduct, and determined to maintain him in Sedan. With respect to the war with Spain, which I was commissioned to propose to him, he deferred deliberating on it to another time, in full council.

1594.

THE count of Sommerive, du Bourg, and Jeannin, finding it impossible for them to prevent the insurrection of the citizens and the garrison of Laon, who were incensed against them as tyrants that had rendered their domination insupportable, thought proper to yield before the time prescribed for delivering the city to the king. They had no longer any hopes of assistance after the misfortune which happened to a reinforcement the duke of Maienne endeavoured to throw into the place. This reinforcement coming too late near Laon, to have any hopes of surprizing the besiegers, thought it best to wait for night in the wood, where they kept themselves concealed all day. The king hunting in that part of the forest at the same time, his dogs discovered the ambuscade. The enemies, although eight or nine hundred in number, instead of shewing themselves, or attacking the king, who had only three hundred horse with him, thought they should be able to avoid an absolute discovery by separating, the better to conceal themselves: but the dogs still continued to pursue them, and the king's troop arriving in the mean time, they were surprized in so great a disorder, that our footmen and servants only, without any assistance from the three hundred horsemen, made themselves masters of them, and pillaged them entirely.

AFTER the surrender of Laon, the king judged it necessary to take a journey to the frontiers of Flanders; his chief inducement to it being the hopes that many of these cities would surrender to him at his approach. The event did not answer his expectations; and his majesty drew no other advantage from his journey, than confirming in their allegiance Amiens, Abbeville, Montreuil, Peronne, and several other cities, into each of which he made a solemn entry. I can say no more of the transactions here, the king's service calling me at that time to Paris upon affairs of less importance than the former, and which for that reason I shall not enter into a particular detail of, any more than of what passed in the different provinces of the kingdom. The reduction of Morlais, and Quimper, by marechal * d'Aumont, with the

* He was killed the following year when besieging Comper, by a cannon-ball that broke his arm to shatters; being upwards of seventy years of age: he said no more when he found himself wounded, than these

words, *I have got it*. He was generally esteemed, and generally regretted. See his eulogy and great qualities in M. de Thou; b. cxiii.

1594. assistance of the English forces; the building of Fort du Croific, by the duke of Mercœur, at the head of the Spaniards, to be a check upon Brest, were the most considerable exploits of the two parties in Brittany. Savoy, Piedmont, Provence and Dauphiné, continued to be the theatre of a* war always favourable to Lesdiguières, against the duke of Savoy, notwithstanding the defeat and taking † of Crequy.

THE duke of Maienne, seeing Laon taken, almost all Picardy in the king's party, the chief officers of the league, and the duke of Guise himself, disposed to treat soon of an accommodation with his majesty, yielded at last to the advice of the president Jeannin ‡, who had long pressed him to fix himself in one particular province, and there make powerful efforts in time, to render himself independent; so that, after fortune had subjected all to the king, which he doubted not would soon happen, he might at least have secured a retreat to shelter him in the reverse of his.

BURGUNDY was the province || fixed upon by the duke of Maienne; and he marched thither with his forces, after placing good garrisons in Dourlens, La-Fere, and Soissons. Besides his being already in possession of great part of this province, its contiguity to Savoy, Franche Comté, Lorraine, Switzerland, and Germany, from whence he hoped to draw great supplies, was a farther inducement for him to fix there. The pope, and the emperor, seemed to enter into his views: he might strengthen his right of conquest, by a resignation in form, which Spain would grant him so much the more willingly, as by that means she would revive a claim upon Burgundy, long since suppressed, but never wholly renounced. All these probable advantages made it be believed by many persons, that the ancient kingdom of Burgundy was upon the point of being restored. The duke of Maienne's conduct in these quarters, the remaining part of this year, and till the month of April in the following, supported this opinion; and I had less reason

* See these military expeditions in the historians.

† Charles de Crequy, son-in-law to Lesdiguières, coming to the relief of Aiguebelle, besieged by the duke of Savoy, was defeated and taken prisoner. This did not happen till 1598.

‡ I know not if the author does not here a little too lightly tax this president: at least it has been said that more than two

years before, at his return from Spain, he had been the first to advise the duke de Maienne to come to an agreement with the king; as being disgusted at the haughtiness and excessive vanity with which the king of Spain in treating with him, had said, *my town of Paris, my town of Orleans*, as if France had actually been his own.

|| The duke of Maienne was governor of this province.

than

than any other to doubt of his intention in this respect, after the letters I saw at Paris, in the hands of the cardinal of Bourbon.

1594.

BUT, unfortunately for the duke of Maëne, the Burgundians were not disposed to make choice of a subject for their master: they never before gave such convincing proofs of their fidelity to their sovereign. The duke of Guise beginning with endeavours to secure Beaune, by throwing a strong garrison into it, the burghers rose against them, defeated them, and forced them to shut themselves up in the castle: and as they might still suffer great inconveniences from them, they fortified themselves with barricades against the castle, and invited marshal Biron to come to their assistance, permitting him to lodge his little army six weeks within their walls. They afterwards attacked the castle in form, with a battery of twelve pieces of cannon; and carried on their works so vigorously, that they drove out at last the garrison of the league. I shall give an account hereafter of the expeditions in Burgundy; at present I must leave them, to return to the affairs of the capital.

I PERCEIVED the cardinal's illness to increase so prodigiously every day, that, not doubting but his end was very near, I staid at Paris to give the king immediate notice of it. He died without making that disposition of his benefices * which he seemed to have so ardently desired. His majesty was afflicted at his death, having lost a good kinsman and an affectionate subject. He wrote to me, that he was tired with the importunity of several persons who coveted the cardinal's spoils; and that, to get rid of them, his general answer was, that they were already disposed of. His designs with regard to these benefices were as follows: In the agreement with the abbot de Tiron, certain abbeyes belonging to the chancellor and the governor of Pont de l'Arche were yielded to him, for which those two gentlemen demanded to be largely indemnified out of the benefices of the deceased cardinal. The king was desirous that the abbé de Tiron should release these abbeyes to the proprietors, and receive in exchange for them the archbishopric of Rouen, valued at thirty thousand livres a year, but charged by the king with the payment of a pension of four thousand crowns, which he had

* He was archbishop of Rouen, abbé of St. Denis, of St. Germain-des-Prés, of St. Ouen and St. Catherine of Rouen, of Orcamp, &c. De Thou represents him

as a prince who loved the sciences; he was eloquent, mild, and of an agreeable disposition, but extremely weak. He died on the 28th of July.

1594.

promised to the chevalier d'Oise *, retaining for himself Gaillon-house, which he designed to purchase from the abbé; and ordered me to prevail upon him to accept of this equivalent. As for the abbey of St. Ouen, one of the finest benefices the deceased cardinal had possessed, the king, as yet, had not bestowed it on any one; and he had the goodness to tell me, that he would not do it without charging it with a pension of ten thousand livres for me.

THE greatest difficulty I met with in managing the king's affairs at Paris, was to communicate his prudent oeconomy to the directors of his finances, the superintendant especially. The abuse of suffering the finances to become a prey to favourites (an evil, the source of which may be traced back to the reign of Charles VIII.) had in this last reign increased to such a degree, that had a man of the greatest industry, prudence, and integrity imaginable, been at the head of the finances, he perhaps would not have been able to prevent the bad consequences of so prodigious a dissipation: and, unhappily, d'O † possessed none of these qualities. His disposition, naturally leaning towards profusion, indolence, and voluptuousness, had been wholly ruined by all those vices for which the court of Henry III. was famous, deep play, unbounded debauchery, expensive follies, domestic disorders, and extravagances of every kind. D'O was on a footing with Bellegarde ‡, Souvrai, Villequier, Quélus, Saint-Luc, Maugiron, Saint-Mégrin, Livarrot, Joyeuse, Epernon, la Valette, du Bouchage, Thermes, and many other less declared favourites: and the title of minion was all the recommendation he had for a post which the most careless princes think fit, for their own interest, to except from those with which they reward such sort of servants.

* George de Brancas Villars, brother to admiral de Villars.

† Francis d'O, lord of Fresnes, Maillebois, &c. first gentleman of the bed-chamber, governor of Paris and the isle of France, superintendant of the finances, &c. "He surpassed kings and princes in extravagance and prodigality; for, even to his suppers, he had pies made of musk and amber served up, that amounted to twenty-five thousand crowns." Journal de l'Étoile, ann. 1594, p. 37.

‡ Roger de St. Larry de Bellegarde. Gilles de Souvrai. René de Villequier. Jacques Levis de Caylus or Quélus. Francis d'Epinaï de St. Luc. Francis de Mau-

giron. Paul Stuart de Caussade sieur de St. Mégrin. Jean d'Arces de Livarrot. Anne de Joyeuse. John Louis and Bernard de Nogaret. Henry de Joyeuse, count du Bouchage, afterwards a capuchin. John de St. Lary de Thermes, or Augustus baron of Thermes. Tho' Souvrai had been one of Henry III's favourites, he should not be ranked in the number of this prince's minions: he was a man of an acknowledged merit and probity. Henry III. said, that if he were neither king nor prince, he would gladly be Souvrai. He refused the commission with which Henry III. would have charged him, to assassinate the marechal de Montmorency, when in prison. De Thou, b. lxi.

SUCH was the man by whom the finances were conducted at a time, when, minions and mistresses being excluded from the council, one would have expected they should have been put under other management: and what is still more surprizing, the king, in his most urgent occasions, had not even the privilege of dividing his own revenues with the superintendent. D'O did not scruple to let him lose a city or a governor for the want of a very inconsiderable sum of money, while at the same time he denied none to his own pleasures. Lieramont *, governor of Catelet, applied to me, to solicit the payment of his garrison from d'O: I thought the affair of such importance, that I subdued my reluctance to ask a favour of him, and acquitted myself of my commission; but with little success. The superintendent, after I had left him, said to messieurs d'Edouville † and de Mouffy, that he had rather see this place in the hands of Spaniards than protestants. Lieramont was of that religion. Mouffy, who was my kinsman, repeating this discourse to me, I declared to the superintendent, that he should be answerable for the place, if it were lost for want of this payment. But the menace had little effect on him.

FORTUNATELY for the king, a retention of urine delivered him, a few days after, from so bad a subject. And it is worthy of observation, that this man, who was possessed of more than four millions, or rather all the money in the kingdom, which he disposed of almost absolutely; more splendid in his equipages, his furniture, and his table, than the king himself, was not yet abandoned by his physicians, when his relations, who had always seemed to bear him great affection, his domestics ‡, and some others, under the title of creditors, pillaged him with such eagerness, and so completely, that a long time before he expired there was nothing left but bare walls in the chamber where he lay; as if fortune thought fit to finish with him at least by an act of justice ||.

* Francis de Dampierre, sieur de Lieramont or Liermont.

† . . . sieur d'Edouville, . . . Bou-tillier, sieur Mouffy.

‡ He had no children by Charlotte Catherine de Villequier, his wife. “ Henry IV. playing at tennis with M. d'O, “ made him observe that the marker stole “ their balls, and afterwards called to “ him with a loud voice, “ D'O, you see

“ that all the world cheats us.” Le Grain, b. vii.

|| “ If,” says M. de Grillon, “ each “ must give in his accounts above, I believe that poor d'O will find himself “ much at a loss to find good documents “ for his. It was said that he died very “ much in debt, more than he was worth; “ and that there were five and twenty “ or thirty officers in his house when he

1594.

THE king returned to Paris to treat of a truce, which the duke of Lorraine requested instantly; and of an accommodation with the duke of Guise, who solicited it by the duchess * of Guise his mother, the king's cousin-german, and mademoiselle de Guise his sister. It must be confessed, that of all those persons who had been in arms against the king, the duke of Guise deserved most indulgence. To the common motives of religion and independence, which seemed to authorize all things, he joined that of a father assassinated by the command of the present king's predecessor. It was madam de Guise, his mother, whose persuasions chiefly induced him to take this step: she was continually representing to her son, that the revolt of the princes and nobility of the kingdom, which in the beginning was justified by religion, became criminal after Henry had removed the only obstacle that could hinder him from enjoying his right of inheritance to the crown.

IN any other age, which had not, like this, lost every distinction between virtue and vice, this woman would have been the ornament of her sex, for the qualities of her heart and mind. Her whole conduct was regulated by a native rectitude of soul; so that it was easy to see that she had not even the idea of evil, either to act or to advise it: and at the same time of so sweet a disposition, that she never was subjected to the smallest emotion of hatred, malignity, envy, or even ill humour. No woman ever possessed so many graces of conversation, or added to a wit so subtil and refined, a simplicity so artless and agreeable. Her repartees were full of salt and sprightliness; and the pleasing, as well as greater qualities, so happily blended in her composition, that she was, at once, tender and lively, tranquil and gay. It

“ died. The treasurers regretted him extremely, and called him their father: it was even said, that three of them gave each fifty crowns to Collot to engage him to dress him properly. M. le Grand, his good friend, was almost distracted for his loss; for he allowed him every year one hundred thousand franks to spend. Madame was not all sorry for it, because he almost starved her: those of the religion regretted him as little, for he wished them no good. Madam de Liancourt mourned for him, because she could do with him as she pleased;

“ and if he kept her in favour with the king. — M. Segurier, the dean, who assisted him to the last, as likewise did his brothers, repeated to him, as he was dying, *Have mercy on me, O God.* Some of the last words he spoke were, “ Remember me to his majesty; he will know better, after my death, wherein I have been of service to him, than he did while I lived.” *L'Etoile, ibid.*

* Catherine of Cleves, wife to the duke of Guise who was killed at Blois. Charles of Lorraine duke of Guise.

WAS

was not long before the king became perfectly well acquainted with the character of this lady; and from that moment he not only forgot all his resentment, but also behaved towards her with all the familiarity and frankness of a sincere friend. He consented to give the necessary passports to the sieurs de la Rochette, Perigord, and Bigot, whom the duke of Guise sent to propose his demands; and, wholly subdued by the instances of these two ladies, named, on his side, three agents to treat with the duke: these were the chancellor de Chiverny, the duke de Retz, and Beaulieu-Rufé, secretary of state.

THESE three persons, to shew their great skill in negotiating, began at first by using all those turns and artifices which policy has unreasonably introduced in the place of that frank and open conduct, that without deceiving any one, produces the same effect. Their conferences lasted ten days successively; yet at the end of this time the smallest preliminary was not settled. Madam de Guise, who was tortured by these affected delays, came one day into the king's apartment, when his majesty did me the honour to converse with me, holding my hand; and turning the discourse upon the treaty with her son, she complained to the king, with her usual gracefulness, but mingled with a little impatience, that he had employed three men, "who go," said she, "three different roads to reach no end; the first, by never saying more than these words, *We must consider; We must advise; Let us do better*: the second, by not understanding himself, although he speaks continually: and the third, by never ceasing to find fault." This was, in reality, the true character of the three negotiators. This lady, suffering herself to be wholly transported by her zeal for the king, and tenderness for her son, taking his majesty's hand, which she kissed, notwithstanding Henry's endeavours to the contrary, she conjured him to receive the returning allegiance of the duke of Guise, and give her the consolation to see her family restored to the favour of their king. She spoke with an effusion of heart so strong and lively, that the king, affected by it even to tears, could not hinder himself from answering, "Well cousin, what is it you desire me to do? I can refuse you nothing." "All I desire," replied she, "is, that you will name the person whose hand your majesty holds to treat with my son." "What!" returned the king, "this wicked huguenot. Truly I grant him you very willingly, although I know that he is your kinsman, and that he has a very great friendship for you." That very moment he took away the cognizance of this affair from the three commissaries, and caused a commission, under the
great

1594.

great seal, to be given to me; not only for settling the treaty with the duke of Guise *, but also for the affairs of the whole province of Champagne. It may be easily imagined, that after this the chancellor bore me no good-will; but it is the part of an old and artful courtier, to appear so much the more obliging and respectful to those who are in favour, as the resentment he harbours against them in his heart is severe and lasting. Chiverny †, indeed, excelled in this art.

THE duke of Guise had begun with very extravagant propositions, which if he had insisted upon, would have rendered his treaty ineffectual. Doubtless, he was induced to make them, through his knowledge of those persons to whom he was referred: he thought, that to obtain something he must demand a great deal. He claimed no less than the post of high steward of the king's household, which the count of Soissons had been in possession of ever since the assassination of the duke of Guise, when it was bestowed upon him; to possess the government of Champagne, which had likewise been given to the duke of Nevers; to enjoy also the benefices of his uncle, the cardinal of Guise, particularly the archbishopric of Rheims, then actually possessed by M. du Bec, a relation of madam de Liancourt, the king's mistress. He added several other articles; but these three gave rise to the greatest difficulties. The duke of Guise, being informed of the change of the commissioners, resolved immediately to lessen the extravagance of his demands; and wrote to the duchess, his mother, and to his agents, to conclude a treaty with me upon reasonable conditions, and even at any price whatever. He had soon after a new inducement to finish the treaty, as soon as possible, which I was ignorant of: he had discovered that the city of Rheims (the most considerable present he had to offer the king) designing to make a merit of returning to its obedience voluntarily, had solicited the rest of the province to do the like; and had already drawn great part of it into their views. The duke of Guise, to prevent this inconvenience, having attempted to place a garrison there, the inhabitants declared that they would guard the city themselves; and this refusal causing a debate, they answered the duke's menaces by others no less haughty.

* See M. de Thou, b. cxi. who gives himself some share in this accommodation with the duke of Guise.

† Philip Hurault de Chiverny, chancellor of France, died in 1599, aged 72.

AFTER the second conference I had with the duke's agent, there was no mention either of the post or high steward of the household, the government of Champagne, or of the benefices; and those three obstacles being removed, I saw very little difficulty remaining. I proposed to the king, the drawing the duke of Guise from Champagne, to fix him in Provence, by giving him that government for a recompence; so that, his interest there being united with that of Lesdiguières, and Ornano, who supported the king's party against the duke of Epernon, they might at once join to reduce the power of that formidable subject. The king consented to this so much the more willingly, as by the manner in which the family of Guise acted with him, he judged he might depend upon their fidelity; and he ordered me to conclude with him upon this plan. I made the proposal to the duke's agents, and, upon reiterated commands from his majesty, used so much diligence in settling all other matters, that the next evening the treaty with the duke of Guise was concluded and signed by me for the king, and by madam de Guise, and the duke's three commissioners, for him.

THE next day six deputies from the city of Rheims arrived at Paris; and, addressing themselves to me, told me that the king needed not bestow any great rewards upon the duke of Guise, not only because Rheims was no longer in his power, but because the inhabitants were ready to deliver him up to the king. They did not require to be introduced to his majesty, but said that they would be satisfied with his approbation in writing, or only mine; submitting it to the king to grant them what recompence he should think fit: and ended with offering me, according to custom, a present of ten thousand crowns, which I neither could, nor would accept of. I thanked them in the king's name for their good-will; and assured them that he would, with great pleasure, receive this testimony of it. I deferred giving them an answer, till I had received orders from his majesty, to whom I went immediately to relate all that had passed. The king was at that time in his closet, from whence he made every one but Beringhen depart, and listened to me walking, often shaking his head, and smiling, through a reflection on the natural levity and inconstancy of the people. He afterwards took me aside to the window, and desired me to tell him what terms I was upon with the duke of Guise. As soon as I had informed him that the treaty was concluded, he did not hesitate a moment whether or not he should observe it; but he would not, however,

1594.

appear insensible of the affection of the city of Rheims. I introduced the deputies to him, whom he thanked as became a king, bestowing upon them a very considerable reward with an air so gracious, that they returned full of joy and admiration.

THE treaty with the duke of Guise being with the usual form signed by * Gèvres for the king, the ducheis and mademoiselle de Guise demanded his majesty's permission for the duke to come himself, and assure him of his obedience. I wrote to him to seek for no other security than that permission: and he made no scruple to comply with my injunctions. He assembled as many of his friends as he could, and came and threw himself at the king's feet, with so many marks of a sincere repentance, that the king, who penetrated into his inmost soul, instead of reproaches, or a silence which on such occasions is more terrible than the severest reproaches, made use of all his endeavours to reassure him: he embraced him three several times, honoured him with the name of nephew, treated him with the greatest tenderness and freedom, and without affecting either to avoid or recall what had passed, mentioned the deceased duke of Guise with honour. He said that they had been friends in their youth, although often rivals for the same ladies; and that the duke's good qualities, and a conformity of disposition, had united them in a fixed aversion to the duke of Alençon. A friend, who endeavours to reconcile himself to his friend after a slight quarrel, could not have behaved otherwise; and all those that were-witnesses of this reception, could never sufficiently admire a king, who, with so many qualities to inspire fear, employed only those that created love.

THE duke of Guise, absolutely gained by this discourse, replied to the king, that he would neglect nothing to render himself worthy of the honour his majesty did the memory of his father, and the sentiments he was pleased to entertain of himself: and from that time he took such care to convince him that his respect and fidelity to him would continue inviolable, that the king, forgetting all which any other, in his situation, would have apprehended from the raising again a family which had made kings tremble, lived with him familiarly, and admitted him with the other courtiers into all his parties of pleasure: for such was the character of Henry, that that exterior gravity, which the royal

* Lewis Potier de Gèvres, secretary of
sta c. From him is descended the branch
of the Gèvres; and from Nicolas Potier

de Blanemenil his elder brother, that of
Novion.

dignity makes it necessary to assume, never hindered him from resigning himself up freely to pleasures, which an equality of conditions spreads over society, The truly great man knows how to be by turns, and as occasions require, whatever he ought to be, master, or equal, king, or citizen: it is no diminution of his greatness, to unbend himself in private, provided that he shews himself, in his public character, capable of performing all the duties of his high station: the courtier will never forget that he is with his master.

MADAM de Guise entering the king's apartment some days after, when the duke of Guise presented the napkin to his majesty for a light repast which he took in the afternoon, she again took occasion to express her gratitude to him for his goodness to her son, and told him, with a lively emotion, that if ever the duke of Guise was deficient in his duty and obedience, she would disinherit him, and disown him for her son. The king, running to embrace her, assured her that he, on his side, would ever preserve for the duke, and his whole family, the tenderness of a father.

THE treaty I had just concluded with the duke of Guise did not fail to be loudly exclaimed against. His own particular enemies, and that sort of people which swarm about a court, who have no other business than to decry the conduct of persons in place, united themselves against me, and being secretly supported by those from whom the cognizance of this affair was taken, proclaimed every where, that I undertook this commission only to please madam de Guise. The duke of Epemon was not silent on this occasion; and whenever the duke of Guise and he were mentioned together, he constantly said, that I had offended the one without cause, to oblige the other against all reason. These discourses were so often repeated to the king, that he was at last made to believe, I had acted with rather too much precipitation: however, he was not displeas'd with me upon that account.

IT was not difficult for me to justify myself; which I did by an apology in writing, and presented it to the king. I there defended my conduct with the following reasons: That the king could not possibly grant the three articles before mentioned, without giving disgust to a great many other persons; notwithstanding which, he would have been obliged to grant them, if he had not had a government to bestow upon the duke, which was the least recompence he could expect, after resigning Champagne, and yielding up so many other claims: That with

1594.

regard to the government which was given him, no other could be chosen, from whence fewer bad consequences might be feared, than from Provence *. For upon a supposition that the duke of Guise might hereafter become capable of forgetting the new oath of allegiance he had taken, there was little danger to be apprehended from him in a province which had no communication with Lorrain, the Low Countries, and Burgundy especially: on the contrary, although none of the duke's demands had been complied with, except the continuing him in the government of Champagne, yet by that, the danger of perpetuating the war in those countries was incurred: That it was the king's interest to reserve to himself the power of bestowing the government of Champagne upon a man who should not be only sincerely attached to his service, but whose integrity likewise should be so well known, that the rebels in Burgundy might despair of ever bringing him to favour their views. With regard to the conveniency of fixing upon Provence for the duke of Guise, I added that argument relating to the duke of Epernon, which I have already touched upon. I recalled to the king's remembrance, in a few words, the many occasions of complaint this man had given him, his repeated revolts, his intrigues to disengage all the catholics from his majesty's party, his insolent boast that he would never acknowledge any superior in his government, his last proceedings at Villemur, and many other circumstances which certainly would do no honour to the history of this imperious subject. It was opposing one leader of the league by another, whom a thousand motives, besides that of his own interest, which ought always to be regarded as the most powerful, concurred to regulate his conduct by a system quite contrary to his former views.

WITHOUT dwelling upon the orders his majesty had given me with regard to the duke of Guise, nor the danger of a longer delay; although the treaty with him had not been so advantageous as it was easy to prove it was, I represented to the king, that he could not act rigorously towards a man, who had so steadily refused all the offers and most flattering promises from Spain, the dukes of Savoy, and Lorrain, and the other enemies of the state †, to prevail upon him to continue a war, which, however short a time it had lasted,

* The government was afterwards taken from him by cardinal Richelieu; who likewise took that of Picardy from the duke d'Elbeuf, and that of Burgundy from the duke de Bellegarde.

† The duke of Guise was hated by the league, especially since the time he had killed with his own hand, in a tumult, the sieur de St. Paul, his field lieutenant, who was much beloved by them.

would have been a greater inconvenience to him, than all he had granted to the duke of Guise. Nor ought it to be thought a matter of little consequence (whatever his and my enemies could say) to gain over a man whose name and birth would always procure him a powerful party. I agree with them, if they please, that this lord after all made but an inconsiderable sacrifice of unjust claims, and uncertain expectations; nay I will reduce it lower, and ascribe it all to the king's generosity; yet, if by that means he bound to his interest, not a single man only, but a family respectable for their alliances, their riches, and influence, it cannot be called an useless generosity.

THE king was struck by these reasons, and seemed greatly surprized at my exact knowledge of Epernon. He did not think it proper to permit this writing to be published, because of the truths it contained, which it was not yet time to reveal. I submitted, without any difficulty, for I never gave myself much trouble about the efforts of envy, having always looked upon that passion as an incurable disease. The duke of Guise's whole conduct for the future made a still greater apology for me: he began his government by so clear and absolute a declaration of his sentiments, that the seditious were deprived of all hopes of ever being able to seduce him. In all occasions wherein the king's service, or the good of the state, required his assistance, he behaved with equal firmness and prudence. The reduction * of Marfeilles, which was with reason thought one of the best strokes of that kind, was his work; and with the help of Lesdiguieres, and the counts of Sault, he so well humbled the haughty Epernon, that he at last obliged him to restrain his rebellious disposition; and this proud subject was seen to submit to the king's mercy, and became one of his most assiduous courtiers.

I NEVER was unwilling to do justice to the duke of Epernon, to be among the first to enhance the value either of his personal services,

* This town was upon the point of being delivered up to the king of Spain, by two of its burgeses, named Charles Casault, and Lewis d'Aix; when the duke of Guise found means to make himself master of it, by intelligence held with Peter and Bartholomew Libertat, two brothers, who were also burgeses of the same town. They slew Casault, beat the troops of the Spanish side, and let in, thro' the Porte-reale, the duke of Guise, who performed this enterprise with a great deal of conduct. See de Thou, b. cxvi. D'Aubignè, tom. III. liv.

iv. chap. 12. Henry IV. upon receiving the news of the reduction of Marfeilles, said, "It is now that I am king." In the following campaign, the duke of Guise shewed a great deal of valour, in pursuing the Spaniards as far as Givry; and killed with his own hand, a trooper belonging to the enemy, who had given him defiance. Henry IV. embracing him, spoke these words, "Those who find old examples of virtue before them, must imitate and repeat them, for such as come after." P. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. i. p. 192.

1594.

or those of his soldiers at Limoges, Saint-Germain, Ville-bois*, Chartres, Boulogne, Montauron, Antibes, and even at Villemur. I am sorry that the subject I treat on necessarily engages me in a discussion which may lessen the advantageous opinions that have been conceived of him; but, since this is a place where nothing should be concealed or disguised, what can, what ought to be thought of his conduct in Provence? Certainly, to ascribe it all to a bigotry in his religion, is shewing the utmost favour to his reputation. His panegyriists, who so loudly extol his most inconsiderable actions, ought to be a little more moderate when they reflect on his frequent revolts, and acts of disobedience; or begin by establishing it for a truth, that a subject may be irreproachable, yet fail in his duty to his king, and his country, introduce discord and confusion to gratify his ambition, and give to violence the name of right. If any panegyrics are to be bestowed here, doubtless it is the king who merits them, who, after all these offences, received Epernon with open arms, and never excluded him from favours; which in every respect, considering his behaviour, were indeed mere favours to him.

Nicolas de
Harlay de
Sancy.

AFTER the death of d'O, there appeared among the candidates a man, who, it was immediately thought, would have the post of superintendant; this was Nicolas de Sancy, who wanted neither capacity, nor experience, for that station. Sancy might be very properly called a man of wit, using this term in the sense that is generally given it, to denote vivacity, subtilty, and quickness of apprehension. But, as it is very seldom found, that an excellent judgment is joined to these qualities, Sancy spoiled them all by a degree of vanity, caprice, and impetuosity, which sometimes rendered him insupportable. It is my opinion of these strong and lively imaginations in general, that although they are commonly subject to two great faults, which are too much subtilty, and too little clearness in their ideas, and confusion and unsteadiness in their schemes, yet they ought not to be thought wholly incapable of business; because it often happens, that they hit upon expedients which would have escaped more cautious and phlegmatic minds: but there is almost always occasion to watch over them, and to correct their errors.

* See on each of these actions, l'Hist. de la vie du duc d'Epernon, printed at Paris, ann. 1655. Villebois is a town of Angoumois, which at this day is called la Valette. You may likewise consult the same history, as to the reproaches which our Memoirs give this duke: but he can-

not be justified in every particular; and even his own historian looks upon it as impossible. All that can be said is, that M. de Sully took pleasure to aggravate faults, which the last years of the duke d'Epernon's life have almost entirely effaced.

SANCY

SANCY had long, and usefully served Henry the third, and the reigning king, both in Germany and Switzerland. He had insinuated himself into Henry's favour by great complaisance, a subtle behaviour, a refined art in heightening his pleasure, and by becoming necessary in his affairs of gallantry. Hence it was that he lived with this prince upon terms of the greatest familiarity. That he might neglect nothing by which he thought he should make his court successfully, he inveighed, without ceasing, against the dissipation of the finances; and, as a flatterer generally goes beyond his mark, in railing at the superintendant he could not help decrying likewise the superintendancy, as an employment ruinous to the state: by which he gave good reason to call his wit in question. But he himself opposed his advancement to this post by an obstacle still greater: he not only neglected to please madam de Liancourt *, then mistress to the king, but also by an intemperance of tongue, to which such persons as he are very subject, he had offended this lady on a very delicate occasion.

I KNOW not whether the story I am going to relate had ever any foundation in truth. However this may be, thus the story ran in Paris: His majesty having sent Alibour, his first physician, to visit madam de Liancourt, who was indisposed (this was in the beginning of his addresses to that lady) at his return he told the king, that she was indeed a little disordered, but that he need not be uneasy, for the consequence would be very good. "But you will not bleed and purge her?" said the king to him. "I shall be very careful how I do that," replied the old man, with the same simplicity, "before she has gone half her time." "How!" interrupted the king, astonished and disordered to the last degree: "what is it you say, friend? Surely you rave, and are not in your right senses." Alibour supported his assertion with good proofs, which the king thought he should destroy, by telling him upon what terms he was with the lady. "I know not what you have done, or what you have not done," replied the old physician with great composure, and for a complete proof referred him to four or five months from that time. The king quitted Alibour with great rage, and went immediately to reproach the sick fair one, who, no doubt, knew well enough how to new dress all the good man had ignorantly said; for it was not perceived that any misunderstanding happened be-

* This was the fair Gabrielle, who was wife to Nicolas d'Amerval, lord of Liancourt. She was forced by her father, they

say, to this marriage, which was no. at all to her liking: but Henry IV. knew very well how to hinder the consummation.

1594.

tween the king and his mistress. It is certain, however, that the event was exactly conformable to Alibour's prediction: but it was thought that Henry, after a more strict examination, was brought to believe that he had been mistaken in his reckoning, since, instead of disowning the child which madam de Liancourt lay in of at Coucy, during the siege of Laon, he acknowledged it openly, and had it baptized by the name of Cæsar.

SANCY gave free scope to his wit, in relating this story; and did not forget the circumstance of * La-Regnardiere, who, having one day, as he said, taken the liberty to inform his majesty of some things that did not please him, was soon after banished the court, under pretence that he had quarrelled with the admiral †. Sancy found something to say upon the death of the good man Alibour, and would have thought it more natural, if it had not happened before the accomplishment of his prediction. If he commented thus upon the birth of the son, he did no less upon the whole conduct of the mother. Sancy proved, to his cost, what the malice of a woman, especially a king's mistress, is capable of doing: Henry loved him, and wanted to raise him; and although he was inclined to suppress the post of superintendant of the finances, yet he would have preserved it, merely to have bestowed it upon him; but madam de Liancourt knew how to prevent it.

INSTEAD of a superintendant of the finances, his majesty composed a council consisting of eight persons; these were, the chancellor de Chiverny, the duke de Retz, messieurs de Belliévre (who was succeeded by Matignon) de Schomberg, de Maillé, de Fresne (protected by madam de Liancourt) de la Grange-le-roi, and de Sancy, who thought himself very happy to be one of the members ‡ of this

* "La-Regnardiere was a kind of buffoon, half soldier, half lawyer, and half gentleman, who said whatever came uppermost." It is in this manner he is spoken of in the adventures of the baron de Fœnesté, liv. iv. ch. 7. where we find many more stories related of him.

† The Journal de l'Etoile, and the Confession of Sancy, confirm all this pleasantry, as also the suspicion of its ending tragically for old M. Alibour, the king's first physician, who was poisoned, they say, by order of the king's mistress; but all this

is alledged without any proof. You may also read, on this head, what Sauval has told on the faith of public report, and satirical libels, touching the intrigues between the fair Gabrielle and the duke de Bellegarde.

‡ M. de Thou and Perefice say, that M. de Sancy was for some time superintendant before M. de Rosny: which ought not to be understood, in my opinion, but only of the authority which he assumed of himself among his fellow counsellors, as M. de Sully tells us afterwards. The body,

1594.

body. The king judged it necessary to give this council, for form's sake only, and without any distinction, a titular head, which was the duke of Nevers. This form of government of the finances lasted some time, although with a few inconsiderable alterations, which I shall mention in their place: for the reader may expect in these Memoirs to see whatever relates to the finances treated with all that clearness and extent which a man, who has so long made them his study and employment, is capable of giving them.

THE king was convinced, in the sequel, that this new change in the council * was far from affording that remedy the disease required: small as my experience was in these affairs, I easily comprehended it. It is not the government of one man only by which the finances are thrown into confusion; since it is an incontestible truth, that, as they must pass through some hands, the fewer that are employed, the less will be embezzled. The abuse lies in the choice of this man, and in the nature of the finances: and therefore, to have this office discharged by many different persons, is to perpetuate the evil. If, in the whole kingdom, it is difficult to find one single man fit for such an employment, how can it be expected that a great number will be met with? Nor is the mistake less palpable in imagining that all these persons bringing each of them one distinguishing good quality into their employments, the same effect will be produced as from a man who unites them all in himself; since that is to suppose, that this single good quality cannot possibly be rendered useless by the opposition of several bad ones, either in himself or his associates. In general, the predominant principle with which those persons who are invested with public employments enter upon the execution of them, is to raise and enrich themselves and their relations. If this eager desire of riches is not felt by them at first, it is inspired, increased, and stimulated, by the great sums of money that pass through their hands: amidst that dependence on, and mutual fear of, each other, every one represents to himself integrity as a quality not only useless, but hurtful to him, the honour of which is shared by his colleagues, the inconvenience wholly his own. The king was far from being fortunate in his choice of the members of this body: several of those who composed it, besides being

writers of that time agree, that nothing of certainty can be said as to the state of the council of the finances, till the time in which M. de Rosny was at least declared the chief. We run no risque in believing

all he says on the head of the finances.

* Preface talks of this new form of the council of the finances, as M. de Rosny, ann. 1598, p. 224.

1594.

of a malignant disposition, were in a situation that exposed them to corruption: they had debts to pay, and domestic wants to supply.

HIS majesty destined me a place in it, and had, for a long time, in his conversations with me, expressed his desire that I would make myself thoroughly acquainted with whatever regarded the finances: but I could not possibly submit to the imperious behaviour of the duke of Nevers, who very unseasonably assumed great consequence to himself from his quality of prince, in a place where it signified very little. One day, when his insolence had exhausted all my patience, I took the liberty to intreat he would remember, that the family of Bethune was in possession of the earldom of Nevers before the family of Gonzague. A man swollen with the pride of ancestry could not possibly receive a more severe mortification. He often repeated to those who would hear him, that my whole family were huguenots; and, to answer my anecdote with another, said, that he had seen my grandfather make a very mean figure at Nevers. I suffered him to have his revenge, which could extend no farther than keeping me out of a council where I had very little inclination to be with him: and this satisfaction he had. The king, who had many measures to keep, told me, in a very obliging manner, that he was under a necessity of deferring some time longer the proof he intended to give me of his friendship; and I waited for it without murmuring, satisfied with the post of secretary of state, with a salary of two thousand livres a year, and a pension of three thousand six hundred more, which the king bestowed upon me.

PERSONS of the least discernment being convinced of the necessity there was to introduce a reformation into the finances, the new council were at first desirous of this honour; and a scheme for that purpose was proposed by those amongst them who most valued themselves for their penetration and method. These were Fresne and La-Grange-le-roi. But after they had produced a very large volume upon this affair, it happened with that, as with the most part of systems that have been or may be invented; nothing more easy in speculation, in practice nothing more difficult: and the king, whom they had flattered with mighty hopes, found every thing in the same condition as before, at the end of the year which he had passed at Paris, expecting daily the effect of their promises.

HE was retained there to more purpose by the treaty with Lorraine, which, entirely forsaking Spain, concluded a league offensive and defensive

1594.

fenſive with France. Sancy's ſervices were of great uſe in this treaty: and to him almoſt all the honour of it was due. The king was no longer at a loſs for employment, after the duke of Bouillon arrived at Paris: he came in perſon to preſs the execution of thoſe ſchemes he had entertained me with at Sedan, particularly a declaration of war againſt Spain, which he made the baſis of his advancement in the Low Countries. He uſed ſuch plauſible arguments for it, that, after the example of the courtiers *, he did not ſcruple to propoſe it in full council. He found there two different parties who did not approve of this war: thoſe in whom a rooted attachment to Spain and the league ſtill remained, and they were not few in number; and thoſe who thought a war, in the preſent weak and exhauſted ſtate of the kingdom, was very unſeaſonable. Theſe laſt had few partiſans, but ſtrong reaſons on their ſide, if any one would have liſtened to them.

I WOULD not incur the reproach of ſilence upon this occaſion. I uſed every argument my reaſon could ſuggeſt, to diſſuade the king from this war: but this prince, whom a natural propenſity drew always a little to that ſide, thought he had now found the opportunity he fought for, to revenge himſelf upon a neighbour who had made it his endeavour to maintain the flame which conſumed the heart of his kingdom. He was ſure of troops from Lorrain: England and Holland, by their ambaffadors, gave hopes of a powerful diverſion: and, according to the duke of Bouillon, a ſingle word from him was ſufficient to make all Luxembourg ſurrender: Sancy made great promiſes in behalf of the Thirteen Cantons: all Franche-Compté lay open to their ravages. The king was determined by all theſe flattering appearances; and in January, the following year, war was declared in form againſt Spain.

* M. de Thou makes no doubt but the duke de Bouillon was the principal author of this war: and his hiſtorian entirely agrees, that in giving this counſel he far leſs conſulted the advantage of the ſtate, and the glory of the king, than his own perſonal intereſt, and that of the calviniſtical party, who neceſſarily wanted a war, in order to obtain the favourable terms which were granted them by the edict of Nantz. Notwithſtanding the reaſons for declaring war againſt Spain, of

which a minute detail may be ſeen in MISS. de la Bibliot. de Roi, vol. marked 8955, and in the king's declaration, that is ſet down in tom. VI. of the Memoires de la Ligue: all good writers and judicious perſons are unaniſmouſly of one voice, in favour of the duke de Sully's opinion as to the precipitation and imprudence with which Henry IV. conducted himſelf in this affair, the conſequences of which might have been a good deal more fatal than they were.

1594.

THAT kingdom seemed to give herself very little trouble about this proceeding; and answered only by shewing great contempt for Henry's council, and for Henry himself, to whom she gave no other title than that of prince of Bearn. While she made preparations to defend herself, her emissaries in France endeavoured to spare her the trouble, by an attempt so horrid, that it is scarce credible she could have recourse to it.

Francis de la
Magdelaine
de Ragny.
Francis de
La-Grange
de Montig-
ny.

ON the 26th of December, the king being then at Paris, in his apartments in the Louvre*, where he gave audience to messieurs de Ragny and de Montigny, who entered with a great number of other persons: at the very moment when he stooped to embrace one of them, he received a wound in the face with a knife, which the murderer let fall as he was endeavouring to escape through the croud †. I was present, and approached in an agony of grief, seeing the king all covered with blood, and fearing, with reason, that the stroke was mortal. The king removed our apprehensions by a composed and agreeable behaviour; and we perceived immediately that his lip only was wounded; the stroke having been aimed too high, the force or it was stopped by a tooth, which it broke.

* According to others, in the chamber of the marchioness de Monceaux, at the hotel de Schomberg, behind the Louvre: but, in fact, it was neither at the Louvre, nor at the hotel de Schomberg, that this affair happened. A register belonging to the town-house at Paris, quoted by Pignaniolle, tom. II. de la Description de Paris, says, that the fair Gabrielle resided, in 1595, at the hotel d'Estrées; and that it was at this place Henry IV. was wounded. This hotel was afterwards called l'hotel du Bouchage; and was purchased in 1616, by monsieur de Berulle, in order to lodge and accommodate the fathers of the oratory, who still continue there.

† “Immediately the king, who found himself wounded, looking round him, and seeing Mathurine, his fool, said, *The deuce take the fool: she has wounded me.* But she, denying it, ran directly to shut the door, wherby she was the

“occasion of preventing the assassin from making his escape; who, upon being seized, and afterwards searched, dropped his knife, which was all over bloody.” Thus l'Etoile speaks of it. The MSS. de la Bibl. du Roy say quite otherwise in vol. 9033, namely, “that the king, finding himself wounded, spoke thus to one of those two gentlemen, *Ab, cousin! you have wounded me:* and that he thereupon, throwing himself at his majesty's feet, replied, *God forbid, sire, that I should entertain even a thought of hurting or wounding your majesty: I have no weapon about me but the sword by my side.*” M. de Thou says, that the count of Soissons seizing the assassin, spoke aloud to him, that it was one of them two had given the blow; and that the poignard was perceived to lie at his feet glittering by the light of the candles. Lib. iii.

THE

1594.

THE parricide was discovered, without any difficulty, though he had mixed among the croud. He was a scholar, named John Chatel; and readily answered, when he was interrogated, that he came from the college of the jesuits, accusing those fathers with being the authors of his crime *. The king, who heard him, said, with a gaiety which on such an occasion few persons could have been capable of, that he had heard from the mouths of many persons, that the society never loved him, and he was now convinced of it by his own. Chatel was

* When the matter relates to any personal reflections, or such as are thrown upon a whole body of men, I think myself particularly obliged to call to mind the observation I made, in the preface of this work, that the Memoirs of M. de Sully are not only composed of authentic and original pieces, that should make them be looked upon as deserving all the credit that is commonly paid to great authors, and moreover as the real production of M. de Sully; such as letters, particular memoirs, conversations, reflections, &c. but that likewise they are interwoven with recitals that may well be ascribed solely to such as have collected and composed those pieces, upon the authority of which there is not so much stress to be laid. Now it is in these narrations that I find a great number of the facts and reflections against the jesuits, which ought not to be admitted without authentic and solid proof. Thus we shall find somewhat mentioned, that is contrary to the tenor of our Memoirs with regard to the affair of Chatel, in those that serve for the Universal History of Europe, tom. I. p. 110, &c. And if more deference ought to be paid to the testimony of cotemporary writers, "Chatel," says l'Etoile, in his Journal sur l'ann. 1595, "was interrogated the 28th, and, by his own answers, he quite cleared the jesuits of any imputation, and even father Gueret, his preceptor: he said that he had undertaken to strike the blow of his own proper motion," &c. In fact, when this parricide gave it, he had been seven months

gone from the college, and had finished his studies. This authority of l'Etoile's, which is not suspected, is corroborated by that of the royal MS. which I have just now quoted, as also by de Thou and Matthieu, tom. II. liv. i. p. 183. by Cayet, liv. vi. p. 432. and the Memoirs of the league. According to all these writers, Chatel declared, it is true, that he had studied with the jesuits, and that by their doctrine it is lawful to kill kings; as it is taught in the writings of father Guignard, library-keeper of the college of Clermont, whom they went to seize directly: but at the same time he formally cleared both his professor and all the jesuits of having ever advised him to assassinate the king, and even of their having had, any more than his confessor, the least knowledge of his design; though, according to l'Etoile, Lugoly, lieutenant of the Marshalsea, had disguised himself like a confessor, on purpose to pump the secret from Chatel. For which reason M. de Sully and M. d'Aubigné are very much in the wrong, to give occasion for concluding, by the manner in which both the one and the other express themselves, that the jesuits pushed on Chatel to this assassination. Father de Chalons expresses himself pretty ambiguously, when he says, in tom. III. of his History of France, p. 245, that Chatel avowed, upon his interrogatories, "that the principles and discourses of the jesuits had led him to this criminal action." Yet, however, one perceives that the sense of these words is very different from the preceding.

delivered

1594.

delivered up to justice *; and the prosecutions against the jesuits, which had been suspended, were now resumed more vigorous than before, and terminated by the banishment of the whole order † from the kingdom. Father John Guignard ‡ was hanged for his pernicious doctrines against the authority and life of kings: John Gueret ||, Peter Verade, Alexander Mayus, Francis Jacob, and John Le-Bel, other members of the society, suspected of being his accomplices, were obliged to make the *amende honorable*, and condemned to perpetual banishment.

* “ After having been put to the ordinary and extraordinary trial upon the rack, which he endured without making any confession, and having made the *amende honorable*, his hand was cut off, holding in it the murderous knife with which he intended to kill the king; then his flesh was torn off with red-hot pincers, and he was drawn between four horses in the Place de Grève; his body and members cast into the fire, and burnt to ashes, and the ashes thrown into the air. The sieur Chatel, the father of the parricide, was banished France for nine years, and for ever from the precincts and jurisdiction of Paris, condemned to pay a fine of four thousand crowns, his house razed, and instead thereof a pyramid erected, containing the whole story of the fact.” L’Etoile, *ibid.* It is thought that the little square that lies before the Barnabites, is the spot on which Chatel’s house stood.

† “ The jesuits, in obedience to the arret against them, departed Paris, conducted by a serjeant of the court: they were thirty-seven in number, part of whom were put into three carts, and the rest travelled on foot; their procurator being mounted on a little nag,” &c. L’Etoile, *ibid.*

‡ Father Guignard did not teach the pernicious doctrine of which they accused him, at the time of Chatel’s affair. He might have propagated it during the fury of the league, as the Sorbonne themselves had done, together with a great number of other priests and religious. If we judge by the pieces belonging to the process of this father, we must agree, 1. That if he had

written and spoke in favour of the league, this crime was forgiven him, seeing an amnesty had been granted to all those concerned in it. 2. That he underwent the rigour of the law, for only preserving some writings and books that favoured this party. Upon which father Daniel, in his *Histoire de France*, in fol. tom. III. p. 1706, remarks, that if a process had been entered against all who were in the like case, there must have been a necessity to condemn capitally the greatest part of the priests and religious, who had the care of any cabinets of rarities and of libraries, where the like writings were kept, and where they are preserved down to our time. “ He said that he died innocent, exhorted the people to the fear of God, and obedience to the king: he even prayed aloud for his majesty, and begged of the people not lightly and precipitately to give credit to the false reports which were industriously propagated concerning them; that they were not assassins of kings; and that the jesuits had never procured or approved of the death of any king whatsoever,” &c. Mem. de l’Etoile, *ibid.* He would not make the *amende honorable* to the king, alledging that he had not offended him. Cayet, *ibid.*

|| Here the author is mistaken. John Gueret was, by an express arret, condemned to perpetual banishment; but there is no express mention made of Peter Verade, Alexander Mayus, &c. who were comprized with all the rest, and without being particularly named in the arret, which proscribed in general the whole society. It is a glaring calumny in Morisot, to have advanced, chap. 33. that Francis Jacob, to

THIS

THIS attempt confirmed the king in his resolution to pursue the war with Spain. He drew a favourable augury for his future success from the advantage he gained in the first acts of hostility. As soon as the treaty between France and Lorraine was concluded, the latter immediately, and without solicitation, dispersed the troops over Burgundy, under the conduct of Tremblecourt* and Saint George, and carried terror into every part of that province. On the other side, the garrison of Soissons, a place absolutely devoted to the league, commanded by Conan and Bellefond§, was almost wholly cut off by Moulisy†, d'Edouville, de Bayes, and Gadancourt the lieutenant of my company. The duke of Montmorency‡, to prove himself worthy of the dignity of constable, which he had lately been invested with, fell upon Dauphiny, the Lionnois, and Bresse, with a body of four thousand foot, and four hundred well disciplined horse; drove out from those places the remainder of the troops belonging to the dukes of Savoy, and Nemours, took Vienne by composition from Dizimieux, who was governor of it for the duke of Nemours, and afterwards Montlucl. Marechal Biron, after the expedition at Beaune, made himself master of Nuys, Autun, and Dijon||. The duke of Bouillon, as soon as war was proclaimed, entered Luxembourg, where, with the assistance of count Philip of Nassau, he defeated eight or ten parties of horse, under the command of Mansfield.

whom they had told that Henry IV. was just assassinated by Chatel, boasted that he would have dispatched this prince, if he had not been prevented by Chatel. I know of no historian that has said any such thing.

It is another calumny of an equally black nature, to have endeavoured to make the jesuits pass for the authors of a piece entitled, *Apologie de Jean Chatel*: a trifling performance, and at the same time, detestable on account of the abuse therein made of divine and human laws, and even of the holy scriptures. They at that time cleared their innocence in this respect; and according to the same historian, F. Matthieu, they were still more justified by the avowal of the true author of this piece, namely, John Boucher, the same priest whose name all the histories have rendered so odious. With this piece, which never ought to

have seen the light, an account of Chatel's process has just been published, extracted not only from a MS. in the king's library, of which we have spoke, but from acts of parliament.

* — D'Auffonville, sieur de St. George, and Lewis de Beauvau, sieur de Tremblecourt, both gentlemen of Lorraine.

§ Bernardine Gigault de Bellefonde.

† On the 15th of February, in the plains de Villers Coterets in Vallois. The baron de Conan is called Conas or Conac, in M. de Thou; and instead of Bayes, you must read it Beyne.

‡ Henry the second son of the constable Anne de Montmorency, who was made constable in the year 1593.

|| See all these different expeditions into Burgundy, in de Thou and d'Aubigné, ann. 1595.

1594.

HENRY did not doubt but that, by uniting all these separate bodies into one army, he should make whatever province he conducted it into tremble. It is certain that if he did this, he could not make a stand every where as before; but the expectations his majesty formed from his first project, made him resolve to prefer it. Having the choice of entering Picardy, Champagne, or Burgundy, he determined upon the last, where messieurs de Montmorency, Biron, and Sancy, gave him hopes of great success. Their secret motives for calling him thither were these.

THE constable Montmorency had been alarmed by the great preparations he saw made by Spain in Lombardy, where the constable of Castile had orders to quit the Milanese, however necessary his presence might be in that country, to enter France, and make some bold attempt there, after he should be joined by the count de Fuentes, general of the Spanish troops in the Netherlands. Montmorency therefore apprehended that all these troops would fall upon him. Marechal Biron, who was in the same quarters, where, after seizing the city of Dijon, he had attacked the castle of it, and that of Talan, both of great strength, was afraid, likewise, that he should be obliged to raise the siege if he was not assisted.

As to Sancy, his views were to advance his own reputation by the conquest of Franche-Comté, to which he was incessantly endeavouring to persuade the king. Convinced by his own experience of madam de Liancourt's power, he sought to make her approve this project: but the terms he was upon with this lady not permitting him to propose it to her himself, he concealed his own interest in the affair, and made use of the interposition of others. He caused it to be hinted to the chancellor de Chiverny, and, by his means, to a lady who could not fail of making her court by it to madam de Liancourt, that the king might easily provide a noble inheritance for her son Cæsar, by driving out the Spaniards from Franche-Comté, and giving him the possession of it under the sovereignty of the Thirteen Cantons, who would be induced by their own interest to favour the attempt. Madam de Liancourt, I am persuaded, could not flatter herself with the hope of gaining the king's consent to so ridiculous a scheme; and durst not even communicate it to him, though this prince's passion * for her was so

* " He went through Paris, having this lady by his side; he took her with him to hunt, and caressed her before all the world." Journ. de l'Etoile, *ibid.* And

we may judge of the attachment of Henry IV. to this lady, from the letters he writ to her: which see in the collection newly printed.

great,

1595.

great, that he suffered no one to be ignorant of it : but there needed no more to make him resolve upon a journey to Burgundy, than this lady's joining herself to those who advised him to it. Such is a court, and thus are kings imposed upon : from whence they may learn, that, whatever ideas they may have conceived of the wisdom and abilities of their ministers, to judge truly of every transaction it is the surest way to study carefully the secret inclinations, interest, and dispositions of those who are nearest to their persons.

To remedy, in some measure, the inconveniencies which might arise from leaving the frontiers of Picardy exposed to the inroads of the Spanish troops that were in Flanders, the king, who was not, like others, imposed upon by the great promises that England and Holland made him, left messieurs de Nevers, de Bouillon, de Villars, and de Saint Paul*, upon this frontier, with each a detachment under their command; enjoining them to assist each other upon occasion, and above all recommending a good intelligence amongst themselves. In case of a reunion, the duke of Nevers was appointed to command in chief. He provided with the same wisdom and foresight for the affairs at home, by establishing a council, which, besides the finances, was to take cognizance of all the treaties that were made with the provinces, cities, and governors; of all affairs relating to war; and of the administration of justice throughout the kingdom.

As soon as his majesty had publicly explained himself with regard to the forming this council, the count of Soissons wished to be made president of it; and began to insinuate something to that purpose in the king's presence. That I might remove his resentment against me for traversing his marriage, I solicited this title for him, which was more honourable than effective, and in all appearance would be of short duration: but the king, whose aversion for the count increased every day, had already fixed upon the prince of Conti, and at dinner declared his purpose before the whole court. Then turning to the count of Soissons, he told him, that, knowing his disposition to be turned wholly towards war, he would keep him about his person this campaign; and ordered him to get his company of gendarmes in readiness to attend him. The prince of Conti answered only with a profound bow, because he expressed himself with difficulty; and the count of Soissons did the same, because anger hindered him from speaking: all his majesty said

* Francis d'Orleans, count de St. Paul, governor of Provence.

to him being accompanied with praises of his valour, and an air of distinction which forced him to appear satisfied.

THE members of the new council were almost all the same that had composed the former; to which were added three intendants, Heudicourt, Marcel, and Guibert: the number was afterwards augmented to eight, by joining to those three Incarville, Des-Barreaux, Atichy, Santeny, and Vienne, and a secretary named Meillant. Although the duke of Nevers was not now in the council, the king found no less difficulty in procuring me a place in this than in the former. He was afraid to propose it at first, on account of the catholics, who could not suffer a protestant in power: but he broke through this obstacle three days afterwards; and the reason he gave for it to the other counsellors was, that the confidence which the prince of Conti had in me, rendered my association necessary even to themselves.

THE road his majesty was to take being through Moret, I attended him so far, not so much to receive him there, since madam de Rosny could have done that without me, as to have an opportunity of conferring privately with this prince, and to receive his last instructions concerning affairs that might in his absence be brought before the council, the members whereof did not long continue in a state of friendship. My colleagues, perceiving by the private dispatches I received from the king, that I was in possession of his confidence, entered, through jealousy, into a combination against me, looking upon me as one who would carry away all the honour of every meritorious act that was performed by the council. They sought to disgust me, or to force me to silence, by joining in a constant opposition to all I said; but finding that notwithstanding this behaviour I still persisted to take my own measures, they had recourse to another stratagem, and in our assemblies every affair was discussed but what related to the finances, which was referred to private meetings, either at the chancellor's or at Sancy's; and there all was regulated without my participation. I did not dissemble my thoughts of this collusion, but declared to them, that I had no desire to mix in their debates; and, instead of signing their decrees, protested against them, and retired to Moret. The members of the council, who could not even invent any pretence for the disgust they gave me, being afraid of his majesty's reproaches, prevailed upon the prince of Conti himself to intreat me to return. Being always naturally incapable of flattery, or of disguising my sentiments, I replied, that since they did not rectify the abuses which had been introduced into
the

the finances, although they were sufficiently acquainted with them, I would at least avoid the reproach of following their conduct, and would stay at Moret, rather than be a witness of faults which I saw committed with impunity.

THE king, whom I informed of what had happened to me, found so much conformity between his situation and mine, that he thought he could not console me more effectually, than by complaining to me in his turn. He had indeed most ungovernable spirits to deal with. The count of Soissons, who had followed him with reluctance, revenged himself by repeated instances of his caprice and ill humour. But not all his endeavours could induce the king, however greatly he was offended, to order him to retire; which was the point he wished to bring him to: and he was at last obliged to go of his own accord, upon a pretence so very trifling, that it had scarcely the appearance of one. A report being spread that the constable of Castille was approaching, the king ordered the constable de Montmorency, and marechal Biron, to bring up the two bodies of troops which they commanded: the count of Soissons alledged that, by his post of high steward of the king's household, he had a right to the chief command of these troops in his majesty's absence, and asserted his claim to it in his presence. The king did not think proper even to request a favour of this nature from the constable, and the marechal; and used his utmost endeavours to banish so ridiculous a notion from the count's mind. He solicited, he intreated him, as he would have done his son or brother (these were his majesty's own words) but in vain: the count, who did not err through ignorance, quitted him with a dissembled discontent, and prevailed upon part of the soldiers under his command to do the like. The king immediately dispatched letters to his council, to take proper measures upon the count's flight: the same messenger left one for me as he passed by Moret. Henry did not yet know that I had retired thither; but we had agreed upon this expedient, to conceal from my enemies the correspondence I had with his majesty.

THREE or four days after the receipt of this letter, my servants informed me that some soldiers were just arrived, who insisted upon quartering at Saint-Mamert, a village upon the confluence of the Seine and the Loin, dependent upon Moret, and distant from it about a quarter of a league. I sent Camord to bring me intelligence who they were, and what was their design. They not only neglected to send me, by this gentleman, the usual compliments upon these occasions, but

1595.

likewise answered him insolently, that they had a right to quarter in any place where their horses began to be fatigued, and all that could be required of them was to do no mischief. They refused to name their captains, and only said that they belonged to the count of Soissons. That I might leave these officers no excuse for their rudeness, I wrote to them a second time, telling them that, since they belonged to the count of Soissons, who honoured me with his friendship, they were welcome to quarter at Moret; that I would provide them lodgings in the inns and houses of the town's people, where they would have greater conveniency; and just hinted to them that I was sensible of the manner in which they had received my deputy. Camord, whom I would have sent with this second message, told me, that it would have no other effect than to increase the insolence of these officers, who came with a premeditated design to affront me, which he confirmed by several other circumstances of his reception, that he had concealed from me before, to avoid a greater misfortune. Madam de Rosny, who was present at this relation, began to give way to female fears; and accusing Camord with imprudence, said she had rather that the whole village of Saint-Mamert was laid in ruins, than see me, for so slight an occasion, at variance with the count, and exposed to a contest with his officers.

I OBLIGED my wife to be silent; and after arresting five or six of the troopers, who came to get their equipages mended at Moret, and to purchase provisions, I again sent Camord to those insolent officers. They received him still worse than before, and hardly forbore laying hands on him; mingling great threatening with their complaints for the detention of their soldiers. It was no longer possible to dissemble: and all that now remained to be done, was to assert my authority, yet with all imaginable moderation. I ordered twelve other troopers, who had just entered Moret, to be arrested; and in two hours time assembled an hundred and fifty arquebusiers, thirty horse, and thirty foot soldiers; with whom I marched to Saint-Mamert, by the road that leads to it by land, and which has a thick shade of trees on each side; while the rest of my troop pursued the same rout upon the river, in a flat boat covered with planks, and arrived at the same time with me under the houses of the village situated near the river. The count of Soissons' party, seeing this double escort, detached some of their men to ask me what I meant by it? "Nothing," replied I calmly, "but that this village belonging to me, I come to quarter my soldiers here." The officers by these words understood that I was not disposed to yield to them; and sent
again

1595.

again to make excuses for what had happened, telling me that they had no design to quarter in any place that belonged to me, without my permission; which the count of Soissons would never pardon them for. In effect, they paid for what provisions they had bought, and remounted their horses, without even demanding the prisoners, whom I sent after them as soon as they had reached Dormeilles. They thanked me, and offered me their service, which entirely removed my anger. I sent the officers a dozen bottles of wine and two pies; after which I mounted my horse, to go, in obedience to his majesty's order, to consult with the prince of Conti upon the measures necessary to be taken with regard to the count of Soissons' desertion.

THIS misfortune was very inconsiderable, compared to that which happened in Picardy. The jealousy of command created a misunderstanding between the duke of Nevers and the duke of Bouillon. The counts of Fuentes and Rosne, who commanded the Spanish troops, and were doubtless informed of it, took advantage of their division, and laid siege to Catelet and Capelle. The first of these two places wanted provisions and ammunition; and the second had a dishonourable governor: but the loss of them was chiefly occasioned by the two French generals*, who, through hatred of each other, neglected to give them any assistance.

THINGS were in this state, when the governor of Ham, a place belonging to the Spaniards, being discontented with his garrison, resolved to deliver up the castle of Ham to the king, which would necessarily include the surrender of the city. He addressed himself to the duke of Longueville, and intreated him to send him a powerful assistance, having a very numerous garrison to oppose. The duke of Longueville acquainted his general officers, and the duke of Bouillon in particular, with the affair, who promised him a speedy supply. Upon this assurance, the duke of Longueville, that he might not by delay lose so favourable an opportunity, hastened immediately to Ham with d'Humieres, followed by some Picardine troops, and threw part of them into the castle, and part in the adjacent places, endeavouring to reduce the city by scaling and petarding. The enemy's garrison defended themselves like lions, and repulsed them several times; and probably a fiercer action of this kind never happened. At length, the French,

* Brantome justifies the duke de Nevers concerning the defeat the French met with at Douriens; and observes that he advanced by long marches, and that he ordered them

to wait for him; but the other commanders did not think proper to do so. Tom. III. p. 268.

Charles lord of Humieres.

1595.

animated by the bravery of their leaders, who found that it was in vain to expect any assistance from the duke of Bouillon, attacked the trench next the castle, carried it, and entered the city. The Spanish garrison received them there with great intrepidity: being forced to give ground, they rallied again several times, and many little battles were fought in the squares, cross-ways, and even in the houses; till they were all, to the number of a thousand or twelve hundred men, cut in pieces. But the French bought this advantage very dear; they lost thirty of their best officers, among whom were du Cluseau and la Croix, and d'Humieres * himself, the best and bravest officer in all Picardy.

N. Blanchard du Cluseau.

MESSEIERS de Saint-Paul, de Bouillon, and Villars, thought they could not better employ their troops, during this interval, than by raising the siege of Dourlens, which had been attacked by Fuentes and Roine, after the taking of Catelet and Capelle. The duke of Bouillon brought four hundred horse, Villars as many, and Saint-Paul five hundred; and their infantry consisted in all, of two thousand men, which they determined to throw into the city, if they failed of driving the besiegers from before it.

ABOUT half a league from Dourlens, Bouillon having sent fifty of his troop five hundred paces before him, to gain the summit of a mountain, from whence they might have a full view of the city and the camp of the besiegers, four of their horses, who preceded the others, perceived a body of the enemy coming directly towards them, between the camp and the hill. This was, in effect, their whole army, in order of battle, which had got intelligence of our design. But these four troopers being hindered by their fear from making a perfect discovery, made a false report to the duke of Bouillon, who, supposing it to be only a detachment, hastened his march with his squadron. Arriving at the top of the hill, he plainly saw his mistake. One party of one hundred horse, preceded two squadrons of six hundred each, which followed at the distance of about a thousand paces, and were supported by three other squadrons, consisting of an equal number, and a body of seven or eight thousand foot. The hundred horse, perceiving Bouillon, galloped towards him, followed at a great pace by the two first squadrons, all armed cap-a-pie, and lances by their sides; which

* Nothing can be added to the eulogium which M. de Thou gives this gentleman; he says, book cxii. that the king and the

whole kingdom lamented him: his life and illustrious actions fill the 893th vol. of MSS. de la Bibliot. de Roi.

left him no room to doubt but that the French were discovered, and that they would be obliged to engage, notwithstanding the inequality of their numbers, the Spaniards being stronger by two thirds than they, unless he could conceal from them his little party.

BOUILLON, sending a gentleman to the admiral, to desire he would come immediately to his assistance; Villars, who was bravery itself, without answering a single word, armed himself in the midst of his troopers, and making them put their helmets on, exhorted them no otherwise than by bidding them follow him; and Bouillon saw him in an instant at his side. Finding him in such a good disposition, he told him, that to prevent the enemy from discovering their rear, it was necessary to charge them with as much fury as possible. The admiral staid not to be desired a second time; but, supposing that he should be vigorously assisted by Bouillon, advanced through emulation, before his troop, and galloping intrepidly towards the enemy, suddenly attacked the left wing, threw himself, with his pistol in his hand, amidst that forest of lances, and carrying terror and dismay through the first six hundred horse, would have cut them in pieces, and perhaps have gained still greater advantages, if he had been seconded with equal bravery: but Bouillon, on his side, made only a false attack; after which he wheeled about and retreated, and has since constantly maintained, that it was this only which had been agreed upon between the * admiral and him, although all those who accompanied the latter have unanimously asserted, that he meant a true attack.

THIS mistake, if it was one, had a consequence as fatal as might have been expected: the enemy's squadron which Bouillon had attacked and afterwards shunned, was the first to fall upon Villars, who was then conqueror of his own; and being that instant joined by fresh troops, which came pouring on him in great numbers, his squadron, being quite overwhelmed, could find their safety only in flight.

* If we will not give credit to his biographer, let us believe M. de Thou, who entirely clears the duke de Bouillon: he, moreover, says, that the admiral de Villars was acquainted by the count de Saint-Paul to retire; but that he did not take this notice for any other than a kind of order of the duke de Bouillon, to which he refused to pay any regard, through a piece of vanity and bravery which cannot be excused

from the imputation of temerity, liv. cxii. D'Aubigné speaks in the same manner as de Thou, tom. III. liv. iv. ch. 9. Les Mem. de la Ligue, tom. vi. and Matthieu, tom. II. liv. i. The opinion of Cayet is, that the admiral de Villars would willingly have taken advantage of the advice which the duke of Bouillon caused to be given him to retire, but that he was then too far engaged. Chron. Novenn. liv. vii. p. 504.

1595.

Villars, incapable of fear, and disdainful to turn his back upon the enemy, performed wonders with a few brave men who would not abandon him; but at last, being attacked on all sides, and surrounded by the enemy, they were all thrown to the ground and expired, pierced with a thousand wounds, or massacred in cold blood*.

BOUILLON gained nothing by this sacrifice of his colleague: the victorious enemy attacked his squadron, the other, commanded by Saint-Paul, and the whole body of foot. Their leader had not inspired them, by his example, with a resolution to defend themselves. Bouillon and Saint-Paul fled with their cavalry, leaving the foot without any means of safety; in effect, they were all cut off. After this, the besieged city in vain demanded to capitulate. The enemy, intoxicated with their good fortune, would listen to no propositions, but stormed the place while they were parlying, and inhumanly butchered all they found in it. I had this whole relation from La-Font, who, after the loss of his master, returned to my service; and the reader may be assured that it is absolutely true, since this man deserves all the faith that is due to a man of honour, and an eye-witness of what he relates. He told me, that more than three thousand French were lost upon this occasion; and, what is truly deplorable, more valiant men perished, than in those three great battles the king fought at Coutras, Arques, and Ivry: France, in Villars alone, sustained an irreparable loss; to the general grief of the kingdom, I joined mine in particular, for the loss of a true and incomparable friend.

ANOTHER letter, equally worthy of credit, from the sieur Baltazar, whom I had charged expressly not to omit the smallest circumstance relating to the actions of the king's army, puts it in my power to inform the reader of all that passed. In this recital he will, with great pleasure, behold a king whom the sweets of royalty had not power to alter; his successes were such, in all their circumstances, as could be attributed to nothing but his own valour and good conduct, and the glory of them was heightened by the opposition of those misfortunes which happened in all places where he was not in person.

* The admiral de Villars was among these last: after having been made prisoner by some Neapolitans, a Spanish captain, named Contrera, entered on purpose into a dispute with them about having him, and he made a handle of their refusal, to kill him. L'Etoile says, that the hatred which

the Spaniards bore him, from the time that he quitted the party of the league for that of the king, was the true cause of his death. He gives him the same encomiums as M. de Rosny. Journ. de P. de l'Etoile, ann. 1595.

This campaign of Henry's in Franche-Comté, in the opinion of the best judges, exceeded all he had hitherto performed.

1595.

I HAVE before observed, that marshal Biron was employed in assisting the citizens of Dijon, who held the enemy's garrison besieged in their castle. He arrived there very fortunately: the viscount of Tavannes * having brought a considerable reinforcement to this garrison, the besieged became besiegers in their turn. The citizens, pressed on all sides, and reduced to the last extremity, could only defend themselves at the end of a street to which they had retired, and had but one of the city-gates in their possession, when Biron came to their assistance, and reanimated their courage; they once more drove out the viscount Tavannes, and surrounded the castles of Dijon and Talan †. In the midst of these transactions Biron was informed that the duke of Maienne, full of grief for the success of the king's arms in Burgundy, had so earnestly solicited the constable of Castille for assistance, that the latter was upon the point of passing the Alps, with his army, to enter Burgundy. Biron, concealing this intelligence from the king, contented himself with only sending to intreat he would come as soon as possible to help him to reduce the castle of Dijon. The king was come to Troyes when he received the marshal's dispatches; and barely guessing at a circumstance which the marshal had an absolute certainty of, namely, that the constable of Castille, who, he supposed, would soon pass into Flanders, would take Dijon in his way, to settle there the affairs of the league with the duke of Maienne, he marched thither hastily, and put every thing in motion, that they might find nothing more to do at their arrival.

IT is not to be doubted but that these two generals might have still been able to have prevented the king, and preserved the castles of Dijon, had they not stopped unseasonably in their way to take Veson, and some other little places in Franche-Comté, which had been seized by the troops of Lorraine. To this voluntary delay necessity afterwards added another at Gray, by the overflowing of the river Saone, which made it impossible for them to pass it. To remove this obstacle, the constable of Castille caused a bridge to be built over the river: but by his carrying on this work so slowly, it seemed as if he was afraid of engaging himself in the heart of France, with so many rivers behind

* John de Saulx, made a marshal of France by the league, and lieutenant of Burgundy for the duke of Maienne.

† About half a league from Dijon; where an Italian, named Francisque, commanded.

him. The truth was, this general already knew that he had the king before him.

WHEN the king left Troyes he sent the count of Torigny* with eight or nine hundred horse before him; with which marechal Biron was extremely pleased. Four days after, Henry himself arrived at Dijon, and, without dismounting, went immediately to reconnoitre the outworks, and all the neighbouring places; especially on that side where the enemy might be expected. He caused deep trenches to be made, and by that means cut off all communication between the two castles. This done, the king perceiving that notwithstanding all the efforts he could make, the castles might still hold out a long time, he went, according to his usual custom, with a small detachment to meet the enemy, that he might retard their march, and give time to the rest of the troops to finish their enterprize. Having so inconsiderable a number with him, he thought if he could find his enemies employed in their passage over the Saone, it would afford him a favourable opportunity: he therefore appointed Lux and † Fontaine-Françoise for a rendezvous for the rest of his troops, and marched before with only three hundred horse, half of whom were arquebusiers; and with this little escort advanced to the Vigenne, near Saint-Seine: from thence he detached the marquis of Mirebeau ‡, with fifty or sixty horse, to get intelligence; and in the mean time he passed the river of Vigenne with a hundred, or a hundred and twenty horse; designing only to reconnoitre the ground, and the form of a country, where he might possibly be obliged to come to an action.

HE had not marched more than a league, when he saw Mirebeau return in great disorder; who told him, that he had been charged by three or four hundred horse; which had prevented him from getting a full view of the enemy; but added, that he believed those four hundred horse had been sent to seize the post of Saint-Seine, and that they were followed close by the whole army. Biron, who arrived that instant, offered to go and make a clearer discovery. At the distance of a thousand paces, he found, upon a little hill, an advanced guard, consisting of sixty horse, which he attacked; and taking their place, saw

* Odet de Matignon, count de Torigny, eldest son to the marechal.

† Upon the frontiers of Burgundy and Franche-Comté: this expedition happened in the beginning of June.

‡ James Cabot, marquis of Mirebeau, and count de Charni, counsellor of state, and lieutenant in Burgundy for the king, died in 1670.

plainly

1595.

plainly the whole Spanish army marching in order of battle; and in particular, a body of four hundred horse, which, advancing before the rest of the army, pursued a party of one hundred and fifty French. This was the party commanded by d'Auffonville*, whom his majesty had sent to make discoveries on the other side. D'Auffonville, by flying, turned the arms of the pursuers on Biron. The enemy's detachment dividing into two bands, attacked him on the right and left, doubtless with the same intention as Biron, to discover what forces were in the rear. The difference between them was, that the enemies, being supported by near six hundred horse, were two thirds superior in number to the two squadrons commanded by Biron and Mirebeau, which made up only three hundred.

NOTWITHSTANDING this inequality, Biron continued to make a stand: he separated his three hundred horse into three equal platoons, placing Mirebeau, with the first, on the right; the baron of Lux †, with the second, on the left; and posted himself, with the third, in the middle. The enemy attacked each side at once, with a hundred and fifty men: Lux suffered greatly, and was even thrown to the ground, with many others: Biron, having the advantage in his place, flew to his assistance, and reanimated his troops; but was himself charged with such impetuosity by all the enemy's squadrons united together, towards whom he saw others from the main body of the army still advancing, that he was obliged to retreat. This retreat, as soon as the enemy's horse drew nearer, was changed into a real flight; in which condition he came within view of the king, who immediately sent a hundred horse to support him. Nothing is more difficult than to stop the flight of a squadron when the enemy is at their heels; the last hundred men caught the contagion of fear, and returned flying with those they went to assist.

THE king now finding that all depended upon himself, advanced towards the fugitives, without taking time to put on his helmet, exposed himself to the fury of the victorious squadrons, which consisted of more than eight hundred men, called his principal officers by their names, and throwing himself every where, without any regard to his

* . . . baron d'Auffonville de Saint George, a gentleman of Lorraine.

† Edme de Malain, baron de Lux or de Luz: he was a counsellor of state, captain of fifty gens d'armes, and the king's

lieutenant in Burgundy. We shall speak of him when we come to mention marechal Biron's conspiracy, in which he was an accomplice.

1595.

Claude de la
Trémouille,
duke of
Thouars.

own person, obliged some of the fugitives at last to stop. He composed two bodies of the whole, and putting himself at the head of a hundred and fifty horse, returned to the charge on one side, while la Trémouille, with a like number, did the same, by his order, on the other: had it not been for such an exertion of courage, it is probable, that not one of those three hundred men, engaged thus on the farther side of a river, with a victorious body of cavalry in front, would have escaped. The king*, giving his soldiers an example, threw himself, bare-headed, amidst six of the enemy's squadrons, broke thro' them, and forced them to give ground. Biron, taking advantage of this opportunity, rallied about a hundred and twenty horse, and returned to support the king, and all together drove the enemy's horse back to the main body of the duke of Maienne's army.

HENRY would not have suffered his ardour to have transported him so far, but that he did not immediately perceive, that a wood on each side of him was crowded with fusileers, to whose discharge he had like to have been exposed, and would have been surrounded by them, if, in the heat of the fight, he had attacked the Spanish army: he therefore stopped his career, and kept himself upon his guard. At

* The king said, that upon other occasions and emergencies into which he had happened to fall, he fought for victory, but here he contended for his life. Perefixe, Matthieu, Cayet, le Grain, and d'Aubigné, relate the actions of this day in the same manner; but M. de Thou, and vol. 8929 of the royal MSS. with some little difference. D'Aubigné says, that the king did not shew himself entirely satisfied, that only the dukes de la Trémouille and d'Elbeuf joined together with a good grace, "to brush off," says he, "the dew before his majesty." Tom. III. liv. iv. ch. 8. But according to de Thou, he commended much before the parliament, Mirebeau, la Curée, and many others.

"I have no need of counsel but of assistance," replied Hen. IV. to those who advised him to make his escape on a good Turkish horse that was got ready for him; "there is more hazard in the flight than the chase." Matthieu, tom. II. liv. i. p. 187. "Mainville," adds this historian, "who stood near him, and had his

"pistol ready charged for the first of the
"enemy that came near him, let fire at
"one *à propos*, that he shot him quite
"through the head; and the ball came
"whistling so about the king's ears, that
"he never spoke of a pistol but he re-
"membered this report, saying, That it
"was the loudest he had ever heard, hav-
"ing been charged with two steel balls."
According to the account of the same
historian, the duke de Maienne demanded
only four hundred horse of the Spanish
general to attack the king's troops; which
the Spaniard refused him, being persuaded
that Henry only wanted to draw him into
an ambuscade. This distrust of the enemy
was the occasion of his escape at Fontaine-
François, as it had been before at Amale.
And what is more surprizing is, that this
prince only lost six men in so hot an ac-
tion; while on the enemy's side were
killed one hundred and twenty, besides
two hundred wounded, and sixty taken
prisoners. Chron. Novenn. liv. vii. p.
497.

that moment he perceived two other bodies of horse, who came out of one of those woods to strengthen the advanced guard, which he had vanquished. This was one of those critical moments, when the least want of precaution brings on inevitable ruin. The king, who with one glance perceived the design of these troops, ordered his to halt and thicken their ranks, that they might be in a condition to receive them; for in the heat of his victory he overturned all that opposed him, and found himself at large before all those battalions, who were astonished at the miracles they saw him perform. Henry knew this surprize would not last long, and that he would have the fury of a whole army to sustain, animated by the sight of a handful of foes, to repair the shame of such an astonishing defeat; he therefore took advantage of the enemy's inaction, to regain at least his first post, without being pursued; and disengaged himself from the midst of the enemy's army with so much order and superiority, that they could make themselves no amends for their loss. And this prince, in one day, and almost in one moment, acquired the honour of the most glorious victory, and finest retreat, that ever any history afforded an example of.

ON his arrival, he found the count of Chiverny*, the chevalier d'Oise, messieurs de Vitry, de Clermont, de Risse, d'Arambure, de la Curée, d'Heures, de Saint-Geran, and de la Boulaye, with each his company, which being joined to those troops the king had before, composed a body of eight hundred horse. After this reinforcement, the enemy durst not attack them, being persuaded that his whole army was not far off; and not yet recovered from their consternation at the defeat of their men by a platoon scarce the sixth part of their number, they turned back, placing their infantry in the rear to cover their cavalry. The king followed them close, and harrassed them continually, till they had repassed the Saone upon the bridge they had built below Gray. Not daring to attempt the passage again, Burgundy, by this exploit, remained wholly at the king's discretion: he reduced it all in a few days,

* Henry Hural, count de Cheverny, George de Brancas-Villars, Louis de l'Hôpital-Vitry, George de Clermont d'Amboise, . . . de Crequy de Riffey, Jean d'Arambure, and Gilbert Filhet de la Curée, who also was in the engagement, where he fought without armour, and bad-

ly mounted. A voice, which he thought to be the king's, called to him, "Take care, Curée;" when, lo, he found it was one of the enemy, who was just ready to run him through with his lance; but he killed him. Vol. 8929. MSS. de la Biblioth. de Roi.

except

1595.

except the Seure *, and seized several little towns in Franche-Compté, which he released at the intreaty of the Swifs. These advantages were all owing to the battle of Fontaine-Françoise.

HENRY, when he learnt the defeat of his forces in Picardy, confessed, that those advantages, great as they were, did not equal that loss. He quitted Burgundy and the Lyonnais immediately, and marched hastily towards Paris. Passing by Moret, I acquainted him with my motives for leaving the council: he approved of them, and was of opinion, that the confidence which the other members of it perceived he reposed in me, and the desire I had to make myself still more worthy that distinction, had drawn their enmity upon me. He had the goodness to console me for it, by assuring me that my sufferings upon this occasion would only increase his friendship for me. I agreed with his majesty, that at a time when the check his forces received at Dourlens might occasion a revolution, there was a necessity to dissemble his disgust, and to avoid accusing any one. It was to me only that the king complained of the authors of that fatal accident, and deplored the dangerous effects of enmity between leaders, which is almost the sole cause of the greatest disasters in war. He appeared sensibly affected with the loss of admiral Villars, and never mentioned him but with the highest praises: nor could he be deceived by any thing which the interested parties advanced, to place all that had happened to the account of the deceased.

It was then that this prince was convinced, and acknowledged to me, that he had yielded unreasonably to proposals for a war, the success of which he had been persuaded was infallible: he was even candid enough to treat it as an error which might plunge France once more into greater miseries than those she had just been delivered from. By speaking thus, the king only reflected on the greatness of a loss such as Catelet, Capelle, Ardres †, Dourlens, Cambray, from which Balagny had been just driven; and Calais especially, which though not yet taken was looked upon as already lost. As for me, I thought the kingdom was then in most danger, when the king, by an astonishing instance of

* Seure, a town upon the river Saone: it has changed its name, and now is called Bellegarde.

† Ardres was surrendered to the enemy by the count de Belin, almost without

making any defence; for which he was disgraced, turned out of his places, and sent home to his estate, &c. Bongars Epist. 75 ad Camer. Morisot, ch. 33.

valour and good fortune, preserved Burgundy and his own life. From that time Henry used to say, that a declaration of war was one of those affairs that required the greatest deliberation, and could never be sufficiently enough attended to. From this example princes may still draw another lesson no less useful, which is, that they ought never to entertain a personal hatred for their neighbours, and that prudence, on certain occasions, requires them to seem disposed for a reconciliation, notwithstanding the most violent, and even the most just resentment.

THE king was careful to avoid discovering his thoughts in public; on the contrary, he endeavoured to revive the courage of those who seemed most deprest. To the Parisians, who made him compliments of condolance upon his loss, he replied that it might be easily repaired, provided they would join actions to words. They made him great offers; but his majesty, who had had frequent proofs of the little dependence he could have on them, took his own measures, and without waiting for the accomplishment of their promises, left Paris the next day, with the satisfaction of hearing before he went, by a courier from Rome, that the pope had been at last prevailed upon to grant him the absolution * he had so long solicited. In the present conjuncture, this news was of the utmost importance.

To this absolution the holy father annexed the following conditions †: That the king should exclude the protestants from all employments

* “What made the pope,” says M. de Perefice, “delay giving absolution so long was, said he, because that he alone had the power of restoring penitents: and he was very much displeas'd that the prelates of France had taken upon them to absolve him, though they had only done it provisionally, *ad cautelam*.”

† Besides these conditions, the original of which may be seen in vol. 8778 of the MSS. de la Biblioth. du Roi, where the act of absolution of Henry IV. is set down at length, in Italian, the holy father imposes therein for penance upon this prince, to hear on every Sunday and festival, a conventual mass in the chapel royal, and private mass every week day, to say the rosary every Sunday, the chapelet every Saturday, and

the litanies every Wednesday, to fast every Friday, to confess and communicate publicly at least four times a year. I observe, in this act, that the pope, after having given this prince absolution, then entitles him only the king of France and Navarre. At each verse of the *Miserere*, the holy father gave a light touch of the penitentiary crook on the shoulders of M. Du-Perron, and M. d'Osat, who are therein called *Procuratori di Navarra*: this is but an ordinary formality in this sort of ceremony; upon which the protestant writers have not failed to comment with great indignity, by saying that Henry IV. had submitted to receive lashes of the whip from the procurator, and other such like calumnies: but these malicious pleasantries have not been able to

and

1595.

and dignities, and use his utmost endeavours to suppress them entirely : That he should restore the celebration of mafs in Bearn, and oblige the huguenots to make refitution to the catholics of all the effects which had been taken from the ecclesiastics : That he should prevail upon the prince of Condé to embrace the roman catholic religion : That he should publish and cause the council of Trent to be received : and lastly, That the jesuits should be again established in France. These conditions which regarded the protestants and the council of Trent were not complied with, the rest were.

THOSE persons who thought the king received laws from the pope upon this occasion, ought to lay the blame upon Du-Perron, and still more upon Arnaud d'Osfat, then agent for this affair at Rome. These

impose upon any, since M. de Thou and all the sensible writers have shewn, that they were altogether unjust and without foundation. M. de Sully, as far as appears, had got over this popular error; but I know not if he observes the same equity with regard to M. d'Osfat.

What he says here, and in many other places of these Memoirs, excited in me a curiosity to read carefully the collection of this cardinal's letters, who is reputed amongst us to have been as good a Frenchman as an able statesman. I will speak freely my mind as to each grievance which furnishes the duke de Sully with occasion of attacking him, according as they fall in my way. And to begin with that of Henry IVth's absolution, it appears to me, after examining all he says on this head, page 45, 48, 105, 107, 115, 129, 208, &c. of the old edition in folio, that we cannot but acknowledge on one hand, that he met with great scruples in the pope's breast, and real difficulties on the part of the sacred college; that he applied himself with great assiduity and with equal success to surmount them; and that any but he would have had much to do to have conquered them; as is evident from what happened to the duke de Nevers, the cardinal de Retz, the marquis de Pisany, and others: that for his own part he is very far from approving the many subterfuges to which the court of Rome had often recourse in

their formalities; and even that all this chicane made him often uneasy, as also the unfair dealing which, he complains, they used in the bull of absolution. However, in opposition to all this, a man may perceive on the other hand in these very places, and still more in all those passages that in any measure relate to the protestants, the jesuits, or the council of Trent, &c. that his eminence was not at all disturbed, that the affair of the king's absolution had passed under the restrictions of which M. de Sully complains so bitterly: whether it was that M. d'Osfat did not perceive therein the pretended lesion of the honour of the crown, and the prejudice done to the liberties of the Gallican church, which I leave to the learned to determine; or whether he believed that all these precautions became necessary for the interest of religion; or lastly, whether he were not biased in favour of the maxims of the league: and yet all this does not hinder me from subscribing to the encomiums which our best historians have given this cardinal; and in the last place Amelot de la Houffaye, in the life he gives us of him that is prefixed to the edition of his letters, to which I refer the reader. The abbé Du-Perron and M. de Villeroy, had likewise done considerable service to Henry IV. in the affair of his absolution. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 210, & seq.

two ecclesiastics were so far from rejecting these conditions, that they would have been grieved, if they had not been insisted upon; if any credit may be given to a memorial which was many years afterwards sent me from Rome, and which I shall speak of fully in its place: it affords a complete proof of what I have just advanced, at least with regard to d'Ossat.

1595.

THIS memorial advances two things relating to the king's absolution, which proves one of the principal articles: that the pope and the whole sacred college were so ardently desirous of the king's applying to Rome for this ceremony, that they could not conceal their fears, when they were sometimes informed that Henry would be brought to despise it, or look upon it as useless; and this the author proves from their own letters: secondly, that d'Ossat, instead of informing the king of this disposition in the court of Rome, which he would have done had his honour and dignity been of the smallest consequence to him, on the contrary gave this prince to understand, that he could not obtain a reconciliation with his holiness, but by offering an incroachment upon the liberties of the Gallican church, and purchasing it by those conditions already mentioned. Henry, however, rewarded his two agents with the highest dignity in the prelacy.

IN three days his majesty arrived at Péronne, where he was immediately saluted by Balagny. This man, who by an excess of ridiculous vanity *, had just lost his government, his fortune, his wife, and his honour, instead of blushing for his folly, and concealing himself from reproach, affected to shew himself, talked big; and in this state, which

* M. de Perefice says, that Cambrai was taken by famine: others, as Matthieu, blame the misunderstanding that subsisted between the dukes de Nevers and de Bouillon for it; and others again the negligence of Balagny. The Memoirs of the league, tom. VI. remark, that three companies of Swits, not having had their pay given them, compelled him to deliver up the place. All the historians have cried up the courage of Renee de Clermont, the wife of Balagny, and sister to the brave Buffy d'Amboise, who, after having, to no purpose, done all she could to inspire resolution into the garrison and her husband, did not chuse to survive the loss of her principality, and died either of famine or grief.

“ And here in one article, is an abstract of the greatest disgrace that France has suffered from foreigners in the memory of man.” So speaks d'Aubigne, in concluding the 9th chapter, liv. iv. tom. III. of his history, in which he has collected the taking of Catelet, la Capelle, Ardres, Cambrai, Calais, and the defeat at Dourlens. Balagny tells a Spanish officer, who seemed surprized at seeing him take his mistress along with him, and in the same boat, that love softened all the cross accidents of fortune: “ Right,” replied the Spaniard, “ and especially at present, as you will have leis to do than you have had before.” P. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 219.

1595.

was indeed the fittest for him, expected all that regard which is generally paid to unfortunate sovereigns. The king resolved to attempt all things to assist Calais: finding that his troops were not sufficient to storm the camp of the besiegers, he took the only course that now remained, which was to throw himself into the place, at the head of a considerable reinforcement. Twice he embarked with this design, but a contrary wind forced him back again to land. While he despaired of accomplishing his enterprize, Matelet, governor of Foix, came to him, and offered to attempt a third time to enter Calais, promising him that, if he would give him four or five hundred gentlemen, he would so manage, either by sea or land, that he would open himself a passage. The king praising his resolution, gave him the escort he demanded; with which Matelet succeeded in his design, and entered Calais, after having surmounted a thousand obstacles*. But the glory of this brave action was soon obliterated, when it appeared that he had only joined the garrison to be infected with their fears, and to consent to a capitulation: and the king had the mortification to march to Calais, only to see it surrendered before his face.

IF it be demanded where during this time were all those French noblemen and officers who were so forward in advising the war; and why they suffered the king to bear the whole burthen of it, and suffer repeated losses? It must be owned, to the dishonour of the French name, that they expected to draw advantages to themselves by the misfortunes their imprudence occasioned, and their negligence augmented; and formed, in the mean time, projects more fatal to the king's authority than the bloodiest foreign war. These projects I shall mention immediately.

Cities and
forts in Pi-
cardy.

The king, equally superior to good and bad fortune, comforted those that were driven out of Calais, provided for the security of Boulogne,

* Historians do not agree as to this action. Some, as de Thou and d'Aubigné, by saying nothing at all of it, seem to call it in question; others ascribe it to the sieur de Campagnole the younger; Davila and our Memoirs to Matelet, governor of Foix. Queen Elizabeth offered to defend Calais against the Spaniards, upon condition that the place were put into the hands of the English. Sancy, who was then ambassador at London, made answer to the

queen, that the king his master would rather have it in the hands of the Spaniards than in those of the English: and Henry IV. said himself, "If he were to be bit, he had rather it was by a lion than a lions;" and this was the reason that queen Elizabeth afterwards refused to besiege that town, while Henry IV. lay before that of Amiens, though they offered then to put it into her hands by way of security. Matthieu, *ibid.* p. 223.

Abbeville,

1596.

Abbeville, Montreuil, Monthulin, and other towns and castles, and marched towards St. Quintin, fearing lest the enemies, who were not far from those quarters, should surprize some of the nobles, and general officers who came thither separately. They chose this opportunity for the execution of a design which they had formed, before they left Paris. The duke of Montpensier was the person whom they charged with this commission, not because he was more disaffected than the rest, but because his temper was most easy, and his understanding the weakest. He accosted the king at Saint-Quintin; and, in the name of the principal French nobility, proposed to him, as the only means of subduing his enemies, to resign to the governors of provinces the property of their governments, with an hereditary right to them, requiring nothing of them but their allegiance.

It is not easy to comprehend how a proposal which had so manifest a tendency to throw France into a state of anarchy, that in former ages had filled it with blood and horror, could proceed from the mouth of a Frenchman, a prince, and what is more, a prince of the royal blood. Henry, struck with astonishment at the prodigious insolence of this affront offered to the royal dignity, for some moments could not utter a word, while the duke of Montpensier continuing a speech which had been studied long before, endeavoured to prove to his majesty, that while those governors, or rather those little princes, obliged themselves to maintain troops always ready for his service, he would be never again reduced to such a situation as he was in at present, to appear before his enemies without soldiers to oppose them. The king, though agitated with various passions, discovered none to the duke, but pity towards him for the unworthy part he played. He stopped him from proceeding farther, by telling him, without the least resentment, that he had already heard too much; and that he was convinced those French nobles had taken advantage of the easiness of his temper, to make him the bearer of a proposal, the whole meanness of which he was not sensible of, he who was a prince of the blood, and nearer the crown than himself had formerly been. The king added much more to the same purpose, with equal calmness, and was so far from being apprehensive that he should be reduced to yield to such a proposition, and so determined to suffer a thousand deaths, if possible, rather than bring such a load of infamy upon the royal dignity, that he had not even the thought of entering into any discussion of this project, or of uttering a single word in answer to it*.

* "We are all gentlemen, said Henry IV. sometimes," before the princes of the blood.

1596.

THE duke of Montpenfier became sensible of his fault, by the air and tone with which his majesty spoke to him; he blushed and asked pardon for it, and intreated the king never to remember that he had been capable of thus degrading himself from his rank. The king, after having shewn the duke the whole extent of his fault, directed him how, in some measure, to repair it, with those who had prevailed upon him to commit it; and assured him, that he for his own part would forget it entirely, and still regard him as his kinsman. The duke of Montpenfier agreed to take the first opportunity that offered, when the authors of that insolent proposal brought it again on the carpet, to declare that he had reflected well upon the commission they had given him; that they might send their proposal by any other person, since he absolutely disapproved of it; and if ever he was to mention it to his majesty, it should be with a design to dissuade him from it; and that they might depend upon his using his utmost endeavours to hinder its taking effect. He performed this task so exactly, and with an air so natural, that he wholly disconcerted all those noblemen, and left them no inclination to make any attempts on his fidelity for the future.

It was therefore to reduce the king to the necessity of making them his equals, that the princes and governors of provinces in France so ill performed their promise of assisting him with troops. The duke of Bouillon was one of those who sold his services the dearest. His majesty, not doubting but he had a part in the plot, was willing to have a proof of it from the duke's perplexity, without letting him know that he was informed of it by other means. Bouillon did not want art and eloquence enough to conceal whatever he designed should not be known; but, besides that Henry possessed in no less degree the art of penetrating into the thoughts of those with whom he conversed, the presence of a sovereign is alone capable of abashing a man conscious of any secret guilt towards him. The king began by convincing himself that the duke of Montpenfier had not betrayed their late discourse to the duke of Bouillon. After which he introduced the defeat of Dourlens, by asking him plainly, and with a kind of confidence, how it happened that he had been disappointed in those certain correspondencies which as he said he carried on in Liege, Namur, and many other places in Luxembourg, and Hainault, upon which he was sensible the war had been undertaken?

BOUILLON, embarrassed by the question, and that air of simplicity with which it was proposed, instead of giving a direct answer concerning

ing his pretended correspondencies, fell into long speeches, without meaning or end, which betrayed him more effectually, than the most sincere confession could have done. He accused all the world; the duke of Nevers, who he said had corrupted his officers and obstructed his levies; the English for not making the promised diversion; the Dutch for taking advantage of this conjuncture to increase the power on their side of Over-Iffel and Friesland. Upon which the duke of Bouillon, who sought only to turn the conversation still more from the first subject, told the king, that the true cause of the misfortune which had lately happened, was, that his majesty had no person of consequence, and on whom he could have an absolute dependence, at the court of London, to hasten the supplies that had been promised there; and at the same time offered himself for this embassy, and even solicited it earnestly. The king being of opinion that it would answer no purpose to press the duke any farther upon this fault, ceased to mention it; and reflecting that he should not lose much by his absence, consented at last to the embassy to England. Accordingly his commission was made out, and the duke of Bouillon, a few days after, set out for that kingdom.

1596.

IT was from his majesty himself that I had an account of this conversation with the duke of Bouillon, as likewise that with the duke of Montpensier before mentioned.

THE king had no sooner quitted Bouillon, than reflecting that the duke, instead of having any design to serve him usefully at the court of London, had possibly only solicited that employment to give bad impressions there of his conduct, or at least to labour only for his own interest, he sent Jaquinot for me early in the morning, to communicate this fear to me. I kneeled on a cushion at his bedside, and his majesty asked me immediately what was said, and what I, in particular, thought of the long conversation he had just held with the duke of Bouillon. I replied, that every one guessed his own way; and that probably the affair of Ham, and Dourlens, and the proposal made by the duke of Montpensier, made up the greatest part of it. The king told me that I was mistaken; that he was too well acquainted with the duke of Bouillon's disposition, to doubt that any reproaches upon these occasions, instead of correcting, would only serve to throw him in an open revolt. His majesty afterwards, repeating exactly all that has been related concerning the embassy to England, proposed to me to accompany the duke of Bouillon thither, that I might carefully observe his conduct.

1596.

IN courts every thing is brought about by artifice. The king, after his conversation with the duke of Bouillon, telling his council for the finances, that he had sent the duke to England, these gentlemen, after conferring together, found nothing so fit to satisfy their hatred of me, as to persuade the king to join me with the duke of Bouillon. My abilities for negotiations were praised, an honour which they were resolved to deprive me of, when they had once succeeded in removing me from the king, who not penetrating into their views, approved of the proposal. But I did not so easily fall into the snare: I shewed his majesty the true motive of these gentlemen's feigned generosity with regard to me. From the moment that the duke of Bouillon discovered that I watched his conduct, and disconcerted his projects, he would not fail to break with me; and such a genius as he possessed, when animated with malice, would suggest to him the means of throwing upon me the blame of all the faults he committed, and all the good he neglected to do. My enemies knew this as well as I; his majesty was convinced by my reasons, and pressed me no farther.

THE gentlemen of the council did not stop here: when they came again to the king, they were the first to confess that it was with reluctance they joined me to the duke of Bouillon; but since that duke was to stay but a short time at London, they had pitched upon me to take his place with the same title and equal honours. All was alike to them, provided they could get rid of me. The king was again influenced by their opinions, and some days after, declared his intention to me; ordering me to make preparations immediately for this voyage; to provide myself with money, and to dispose my wife to follow me, if I chose to have her with me; which, however, he did not think necessary, since I should not, he said, be absent above seven or eight months at most. The king perceiving my reluctance, accompanied this order with the most kind and obliging expressions his imagination could suggest; he told me that the present perplexed situation of his affairs hindering him from giving me the sole direction of the finances, he should reproach himself for exposing to the dangers of a long and furious siege the only man in his kingdom whom he thought worthy to fill that important post. His majesty had just then declared himself publicly concerning the siege of La-Fere.

WHILE the king was speaking, I was struck with astonishment at the obstinate persecution of my enemies, and the depth of their malice.

Under

Under the appearance of a title of honour vain in itself, and fatal in its consequences, they took away, and perhaps for ever, all opportunities of advancing me: For who in my absence would be solicitous for my interest? Who would hinder them from prolonging my stay out of the kingdom, till, affairs having taken a fixed and durable state in France, there would be nothing left for a man who, by so long an absence, would be regarded as a stranger. These reflections kept me firm in my resolution not to go. I intreated the king not to force me to a journey for which I felt an invincible repugnance; and I had the good fortune to find that Henry was of himself disposed to believe that I should be of more use to him at Paris than London, during the siege he was going to undertake: he therefore sent me thither to facilitate his supplies of money, to furnish him with whatever was necessary towards carrying on the siege, to receive his orders there, make one in his council, and direct its resolutions. Had the choice of my revenge been in my own power, I could not have fixed upon any more effectual.

1596.

M E M M O I R S

O F

S U L L Y.

B O O K VIII.

1596.

THE motive which had determined the king to undertake so difficult a siege as that of La-Fere, was, that, his enemies having after their success separated their troops, he would not suffer his own, who had at last assembled, to remain idle, there being a necessity to secure Picardy, already shaken by so many repeated losses. Had I had the liberty of disposing of myself as I pleased, I should have chosen to have continued with the king during this siege, whose too great solicitude for my safety I could by no means approve: but I did not dare to refuse the commission which would detain me in Paris; and his majesty, to render this order less displeasing, assured me, that he would not for a long time attempt any thing considerable against La-Fere; and that some time or other he would permit me to make a journey thither. In reality I did so several times, but I had no sooner arrived, than the necessity of providing for the subsistence of his troops obliged me to return again immediately. I comforted myself, however, with the thought, that through my diligence the army being supplied with every thing it had occasion for, I might flatter myself with having, in some measure, contributed to the success of this siege, which lasted six months, and was the longest that Henry was ever engaged in. This place,

place, besides its advantageous fortifications, had a very numerous garrison, composed of chosen soldiers, and commanded by two excellent officers, the one a Frenchman*, high steward of Montelimart; and the other a Spaniard, named Oforio.

1596.

BERINGHEN †, at the persuasions of an engineer who was his friend and kinsman, and had come expressly for that purpose from Flanders, where he lived, took it into his head that it was possible to lay all La-Fere under water; and, upon the assurances of his friend, was so confident of success, that the king, though contrary to his own judgment, suffered him to make the attempt: it would indeed have shortened the siege; but it is to be observed, that almost all projects of this kind are liable to fail: the slightest mistake is sufficient to ruin them, and it seldom happens but some mistake is made. The project of turning the course of the Tesin formerly cost Francis I. the loss of a battle, together with his liberty. In one of these journeys I made to the camp, I found this proposal upon the carpet. I looked upon the execution of it to be impossible, and I combated it with all my force: but the engineer wanted not plausible reasons to oppose to ours. According to him, it was an attempt that would cost but little time and trouble; all they had to do was to raise a causey: this they performed; and the water destroying their work two or three times, they renewed it as often; at last it became proof against the water, but the river did not rise to the height they expected: it is true, indeed, that it wanted only six feet, but that was sufficient to force them to abandon the work ‡, after having consumed in it a great deal of time and money.

THE king falling sick at Traverfy, where his head quarters were, the siege of La-Fere suffered a still longer delay. As soon as the news was brought me I flew to him, and never left him till his health was perfectly re-established. His sickness was considerable enough to make me apprehend for France the greatest loss it could possibly sus-

* His name was Colas; the Spaniards had promised to make him count de La-Fere.

† Peter de Beringhen was himself a Fleming, and born at Brussels.

‡ D'Aubigne does not speak of it so contemptibly, ch. 12. *ibid.* "The causey, says he, "having made the river Oise

"flow back within La-Fere, it spoiled all
"the magazines they had in the lower
"parts and cellars of the town. It was
"a large machine, above a quarter of a
"league in length. Such an undertaking
"shews, that neither the king nor the
"kingdom was dispirited under their pres-
"sures and disadvantages."

1596.

tain. The governor of La-Fere, finding himself in want of every thing that could enable him to hold out a longer time, surrendered the place to the king, who caused it to be repaired; and at the intreaty of madam de Liancourt, he appointed her son Cæsar to be governor of it, Manicamp, a kinsman * of this lady, performing all the functions of that office, in quality of his lieutenant.

HIS majesty marching afterwards to the frontiers of Artois, took the castle of Imbercourt by assault; and thought to have done the same, by petard, with the city of Arras. Marechal Biron † was the cause of the ill success of this last enterprize, by not providing himself with a sufficient quantity of petards: the three first they applied played tolerably well, but the fourth being thrown, without effect, into the ditch, with the person that directed it, several of our men were killed and wounded by it. It was, indeed, a mortifying thought that a conquest of such importance, which would have secured Amiens from the misfortune which soon after happened to it, should be lost for want of a petard or two more. Biron, to avoid the reproaches he had reason to expect, got out of the way, and went to discharge his rage upon the county about Bapaume, where he made a horrible devastation.

THE ill success of the attempt upon Arras was sufficiently compensated by many favourable events that happened at the end of the preceding year and the beginning of this, which I shall pass over slightly as usual; these were the reduction of Toulouse ‡, the prosperity of the king's arms in Provence, and the reunion of the chiefs of the league in the king's party. Joyeuse §, who had quitted the habit of a monk, to resume that of a soldier, and paid himself with usury for the mortifications of a cloister, made a treaty with the king about that time. The duke of Nemours followed his example; but just as it was upon the point of being concluded, he died † with vexation, as some believe, for the bad success of so many great projects. Saint-Sorlin, his brother, continued the treaty for himself. The death of

Henry de
Savoie-
Nemours.

* Philip de Longueval, sieur de Manicamp.

† Biron, in his turn, loudly exclaimed against the king's avarice.

‡ As to these facts, consult the histories before mentioned for the years 1595 and 1596.

§ Henry de Joyeuse. He again entered himself among the capuchins, and died there, under the name of father Ange.

† “He voided, by his mouth and pores, every drop of blood in his body.” Prefixe, *ibid.* Cayet gives a very moving description of it, *ibid.* p. 519.

the duke of Nevers * delivered the king likewise from a troublesome uselefs servant. Lastly, the duke of Maïenne, now absolutely disgusted with the treachery of the Spaniards, began to think seriously upon means to restore himself to the favour of the king.

1596.

THE king thought it of such importance to make himself master of Arras, that he resolv'd to besiege it in form. I was the only person to whom he communicated this design; secrecy was of such consequence on this great occasion, that he durst not trust any one with the care of making observations upon the place, and therefore undertook that task himself. I had continued the whole winter at Paris, employ'd in his majesty's service, and sometimes made little excursions to Moret, in which I took great delight. One day, when I was busy in overseeing my workmen, who were levelling the high grounds about two thousand paces from my house, to bring thither two rivulets which form those two sheets of water which are at present near the great alley, a courier from madam de Liancourt arriv'd, who brought me a letter from this lady, and another from his majesty, in which he inform'd me of his designs upon Arras, and the methods by which he hop'd to succeed. I had never seen this prince in so great a rage as by this letter he appear'd to be in, against the "impositions and rogueries (these were his words) of eight gluttons;"

* Louis de Gonzague died of a dysentery at Nefse in 1595, aged fifty-six: of chagrin, says others, because that when he talk'd with Henry IV. advising him with regard to Calais, this prince made answer, "How can you advise me on this head? you who have never been nigher that town than seven leagues." Though M. de Thou, liv. cxiii. and Brantome, tom. III. p. 259. very much extol him, the charge which the duke de Sully brings against him, of having been always a very expensive servant to his master, may be easily made out, even from this general's own letters to Henry IV. of which we have a collection in de Nevers's Memoirs, tom. II. p. 237, 376. "If your majesty," says he to him in one of his letters, "cannot or will not come this length, I shall remove so far, that there will be no grounds to expect any succours from me. In truth, sire, you do not make me re-

turns suitable to the manner in which I serve you; and it appears to all the world that you do not value me much.-- I never was treated in the manner you treat me by the kings your predecessors; from them I received many favours, whereby I was oblig'd to serve them implicitly; and I am yet to receive the first favour from your majesty. If fatal and ruinous commissions be not the favours I receive from you, I will be so free as to tell you, that I have received no other since you were pleas'd to order me into these parts," &c. p. 348. And there are a great many more letters in the same strain. It is from these the duke of Sully, to whom Henry IV. communicated all his cabinet secrets, form'd a judgment as to the dispositions of the duke de Nevers, and not from those he writ to several other persons, which shew great attachment and zeal for the king's person.

C c c 2

-which

1596.

who were given him, he said, instead of one that he had before: "those rascals," added he, "with that prodigious number of intendants who have brought in all their male and female gossips, feast together, and have consumed above a hundred thousand crowns, a sum large enough to drive all the Spaniards out of France." This was, indeed, exactly true, which I shall make sufficiently clear when I enter into an account of the finances; at present I shall only relate two or three circumstances.

THE council of the finances supposed, that in order to furnish the supplies for the siege of La-Fere, they should be called upon to clear their accounts: in this, however, they were mistaken, the king having put the superintendency of the siege wholly into my hands. These supplies Descures, la Corbiniere, and some other contractors, with whom the financiers lived in such intelligence, that they made use occasionally of their names, without admitting them to more than very small shares, were engaged to procure. They then treated, under these borrowed names, with tradesmen and purveyors, who commonly served them at the lowest prices, and contrived to charge to the king thrice the real expence.

THE following fact I had from the king himself. Very considerable arrears were due from the royal treasury to the Swiss soldiers, German horse, and other foreigners in the French pay. The council suborned a man, named Otoplote, who gave the receivers deputed by these foreigners to understand, that they must never expect to be paid, unless they consented to reduce their demands to such a moderate sum as could be given them, without draining the exchequer. The reduction was agreed to; but the gentlemen of the council charged the whole sum to the king's account, and by this means robbed his majesty, or rather the lawful creditors, of the overplus.

To this many other frauds of the same kind may be added. These gentlemen revelled in luxury, while the king and his household wanted necessaries. A few days after that on which his majesty wrote to me, he sent to inform them that he had occasion for eight hundred thousand crowns, for an enterprize of great importance (the siege of Arras;) he intreated, he conjured them to let him have this sum, but in vain; all the answer he could get was, that so far from being able to furnish him with what he demanded, they knew not how to supply the expences of his household. It is, indeed, curious to see how this household

hold was supported. "I am," says this amiable and worthy prince, in a letter to me, "very near my enemies, and hardly a horse to carry me into the battle, nor a complete suit of armour to put on; my shirts are all ragged, my doublets * out at elbow, my kettle is seldom on the fire, and these two last days I have been obliged to dine where I could, for my purveyors have informed me, that they have not wherewithal to furnish my table." Those belonging to the gentlemen of the council were better provided. Henry, in his letter, deplored these monstrous abuses, less on his own account than on his people's, whom he said he looked upon as his children, since heaven had given him no others, and proposed to me the design of assembling the states of the kingdom, to consider of a remedy for all these misdemeanors.

I OBEYED the order the king gave me to burn his letter, but not till I had taken a copy of it; and the reasons for keeping it secret no longer subsisting, I think it my duty to publish the contents, as a proof of the wisdom and goodness of this prince: his majesty concluded his letter with ordering me to come to him in Picardy, and to conduct his mistress thither. We were the only persons to whom he could disclose his thoughts with freedom. The letter from madam de Liancourt was very short; in it she informed me, that she would set out the Tuesday following, in order to reach Maubuisson on Wednesday, where she had a sister, who was abbess, and that she would wait for me there.

Angélica
d'Étreaux.

I ARRIVED at Corbeil on Saturday evening, intending to pass part of Sunday and all Monday at Paris, having some purchases to make for the palace. Just as I entered the street de la Coutellerie, I met a messenger from madam de Liancourt, who acquainted me, that that lady having received fresh letters from the king, and also an account that her sister, the abbess of Maubuisson, was ill, she had determined to set out before the day appointed, and that I might join her at Pontoise. I suspected this lady had an intention to make her court to the king at the expence of my dilatoriness; I therefore altered my resolution, and told my people, that I would go that same night to Maubuisson, without stopping at Paris but only while I refreshed myself and baited my horses, which I did at the first inn I came to, whose design

* "I have seen upon him," says le Grain, liv. viii. "a coat of plain white cloth, that was very much soiled by his
"breast-plate, and torn in the sleeves; as
"also stockings that were much worn and
"holed through on the sword side."

1596.

was the three pigeons. The mention of this inn recalls to my remembrance a comical adventure which happened to me there.

ENTERING, without any attendants, into a very large chamber, I found a man walking about it very fast, and so absorbed in thought, that he neither saluted me, nor, as I imagine, perceived my entrance. Looking at him with more attention, every thing in his person, his manner, his countenance, and dress, appeared to me very uncommon, his body was long and slender, his face thin and withered, his beard white and forked; he had a large hat on his head that covered his face, a cloak buttoned close at the collar, boots of an enormous size, a sword that trailed on the ground, and in his hand a large double bag, like those that are tied to fiddle-bows. I asked him, in a raised tone of voice, if he lodged in that chamber, and why he seemed in such profound contemplation? My man, affronted at the question, without saluting, or even deigning to look at me, answered me rudely, that he was in his own chamber, and that he was thinking of his affairs, as I might do of mine. Although I was a little surprized at his impertinence, I nevertheless desired him very civilly to permit me to dine in that chamber; a proposal which he received grumbling, and was followed by a refusal still less polite. That moment three of my gentlemen, my pages, and some footmen, entering the room, my brutal companion thought fit to soften his looks and words, pulled off his hat, and offered me every thing in his power: then suddenly, eyeing me with a fixed regard, asked me, with a wild air, where I was going? I told him to meet the king: "What, sir," he replied, "has the king sent for you? Pray tell me on what day and "hour you received his letters, and also at what hour you set out?"

It was not difficult to discover an astrologer by these questions, which he asked me with an invincible gravity. I was farther obliged to tell him my age, and to allow him to look into my hands. After all these ceremonies were over, "Sir," said he, with an air of surprize and respect, "I will resign my chamber to you very willingly, and before "it be long, many more persons will quit their places to you with "more regret than I do mine." The more I pretended to be astonished at his great abilities, the more he endeavoured to give me proofs of them; he promised me riches, honours, and power (astrologers are seldom niggards) and added, that if I would inform him of the hour of my birth, he would tell me all that had or ever would happen to me; but without desiring to know my name, or telling me his, he thought

thought proper, after these words, to leave me precipitately, excusing himself for not staying longer with me, upon the necessity he was under to carry some papers immediately to his advocate and procurator. I made no efforts to detain him; but it was not the same with my people, whom I perceived to be seized with fear and respect at every word this madman uttered. I diverted my wife with an account of this little adventure in the first letter I wrote to her.

1596.

IN the evening I arrived at Maubuisson, which serves for a suburb to Pontoise: there I met madam de Liancourt, with whom I took the road next day to Clermont. I rode about seven or eight hundred paces before the litter in which this lady was, and which was followed at some distance by a great unwieldy coach that carried her women; before and behind this coach marched several mules loaded with baggage. About a league from Clermont, where the road was very narrow, a steep hill on one side, and a hanging valley on the other, leaving only room enough for two carriages to go a-breast; the coachman alighting upon some occasion or other, one of the mules passing near the side of the coach, after it stopped, by its neighing, and the sound of its bells, so terrified the horses, which unfortunately happened to be young and skittish, that, taking the bit between their teeth, they drew the coach along with such rapidity, that meeting with two other mules, they overturned them in their course. The women within, seeing a thousand abysses opened under their feet, apprehended their danger, and set forth most lamentable cries. The coachman and muleteers endeavoured in vain to stop the horses: they were already within fifty paces of the litter, when madam Liancourt, alarmed by the noise, looked out, and screamed aloud; I also turned back, and trembling at the danger in which I saw this lady and her attendants, without being able to assist them on account of the distance I was at, "Ah! friend," said I to La-Font, "the women will be dashed in pieces, what will become of us? and what will the king say?" While I was thus speaking, I pushed my horse forwards with all my strength; but this was useless, and I should have arrived too late.

By one of these lucky chances, and which almost amount to a miracle, when the danger was greatest, the axle-tree of the litter wheels coming out of the nave by a violent shock which broke the pegs, the two wheels fell on each side, and the coach to the ground, and there stopped; one of the hindmost horses was thrown down by the shock, and kept in the other; the fore horses broke their traces, and passed

so

1596.

so close to the litter, which was already at the extremity of the precipice, that it is plain if they had drawn the coach along with it, it would have been thrown over t. I stopped them and gave them to my domestics to hold, after which I flew to relieve madam de Liancourt, who was half dead with fear. I went next to the coach, and assisted the women to get out of it: they were for having the coachman hanged, and I was complaisant enough to give him two or three strokes with my cane. At length their terrors being entirely dissipated, and the carriage refitted, we resumed our journey; and till we arrived at Clermont I continued to ride close to madam de Liancourt's litter.

THE king had set out for this place to meet his mistress, and arrived there a quarter of an hour after us. I did not fail to inform him immediately of what had happened; and while I was relating this adventure, I observed him attentively, and saw him turn pale and tremble. By these emotions, which I never perceived in him in the greatest dangers, it was easy to guess the violence of his passion for this lady.

THE first moments were given to tenderness; after which the king consulted with me concerning the state of his affairs. That which was of most consequence at present, was the advice he had just received, by a letter from Rouen, that the duke of Montpensier, engaged more strictly than ever with the factious courtiers, had formed a very dangerous design against his royal person (this design was not explained); and that he was endeavouring by all sorts of methods, to gain himself dependents. The king was so much the more afflicted at this news, as he really loved the duke of Montpensier; and since policy hindered him from marrying his sister to the count of Soissons, or any of the princes of Lorraine, he was accustomed to look upon this prince as his future brother-in-law. He insisted that all other business being postponed for this, I should go immediately to Rouen, and there either prevail upon the duke of Montpensier to return to his duty, or disconcert all his projects.

I STAYED six days at Rouen, and during that time I had sufficient reason to be convinced that the imputations against this prince were absolutely false, and an artifice of those who sought to throw the government into confusion. The duke of Montpensier, whose sentiments were very different from those they accused him of, suffered nothing to appear either in his actions or discourse, but what proved his strict attachment to the king. Those persons with whom he had had the closest

connexions,

connexions, durst not in his presence avow any principle contrary to his, and had no hope of ever gaining him. One day when he did me the honour to invite me to dine with him, he talked to me of his resolution to continue inviolable in his duty to the king, with a candour and freedom which those who knew him are sensible he would not have been capable of had he been conscious of any secret guilt; and although he did not seek to justify himself, yet innocence carries along with it certain silent proofs, which cannot be resisted. He embraced me several times as a man who was dear to him by being faithfully devoted to the king; and on that account promised me his friendship, of which I have since had many instances. I mentioned to him his marriage with the princess Catherine, as an affair in which the king was as solicitous for his success as he himself could be. He confessed to me that he had never desired any thing with so much ardour as the possession of this princess, but that he durst not flatter himself with a hope of obtaining her, since he had not qualities, he said, capable of gaining her heart, or of subduing the ascendant the count of Soissons had over him. I remained entirely satisfied with the duke of Montpensier's sentiments, and resolved to give a good account of them to the king. The remainder of the time I staid at Rouen I employed in renewing my former friendships with several persons, among whom were the first president de Boquemare, messieurs de Lanquetot, de Gremontville, de Bourgtheroulde, de Berniere, all members of the parliament; the abbots de Tiron, and Martinbault; the sieurs de Motteville, des Hameaux, de Mesnil, captain of the Old Palace; de la Haulle, de Menencourt, du Mesnil-basil, and others, by whom I was treated, and whom I treated in my turn. I lodged with la Pile, one of my particular friends.

I FOUND the king still at Amiens *, where a few days after arrived deputies from the principal cities of Provence, and Languedoc; whose compliments and harangues his majesty received with his accustomed goodness. The deputy from Marsailles was heard with most pleasure, as he spoke for a city so ancient, and at all times so faithful to its sovereigns.

THE king being not only undeceived by my report of the duke of Montpensier, but also more than ever convinced of his affection, resolved

* The deputies of the town of Amiens speaking to him, in their address, of Henry III's goodness. "Yes," says he to them, "he was a good prince, but he

"was afraid of you; and for my part I
"I neither fear nor love you." Le
Grain, Decade d'Henry le Grand, liv. x.

1596.

to make one effort more in his favour; and unfortunately I was the person whom he fixed upon to discharge this new commission. Having sent for me one night to his bedside, he told me, that under a pretence of visiting the princess Catherine, I must go and endeavour to prevail upon her to give the duke of Montpensier that place in her heart which the count of Soissons *, notwithstanding the sacrifice of the marriage contract, still possessed. After what had happened to me at Chartres upon this occasion, I thought it rashness to embark in an affair in which it was impossible to succeed. I conjured the king not to expose me, by this new attempt, to the eternal hatred of this princess, and the count. My intreaties, pressing as they were, had no effect: he answered me only with the proverb, *a good master, a bold servant*; and I had nothing for it but obedience.

My last resource was to demand my commission in writing, that it might secure me against the fate of many courtiers, who have been disgraced for acting with blind obedience to their master, against persons of that rank; and besides a letter of compliment to the princess, I required a second, in which he should deduce the motives of my journey, the nature of his orders, and the manner, and arguments by which he desired I should enforce them. When I made this proposal, the king, always tenacious of what concerned his honour, replied that his greatest enemies never demanded more security than his word. I answered by assuring him that I would never make use of it but at the last extremity; and that if the princess should appear disposed to comply with his desires, provided I could convince her that I acted solely by his authority, this writing would then be necessary. The king yielded to this last argument; and being furnished with this authentic piece, I took the road to Fontainebleau, where the princess then was, extremely perplexed with the part I had undertaken.

I STAYED only a day at Paris, from whence I went to the princess, who expected me with impatience, the king having informed her some days before by Loménie of my intended journey, without explaining the occasion of it. She had flattered herself (for love, if it fears all, hopes all likewise) that I might possibly be come to make the count of Soissons happy; and this thought made me happy also, as long as it lasted, which was the two first days; for those I thought necessary to give to civility and compliments. She altered her behaviour on the third, when she

* She used to say to such as spoke to her "I will have my count," Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 628.

found that I only introduced the subject of her love to declare to her that the count of Soissons had, by his imprudent conduct, incensed the king to such a degree, that she ought no longer to think of making him her husband: for I judged it proper to begin by removing one, before I endeavoured to introduce the other.

1594.

ALTHOUGH, in speaking of the count of Soissons, I made use of the gentlest terms my imagination could furnish me with, he had in the princess so ardent a defender, that in her answer she intermingled the harshest epithets, and menaces of depriving me of the king's favour. Astonished at a rage so sudden and violent, I thought of nothing but appeasing her, otherwise my commission would have that moment been at an end. I therefore intreated her to hear me, and began a tedious speech, of which I knew not myself the end: and first I introduced a long and eloquent protestation of my respect, attachment, and earnest desire to serve her; during which I racked my imagination in vain, to furnish me with the means of calming her mind, since what it was most necessary she should hear, namely the count of Soissons' insolent behaviour to the king, was precisely that which would enrage her the most. I ventured however to break through this difficulty, and conjured her to reflect seriously whether this prince had, by his whole conduct, deserved that the king should be solicitous to raise his fortune. It was the hope only that a discourse, whose beginning was so disagreeable, would end in a manner favourable to her passion, that obliged the princess to give any attention to me; which I judged by those emotions of anger and disdain which overspread her face alternately with blushes and paleness.

I CONTINUED to lay before her, with all the moderation imaginable, the many causes of ill-will which the count had given the king, particularly his behaviour in Burgundy, certainly inexcusable even in the eyes of a mistress. I used however the precaution to repeat frequently that for my own part, I believed the count to be very distant from those sentiments which his conduct gave room to attribute to him: I dwelt upon the consequences it must unavoidably have, at a time when a process was actually commenced against the princess of Condé, by which the prince her son, still a huguenot, lived uncertain of his state, in a kind of banishment at Rochelle. This affair being of the number of those in which justice alone was not sufficient, the friends of the young prince would have found it difficult to have scattered those accusations against the mother, and secured to the son his rank of first prince of the blood and presump-

1596. tive heir to the crown, if the king, by suppressing the instruments of the process, as he did at last, had not interested himself in the justification of the one, and the defence of the other. I made the princess sensible that the count was master of his own fate, but that he made so bad an use of the king's favourable dispositions towards him, that he would infallibly oblige him to engage in the interests of his rival. In short, I said enough to have made any other think he was greatly to be blamed.

THE princess, who during this discourse, had fallen into a reverie, occasioned more by vexation than prudent reflections, interrupted me here, to hasten to that conclusion which I had given her a favourable hint of, and which seemed farther off in proportion as I lengthened my speech. But having once begun, she was not sufficiently mistress of herself to stop where she intended; and giving way to the rage that filled her heart, she fell upon me a second time, who, she said, only sought to deceive her, and upon the king her brother, "who loves me so much," said she ironically, "that he cannot resolve to get rid of me;" and as a proof entered into a long enumeration of her lovers; amongst whom it would have been easy to prove that she had missed of an establishment through her own fault, as when she refused the king of Scotland. In the course of her complaints she neither spared the queen her mother, nor king Henry the third, who, she said, had all conspired to keep her single. Her stock of rancour being almost exhausted by so many invectives, the softer passion took its place, and naturally turned her thoughts on the count of Soissons; a subject which she treated not less amply, but in a manner very different from the former.

AT length, recollecting that her design by interrupting me was to hear that advice by which, I told her, all past errors might be repaired, she asked me positively what that advice was, but with the same tone of malignant raillery; by which I was still better convinced that her mind was irritated beyond the power of human eloquence to cure: but pressed by the question I replied, "By the count of Soissons' doing the very contrary of what he has hitherto done." The observations I made while I pronounced these few words, were sufficient to persuade me, that it would be to no purpose to propose the duke of Montpensier to her; I therefore looked upon my commission to be at an end, or rather absolutely useless, and all I aimed at now was to draw myself out of this embarrassment by expressions so vague and general, that the princess might not take any advantage of me, nor afterwards maintain that I had failed in my promise to her. Nothing is more easy than this

kind of discourse. I entered at first upon the necessary duties of crowned heads, and expatiated long upon the subject; from whence, however, I drew no other inference, but that the king could not be reproached with any failure of his. This introduced another set discourse, divided into several parts, wherein Henry's gentleness of disposition was not slightly discussed; and to conclude by something still clearer, since the princess, contrary to my expectations, had patience enough to listen to so tedious an harangue, I assured her, in few words, that Henry's temper was such, that I was confident he would be easily prevailed upon to consent to every thing that was reasonable.

THE princess, surprized at so precipitate a conclusion, asked me, indeed with some appearance of reason, if I had nothing more to say to her; for it is certain, that I had gone a great way about to little purpose: I replied, that I had still a great many things to add. This long conversation having lasted till night, I depended upon having wearied the princess so much, that she would take an absolute leave of me: but I was mistaken; she gave me only till the next day to satisfy her demands, and left me with a sullen and malignant air, accompanied with a glance, and some interjections, which I heard as I went out, upon the part I had played at Chartres; from whence I drew a very unfavorable preface.

I SHOULD have been the most presumptuous of all men, if, after this, I could have flattered myself with being able to bring her to the point we desired. Indeed I was so far from entertaining such a thought, that I should have been rejoiced, if the princess, in quitting me, had commanded me never to appear before her again. I went however to wait upon her at the appointed hour, which was after she had dined. She had repaired to her cabinet earlier than usual, and continued there shut up conferring with the ladies de Rohan, de la Guiche, de la Barre, and de Neufvy, from none of whom I had the least reason to expect any good offices. I waited in her chamber, talking to the ladies de Gratains, and Pangeac, and two other young ladies, who were as much inclined to favour me as the others to do the contrary. I told them, that I should not have been sorry, if they had been in the princess's cabinet instead of those ladies that were then with her, who, I was persuaded, were that very moment giving her very bad advice. They told me I ought not to imagine so, but in a tone that confirmed me in my opinion.

1596.

IT was an hour at least, before the princess came out; she had been all this time preparing herself, and, perceiving me, told me that she was going to give me her answer; the purport of which it was not difficult to guess, by the cold yet contemptuous air with which she pronounced those words. I followed her, in great uneasiness; but she spared me the pain of speaking first, by telling me that she acquitted me of all I had promised to inform her of, and that now I had nothing to do but to hear her in my turn: then assuming an air still more haughty and contemptuous, she treated me in the presence of all those witnesses (I am obliged to confess it) like the basest of men, who, she said, took upon myself the character of a person of importance, and an able politician, while, in reality, I was a vile and infamous parasite, who had endeavoured to extort from her own mouth a confession of faults, which neither she nor the count had ever been guilty of, to make my court to the king, who was himself ashamed of the part I had acted. The princess could not here avoid falling into the female fault of betraying, by an exuberance of words, the reserve she had resolved to maintain. Something which I had said the evening before, relating to her conduct and that of the count of Soissons in Bearn, occurring to her memory, she entered into an unseasonable justification of it. Pangeac was called a great loggerhead, who had not yet received his deserts; my comment upon the duties of kings was found highly unbecoming: then recalling herself from this rambling strain, she told me, that to close all with a few words, and to hinder me from boasting of my commission, she gave me to understand, that I was rash and imprudent to the last degree, to concern myself with the affairs of a person so far above me; I, that was only a private gentleman, whose highest honour it had been to be brought up in her family, and who, as well as all my relations, had subsisted only upon the bounty of the princes of Navarre; that the fate of all those who, like me, ungrateful for past benefits, durst presume to interfere betwixt persons so nearly united, was to be sacrificed sooner or later, without the honour of having my interposition known to be the cause. From a woman these expressions might be endured, but, as the princess was well assured that no man whatever, not even the count of Soissons, although a prince of the blood, durst treat me in the same manner, she added, as the highest affront she could think of, that all she had said was in the count's name as well as her own. The conclusion of this speech was of a piece with all the rest: she threatened, with an excess of rage, to ruin me for ever with the king,

by

by a single word, and forbid me, for the future, to appear in any place where she was.

1596.

I DO not believe any distinction of rank or sex can authorize the use of terms so outrageous: certainly it cannot be vanity in me to repeat them; but, as the princess added endeavours to words, and obliged me to take measures for my own defence, in which, for the first time, I waved that submission which I owed to a princess, the sister of my king. I cannot better prove the necessity I was under to take those steps, than by faithfully relating those conversations, and even the very words that were made use of. Although my pride suffered greatly by this shameful treatment, I had discretion and even policy enough, not to suffer it to appear; I say policy, for had my countenance expressed the least emotion, or my reply the least bitterness, the princess, without hearing me, would have left me in a triumph that it was necessary I should lessen before those persons who either took part in or were witnesses of it.

I BEGAN therefore with the false timidity of a man who is solicitous to disculpate himself; and that I might engage the princess to hear all I had to say, I told her that I was very much grieved, to find that the prejudices she had conceived made her discover a meaning in my words that I had no intention to give them, and had drawn upon me a treatment I could not possibly deserve; that it was easy for me to convince her how little I merited those reproaches she had cast upon me; and to begin with the count of Soissons, she knew that in all I had said relating to him, I had added that, for my own part, I was absolutely convinced of the rectitude of his intentions. By this introduction, I stopped the princess, who supposed she should soon have the pleasure to see me imploring pardon at her feet.

I WENT on with the same composure to tell her, that to remove the displeasure she seemed to entertain, that a private gentleman and one unworthy to approach her, should be sent to treat with her, I begged leave to remind her, that although, by the prodigality of my ancestors, I was neither possessed of the estate nor dignities to which I had a claim, yet, however, more than a hundred thousand crowns had been carried by the daughters of my family, into the houses of Bourbon and Austria*; and that, far from being a charge to the king since I had been

* I refer the reader to the explanation I have given in the beginning of these Memoirs, about the alliances of the house of Bethune.

1596.

in his service, his majesty had sometimes given me the pleasure to see him have recourse to me in his necessities. I acknowledged, however, that nothing could justify my having exceeded his orders, if I had really been capable of doing so. That moment, taking another paper of the king's out of my pocket, addressed to the princess, in form of a letter, I took the advantage of the astonishment into which I had cast her, to tell her, that to finish my message before I quitted her for ever, I declared to her, as her servant, that his majesty holding the place of her father, and being likewise her master and her king, she had no other part to take than submission to his will; that without listening to any thing the count of Soissons could suggest, she must resolve either to accept of a husband from the king her brother, or incur the loss of his favour; that in this last case, it would be a very sensible mortification to her, after having held the rank of a queen, to see herself reduced to a very inconsiderable fortune, since she was not ignorant, that besides the presents the king had bestowed, in the resignation he had made her of those estates she at present enjoyed, he had consulted rather the dictates of his own heart than the laws and customs of Navarre, which would have appointed a very small provision for her.

THESE last words drew the princess, in spite of herself, out of that scornful insensibility she had affected to shew, to enter into the greatest transport of rage that any woman could be capable of. After giving vent to all that anger could inspire, she went furiously into her cabinet; and I withdrew, with great composure, towards the staircase, whither madam de Neufvy came running after me, to tell me, that the princess had sent her to demand the letter I had shewn her. This was a new stratagem of those four ladies, who had persuaded the princess, that she would ruin me more effectually with the king, if she could make it appear that I had sacrificed his majesty's letter. I perceived the snare that was laid for me, and I replied to madam de Neufvy, that I was surprized the princess, after having refused to hear the contents of the letter, should send immediately to demand it. I added, that I would communicate it only to the princess, and read it to her, having occasion for it myself. This was not what the messenger wanted, and she returned without making me any answer.

I WENT that evening to Moret, where my wife then was, and staying with her only one day, set out the next for Paris, to meet my courier, whom I had sent from Fontainebleau with dispatches to the king.

king. But I was greatly surprized when, instead of him, I saw young Boësse, the prince's steward of the household, arrive with a letter, at which I was still more surprized, when I saw it was from the king. I knew that Boësse was the person whom she sent with her dispatches to his majesty. I found that this letter had been sent open to the prince's, and had not been transmitted to me till it had passed through her hands, and that she had sealed it with her own seal: all these circumstances left me no room to doubt of my misfortune, which by a sad foreboding in my mind was still more confirmed, and I opened the letter trembling. My fears were but too just; instead of praises, and those expressions of esteem and confidence with which the king's letters to me were generally filled, my eyes were struck with a severe command to make the prince's satisfaction. His majesty "could not suffer (these were his words) "that one of his subjects should affront a prince's, and his "sister, without punishing him immediately for his fault, if he did "not repair it by submission."

I WAS overwhelmed, I confess, with this unexpected blow, and so much the more, as, having no reason to imagine that the king had not received my letter, I saw that it was after he had read it that I was thus treated. What reflections did I not then make upon the misfortune of being employed in settling the differences of persons of such rank, and the danger of serving kings. I had nothing to reproach myself with, in regard to Henry; I had served him four and twenty years with an unwearied assiduity, and a zeal that nothing could allay: it was with reluctance that I accepted this last disagreeable commission: the writing which I had obtained of the king contained many things much more severe than any I had said to the prince's; and I had suppressed them at a time when it would, perhaps, have been excusable to have aggravated them. My guilt was, at most, a too faithful obedience; yet his majesty sacrificed me cruelly, without any regard to my reasons, or his own express commands. I was sensibly affected with this injustice, and all my thoughts ran upon forming strong resolutions to quit the court for ever.

BUT scarce had I taken these resolutions when a thousand motives concurred to make me change them. Henry, as I had already often proved, had acquired such an empire over my will, that after repeated oaths on my side to quit him, a single word from him has drawn me to him as it were by enchantment. To this was added the consideration of my own interest: by listening to my repentment I was exposing myself to lose the rewards of my long services, when I was just upon

1596. he point of obtaining them, and at a time when, being disinherited by the viscount de Gand, I lost an estate of fifty thousand livres a year; exhausted by a long and painful service, having a house to establish, and menaced with a numerous family by the fertility of my wife, these expected rewards were all my resource, and the only foundation I had to build upon. But, on the other side, how could I endure to suffer, like a criminal, the haughty and contemptuous behaviour of a princess, with whom I had just before maintained a character so different, and who would make this cup as bitter for me as she was able? The agitation and grief of my mind may be easily imagined.

I AT length took the most prudent part I could, but it was far from suspending the uneasiness that preyed upon my spirits; I feigned sickness, and the deep melancholy with which I was seized, was in reality capable of communicating to my body part of the disorder of my mind. I discovered to no person whatever the cause of my grief, but sent for a physician, who making me tremble for the consequences of a disease entirely of my own framing, promised, however, to restore me to health by the force of bleeding and purges.

AT four o'clock in the afternoon another physician arrived, for whom the cure of my distemper was reserved; this was Picaut, my courier, whom I had waited for impatiently, to take, upon the accounts he should bring me, my last resolutions. After informing me that he had had the misfortune to strain his ankle, which was the cause that the princess's courier came to the king before him, he presented me with a letter, in this prince's own hand-writing, which removed all my complaints: Henry told me in it, that I had reason to be offended with the contents of his former letter, which he had written in one of those sudden transports that I knew were natural to him, and upon exaggerated complaints, joined to the instances and importunities of his sister; but that to calm my uneasiness, he assured me he would disavow nothing I had said, in which if he failed, he would permit me to make use of his own letter against him: he concluded with these words, "Come to me, that you may inform me more particularly of all that has passed, and depend upon being as well received by me as you have ever been, let who will be angry at it. Adieu, my friend."

In this kind familiarity I knew again my old master. This letter was dated, the 17th of May, and the first the 15th, and both from

Amiens, for which place I set out very early in the morning, and arrived there the next day. I neither suppressed nor palliated any part of what had been said or done at Fontainebleau between the princess and me; and his majesty, by repeated expressions of friendship and esteem for me, shewed that he approved of my whole conduct.

THAT I may not too often interrupt the course of my history by a recital which is equally proper every where, I shall finish in a few words, all that concerns this affair. La Varenne, who was employed by the princess to take care of her interests at the court, did not fail to inform her of the good reception the king gave me, and the report that was every where spread, that the finances would be wholly confided to my care. The princess comprehended, by this news, that it was now necessary not only to renounce her vengeance, but also to be upon good terms, for the future, with a man from whose hands henceforwards all the appointments for the support of her household would proceed. Whether she was convinced that she herself was wrong, or still imputed the blame to me, she had the generosity to pardon me: and I must confess, to the honour of this princess, that in this she shewed a greatness of soul of which few persons could have been capable. If in those qualities which marked the character of this princess, we except an excess of vivacity which it was not in her power to restrain, and to which, in the affair above mentioned, was added the force of the most impetuous of all passions, her disposition will be found naturally good and easy, capable even of the refinements of friendship, and the warmth of gratitude.

SHE communicated this alteration of her sentiments with regard to me to madam de Pangeac, one of my friends; and even made the first advances to madam de Rosny. I had left her in childbed at Moret. When her health was perfectly re-established, she went one day to church at Fontainebleau, and returned without waiting upon the princess, under pretence of a slight indisposition which confined her to her bed. Madam de Pangeac making her some reproaches, as if from herself, but in reality by the princess's orders, my wife found herself obliged to tell her, that the terms I was upon with the princess made it impossible for her to do herself that honour. At a second journey which madam de Rosny made to Fontainebleau, the princess caused her to be told, that the reasons she had given madam de Pangeac ought not to prevent her coming to see her. Accordingly, my wife waited upon her, and had a most gracious reception. She

1596.

confessed to her sincerely, that she was not yet entirely satisfied with my conduct, as she thought she had reason to expect a very different one, considering those instances of friendship which I had received from her in my youth: she mentioned several parties of pleasure at Pau, or at M. de Mioffens* ; where she had done me the honour to take me with her, particularly that when running at the ring I gained the prize, which was a jewel of small value, and was going to receive it from her hand, she changed the jewel, and gave me one in its stead worth two thousand crowns. She did not forget to mention, that my father had often carried the queen, her mother, in his arms. After all this, the princess very obligingly told my wife, that her resentment against me had never extended to her, whose disposition she loved. She said a thousand obliging things of M. de Saint-Martin, my wife's uncle, who had been first gentleman of the bedchamber to the king; and of madam de Saint-Martin, the sister of M. de Mioffens, and consequently a near relation of her own.

MADAM de Rosny left her extremely well satisfied, and fully determined to use her utmost endeavours to restore me to her favour. She made no attempts this first visit, but afterwards, observing to the princess the attention I shewed in settling the assignments for the payment of the offices of her household; and representing to her, that it was by repeated orders from his majesty that I had subdued the reluctance I had to accept of that commission which had offended her, madam de la Force, who was then at the princess's toilet, joined my wife; and what surprized me greatly, being supported by the ladies de Rohan and de la Barre, they prevailed upon her to send for me that moment. From the time that the princess was convinced of my innocence, she had so great a degree of friendship for me as to confide all her secrets to me alone: she proposed and promoted with all her interest the marriage of my eldest daughter with the duke of Rohan, her nearest relation † on the side of the deceased queen her mother, and the heir of her estate in Navarre. The king did not then approve of this match, though he did afterwards. And lastly, when this princess set out for Lorraine, sufficiently discontented, as it is well known,

* Henry d' Albret, baron de Mioffens.

† Henry II. of that name, duke de Rohan, &c. who married Margaret de Bethune, as shall be seen in the sequel of these Memoirs, was grandson to René I.

of that name, viscount de Rohan, and Isabella D'Albret, daughter to John king of Navarre. See in all the genealogists the other alliances of this illustrious house with that of France.

with

with the court of France, she declared publicly, that there were only three persons in it whom she esteemed, and that I was one of them.

1596.

HOSTILITIES between the king's party and that of the league continued, during the years 1595 and 1596, in the same parts of the kingdom as in the preceding years: in Brittany, between messieurs d'Aumont and de Saint-Luc, and the duke of Mercœur; and in the provinces in the south of France, where several little skirmishes happened between messieurs de Ventadour, de la Rochefoucaut, de Châteauneuf, de Saint-Angel, de Loflange, de Chambaret, and other officers on the king's side*; and messieurs de Pompadour, de Rastignac, de Saint-Chamant, de Montpéfat, de la Chapelle Biron, and other leaguers. The defeat of the Crocans, the siege of Blaye, the sacking of Agen, and the death of the duke of Rochefoucaut, are the most remarkable events † that happened in the Limosin and the adjacent places. Lesdiguières continued the war with equal success in Dauphiné, Provence, and Piedmont; sometimes against the duke of Savoy, and sometimes against the duke of Epernon. The conclusion of all these expeditions was the entire defeat of the duke of Savoy, who,

* Anne de Levis, duke de Ventadour, governor of Limosin, and lieutenant-general for the king in Languedoc: he died in 1622. Francis de la Rochefoucaut, prince of Marillac. René de Saint-Marthe, sieur de Châteauneuf. Charles de Rochefort de Saint-Angel. Lewis Francis de Loflange, or Louftange. N. de Chambaret, otherwise called Chambert, governor of Limosin. Lewis viscount Pompadour. N. de Rastignac. John de Saint-Chamant, or Antony his brother. They afterwards were all of the king's party. Henry Des-Pres de Montpéfat. N. de Charbonniere, sieur de la Chapelle Biron.

† Most of the events which the author mentions here, happened before the year 1595. The count de Rochefoucaut had been dead since the year 1591, having been killed, as we said before, at the battle of Saint-Yrier-la-perche. The viscount de Pompadour was likewise dead in 1591. The taking of Agen by the count de la Roche, son to marechal de Matignon, was likewise in the same year 1591. Blaye was besieged in the year 1593, by the same

marechal, who, notwithstanding the defeat of a Spanish squadron, was obliged to raise the siege. The Crocans, so called from Croc, a village in the Limosin, where they began to assemble themselves, were also defeated about the same time by Chambert, or Chambaret, the governor of that province: and afterwards, the marechal de Matignon completed their final dispersion and overthrow in Languedoc, more by stratagem than by open force. Consult, as to all these events, the historians above quoted; as also see, in the particular history of the constable de Lesdiguières, the expeditions of this hero, famous for the victories at Epernon, Pontcharra, Vinon, &c. and for the taking of the fort d'Exiles, of Cahors, and of a great number of other places; whereby he became master of all Savoy, and a part of Piedmont.

Besides a war, France was sore afflicted this year 1596, with a plague and famine, which were occasioned by the utter inversion of the seasons; for l'Etoile says, that there was a summer in April, an autumn in May, and a winter in June.

thinking

1596.

thinking to derive some advantage from the disunion of the dukes of Guise and Epernon, had marched as far as Provence, from whence he was shamefully driven back; and likewise that of the duke of Epernon, who yielding to his rival the duke of Guise, assisted by the same Lesdiguières, d'Ornano, and the countess of Saul's party, was left without any resource, and reduced to the necessity of imploring the king's clemency, by letters conceived in terms of the utmost submission, which his majesty received at Gaillon. His letters were very soon after followed by himself; he came and threw himself at the king's feet, which was a kind of triumph for Henry, this duke's humiliation, with that of Bouillon, and de la Tremouille, being amongst the number of those things he most earnestly desired,

DURING his stay at Amiens, the king took several new measures to facilitate my being joined in the council of finances. This prince, who by an effect of the native rectitude of his own mind, could not believe it possible for men to be as corrupt as they really were; and by the sweetness of his disposition incapable of proceeding to extremities till he had tried all other methods, had for a long time imagined, that he should at length bring this body to manage the revenue of the state with wisdom and œconomy; and this important reformation was not so difficult, but that it might be produced by the advice of one man of industry and integrity, whom he would associate with those that composed it. With this view he spoke both in public and private to messieurs of the council to receive me amongst them: however great their reluctance was, they durst not openly reject a proposition, which being made in this manner, resembled rather an intreaty than a command.

I CONFESS sincerely, that I was not so easily brought to yield to this medium. His majesty, in a private conversation, told me it was his desire I should endeavour to gain the good-will of messieurs of the council, and by some instances of complaisance, remove the suspicions they had entertained, that if I joined their society it would be only to do them bad offices; so that I might engage them by my behaviour to make it their own request that I should be associated amongst them. I did not hesitate a moment in replying, that this appeared to me to be the worst way imaginable of being introduced into the council of the finances, to owe it as an obligation to those who governed them; and knowing so well as I did the dispositions of this society, I could not serve them and the state at the same time. The king,

king, who did not like to be contradicted, and who likewise remembered my disputes with the duke of Nevers, supposed I had still some remains of resentment against those gentlemen, and thought he perceived a kind of haughtiness in my answer, and a tenaciousness of my own opinion, told me, with some quickness, that he had no desire to irritate every one upon my account; therefore without making any more attempts to bring me into the finances, he would seek for some other employment for me, since he knew I could not continue in a state of inactivity.

HE had still some remains of displeasure in his countenance when he quitted me to visit madam de Liancourt, who enquiring the cause, represented to him, that he would never be served with fidelity till he found a man who, from a regard only to the public good, would not fear to draw upon himself the hatred of the financiers. As for me, I looked upon my engaging in the finances as farther off than ever; and reflecting that my employment would henceforwards be reduced to treaties and negotiations, an office which seldom fails to bring certain ruin upon any man who would maintain his rank in it with dignity, and his reputation with honour. I resolved to explain myself to his majesty, and prevail upon him to approve of a scheme that would at least secure to me the reimbursement of all my expences. But Henry did not give me time to make this proposal to him: when I approached he told me, that upon the representation madam de Liancourt had made him, he was now brought over to my opinion, and that without any longer delay, he was going to declare his intentions publicly, after having, for form's sake, imparted them first to the constable and Villeroi, to whom it belonged to dispatch my patents. These two gentlemen came very seasonably into the king's apartment, and received this order; the constable by a bow, and Villeroi by saying, he would give me the patents as soon as he could meet with a precedent of the proper form.

IN the afternoon, when the king was gone to hunt, I went to make my acknowledgments to the marchioness de Monceaux (for this was the title that madam de Liancourt had lately taken); after which I thought I was obliged, in civility, to visit monsieur de Villeroi, of whom, instead of the patents, I asked for a warrant, which would have answered the same purpose. Villeroi made an evasive reply, and during three or four days that I pressed him, always deferred the affair on various pretences till the next day. At last, the king left Amiens, to go to Monceaux,

1596.

Monceaux, and passed by Liancourt, where Liancourt, his first equerry received and treated him very splendidly. It was in this place that they determined to use their utmost efforts against me.

LIANCOURT, at Villeroi's solicitation, invited the chancellor, who was his intimate friend, and the other members of the council, who came to that place by the king's order, to stay at his house during the king's residence there. They took advantage of this opportunity, of being always near the king, to labour effectually for my exclusion from the council. The method they made use of was not to attack me directly, but to insinuate to the king, that I was not fit for this employment, in which, they said, for want of that experience which only a long habitude can give, it would not be possible to avoid committing a thousand faults, the least of which was able to ruin, without resource, the credit, and consequently bring on the destruction, of the state. These discourses were so often repeated, in the king's presence (for they designedly turned the conversation upon that subject) and with so great an appearance of sincerity, that the king was at last shaken by them, and when at the same time he found these gentlemen could with such facility form the greatest projects, discourse with such clearness upon the strength and interests of the state, calculate the revenues of it with the utmost exactness, in a word, were possessed in appearance of the whole science of commerce in its full extent, and of every other method by which a state is rendered flourishing; and especially that they conversed with each other in a language hardly intelligible to any but themselves; and influenced still more by the long preparation which they represented as absolutely necessary before any one could be received into the council, he thought that the present bad state of the finances was not the greatest misfortune with which they were threatened. His majesty likewise, looking upon all this as a proof of their repentance, and from the apprehensions he had just given them expecting to see a very great alteration in their conduct, no longer entertained a design of associating me amongst them.

VILLEROI, who during this time continued at Amiens, yet was not the less informed of all the measures taken by a body whom he directed as he pleased, seized this opportunity to send my patents to the king, which he could not dispense with himself from dispatching, after the express orders he had received from his majesty. When they were transmitted to the king, he had left Liancourt, having staid there only one day, and was then at Monceaux, where, still under the influence

of

of these suggestions, he gave them to Beringhen, telling him to keep them without saying any thing to me, till he had orders to the contrary. Beringhen, who was one of my friends, discovered the secret to me, which I kept faithfully. Fifteen days passed in this manner. The king did not speak to Beringhen about my patents, and messieurs of the council, blinded by their success, instead of that sincere repentance which his majesty expected from them, gave him new proofs of their artifice and insincerity, and such gross ones, that they forced him to crush them with the blow which they might, without much difficulty, have avoided.

THE king discovered that the council had just farmed out the subsidies of Normandy for thirty thousand crowns, and to defraud the treasury of this sum, so much less than the true value of the revenues, they had applied it all to the discharging the old demands upon it. With a little attention, he convinced himself of other faults in their conduct; that the five large farms did not produce the fourth part of their value, because Zamet, Gondy, and other farmers of the king's revenues, who were employed in them, being connived at by the gentlemen of the council, divided with them the immense profits that accrued from those farms. The avarice of these people was not yet sated, and, under pretence of the losses at Calais, Cambrai, Ardres, &c. they allowed such drawbacks upon all the other parts of the king's revenues, that, instead of increasing, they grew perceptibly less. The king, amidst that just indignation which this knowledge inspired, sent for me, and commanded me to go to Paris, to enquire from whence so great a dissipation of the money proceeded, which could only take its rise from the council. I replied, that his majesty having, without doubt, revoked the order he had given to Villeroi to dispatch my patents, since I had not received them, I had no right to mix with the council, or to meddle with the affairs transacted by it. "How!" said Henry, concealing his consciousness of this reproach, "then Beringhen has not given you your patents, and a letter from Villeroi, which he has had these fifteen days: you see this heavy German would have forgot them." While, by the king's orders, I went to make preparations for my journey, that I might reach Claye that evening, his majesty spoke to Beringhen, who consented to take all the blame upon himself. During this interval, a thought came into my head, which I communicated to the king when I returned to receive his last orders. I told him, that I thought it would be necessary for me to go, before the day appointed for the opening of the states, to some of the principal districts of the kingdom, to procure there a

1596.

more certain account of the present state of his majesty's revenues, the diminution they had suffered, and the augmentations they would admit of, to the end that his majesty might regulate his demands upon the states according to this scheme, which, however imperfect, might still, in proportion, throw some light upon the strength of the more distant districts, and consequently upon the whole kingdom: that, besides this advantage, I did not despair of procuring for him, in those districts only which I should visit, the three or four hundred thousand crowns which he had demanded in vain of the council. I thought it would be useless, and even imprudent, to take upon myself to make this examination, without such an instrument as appeared to me to be the most effectual means to prevent my being deceived, which was a full power from the king to suspend the contumacious receivers and overseers from the exercise of their office, or even to discard them entirely, and to reward the integrity of those who had been zealous for his majesty's service.

HENRY approved of the essential part of this scheme, but altered something of the manner in which it was to be proposed to the council. He was of opinion that I should take such measures in offering this advice to them, that those who most valued themselves upon the strength of their genius, such as Sancy, Schomberg, Fresne, and la Grange-le-roi, might seize the hint first themselves, and so pass, at least in part, for the authors of it; and likewise, that each one in the company might flatter himself that this commission would be given to him, or through his means, to the intendants and masters of requests who were wholly at his devotion. Nothing could be more prudent than this medium, which gratified alike the vanity of some, and the avarice of all. Accordingly I took my place in the council, where, by a miracle, to be found only in courts, my colleagues, who inwardly pined with vexation, suffered nothing but joy to appear in their countenances, words, and behaviour. I was almost deceived myself by that profusion of praises with which the chancellor loaded me, and the manner in which he told me I had been expected by them with the utmost impatience: such is the art of courtiers; they settle it amongst themselves, that however grossly they play the counterfeit, they shall not laugh at each other.

THE treaty with the duke of Maïenne, which had been agreed upon some time before, was concluded during the king's stay at Monceaux. When the king was at Amiens, the duke had sent a man to him, named d'Estienne, to know what place would be agreeable to his majesty, for
him

him to come and pay him his respects, and the king appointed Monceaux, in consideration of the duke's indisposition, which would not permit him to make longer journies than from Amiens to Soissons, where he resided *. The king was walking in his park, attended only by me, and holding my hand, when the duke of Maïenne arrived, who put one knee to the ground, with the lowest submissions, and added to a promise of inviolable fidelity his acknowledgments to his majesty for having forced him, he said, from the arrogance of the Spaniards, and the subtilty of the Italians. Henry, who as soon as he saw him approach, had advanced to meet him, embraced him thrice, and, forcing him to rise, embraced him again with that goodness which he never withheld from a subject that returned to his duty; then taking his hand, he made him walk with him in his park, conversing with him familiarly upon the embellishments he designed to make in it. The king walked so fast, that the duke of Maïenne, equally fatigued by his sciatica, his fat, and the heat of the weather, suffered great torments without daring to complain. The king perceiving it, by the duke's being red and in sweat, whispered me, "If I walk longer, said he, with this corpulent body, I shall revenge myself upon him, without any great difficulty, for all the mischiefs he has done us." Then turning to the duke of Maïenne, "Tell me truly, cousin," pursued he, "do I not walk a little too fast for you?" The duke replied, that he was almost stifled; and that, if his majesty walked but a very little while longer, he would kill him without designing it. "Hold there, cousin," replied the king with a smile, embracing him again, and lightly tapping his shoulder, "for this is all the vengeance you will ever receive from me?" The duke of Maïenne, sensibly affected with this frank behaviour, attempted to kneel and kiss the hand his majesty gave him; and protested that he would henceforwards serve him even against his own children. "I believe it," said Henry; "and that you may love and serve me a long time, go to the castle and rest and refresh yourself, for you have much need of it. I will give you a couple of bottles of Arbois wine, for I know you do not hate it: here is Rosny, whom I resign to accompany you; he shall do the honours of my house, and attend you to your chamber; he is one of my oldest servants, and one of those who is most rejoiced at your resolving to serve, and love me affectionately." The king continuing his walk, left me with the duke of Maïenne, whom I conducted to a summer-

* L'Etoile tells the story otherwise: but in this the duke de Sully is more to be depended upon. Prefixe has likewise

been mistaken in placing this interview in 1595. See the Chronol. Novenn. liv. viii. p. 599.

1596. } house to repose himself, and afterwards attended him to his horse, as much satisfied with the king and I as we were both with him.

THE king thought Monceaux so agreeable a place, that he staid there longer than he had at first intended: he sent for the constable and Villeroi from Amiens, and ordered the council of the finances to reside at Meaux, for the conveniency of receiving his commands. I had not yet proposed in it my scheme of visiting the districts. His majesty, being convinced that it must have good consequences, took upon himself the care of proposing it. At the first hint he gave of it, the counsellors, who thought none but themselves could be designed for this employment, and each of whom was attentive to his own particular interest, without prejudicing that of the society in general, approved of the design; but were greatly surprized, when they found that, amongst them all, the king only named la Grange-le-roi for this purpose, and appointed him two districts: his majesty filled up the other commissions with the names of messieurs de Caumartin* and Bizouze, for two districts each; and with those of the other two masters of requests, for one district each: four of the chief and most extensive ones were assigned to me. The gentlemen of the council began now to repent that they had not hindered the execution of a plan, which would produce a full proof of their injustice: they united their utmost endeavours to render it useless, or at least to traverse it as much as possible. Their malice was all directed against me; for by the confidence the king placed in me, and the part I had acted in this affair, they guessed the truth. I was accused of ignorance, rashness, and obstinacy, and other faults still more glaring; and had no sooner begun to exercise the duties of my employment, than I perceived that, by an effect of their foresight, they had taken all the necessary measures with the treasurers of France, the receivers general and particular, comptrollers, clerks, and the lowest officers in the revenue. These people, almost all of whom had either sold, or blindly devoted themselves to their wills, were ready to do whatever was required of them; some absented themselves, and left their offices shut up; others presented me with a state of their accounts, drawn up with all that art which may be expected from men who make a science of roguery: others contented themselves with shewing me the orders of messieurs de Fresne, d'Incarville, and des Barreaux, by which they

* Louis le Fevre, seigneur de Caumartin, was sent into the Lionnois, Berry, and Auvergne: we shall speak of him hereafter. He was keeper of the seals in 1622, after the death of M. de Vic, and died the

following year, in the seventy second year of his age. He had the same elogiums given him by historians as M. Sully bestows on him in the sequel.

were forbid to communicate their registers and accounts to any person whatver.

1596.

To this excess of malice I at first opposed only patience and gentleness. I exhorted, I endeavoured to persuade, upon the principles of honour and justice, persons who were strangers to both: afterwards, I caused a report to be spread, that the design of assembling the states of the kingdom was to suppress that great number of offices and clerkships, especially the treasury, the least useful of all the societies, yet the most difficult to manage; and that none were to be continued in their places but those who made themselves worthy of that distinction, by a sincerity which, on this occasion, would prove their regard to the public good. This threat producing no effect upon persons who were secretly supported by the council itself, I was obliged to make use of the power I had received, and interdicted most of these dangerous officers, causing the duties of their employment to be exercised by two out of each body, whom I chose amongst all those that appeared to have the best principles. By these means I made myself master of all the registers and accounts, which served me for a clue to enter that labyrinth of impositions and robberies.

WHAT a scene had I there before me! It would be vain to attempt an account of the tricks and subtilties of this mischievous trade, or an enumeration of concealments, forgeries, misrepresentations, and productions of the same evidences, to serve different purposes; not to mention the contrivance of an artificial confusion, thro' which those wretches see with great clearness, though, to every other eye, all is darkness and inextricable perplexity. I content myself with remarking that, by clearing only two old accounts, and bringing together the receipts and letters of exchange of the year current, and the year preceding, I easily collected more than five hundred thousand crowns, which was lost to the king. It may be judged what a sum would have been raised, if, from all those who were thus employed, a rigorous restitution had been demanded of all that they fraudulently gained in so long a course of dishonesty, out of the different sums that had passed their fingers, since only from assignments for old debts, arrears of long standing, and orders payable to the bearer, so much money was recovered. My partners were not as fortunate or as exact as myself; all, except Caumartin, who brought the king two hundred thousand livres, paid his majesty only in long memorials of improvements to be made in the farming his revenues; yet the

1596.

the king had chosen these persons with the greatest care. But it is not surprizing that they should act in this manner, for to dare the hatred of a society so powerful as that of the financiers in France, to be proof against the presents and allurements, against the turns and artifices of all their dependents, the greatest part of whom do not want understanding, and make use of it only to dazzle, corrupt, and deceive, requires a degree of courage and fortitude of which few persons are capable.

MEAN time the gentlemen of the council, who had intelligence of all my proceedings in the provinces, were in a situation that may be easily imagined: unless they found means to render all my endeavours useless, or to ruin me before my return, their reputation and interest would be entirely lost. My absence afforded them all the conveniency they could wish for to prosecute this design; every thing that malice could suggest was said and done, by them and their emissaries, to prejudice the king against me: they never mentioned me but as a tyrant, who drained the people of all their subsistence, by the most cruel extortions, without procuring any advantage to the king; since the sums with which I took such pains to fill his treasury, being designed for the payment of pensions to the princes of the blood, and salaries of the great officers of the crown, they would be only placed in his coffers, to be taken out again immediately. Notwithstanding the invectives and impositions of this dreadful cabal, none of whose practices against me I was unacquainted with, I continued to perform my duty; and they had no other effect than to increase my diligence in the execution of my plan, and my precaution in taking such measures as would effectually put a stop to their accusations.

HENRY, who had at first given no credit to their reports, beginning afterwards to apprehend some bad consequences from my inexperience in those affairs, desired me, in his letters, to return as soon as possible: but, at length, when my enemies had made their party so strong, that there was a general outcry against me at court, the king was prevailed upon to believe that I should use the power I was possessed of with a severity that would make even him odious to the people; and then, instead of an invitation, I received an absolute order to return to Paris. I obeyed without murmuring, tho' greatly concerned to be thus stopped in the midst of my endeavours for his service. I caused the accounts of my four districts to be immediately drawn up, and signed by eight receivers-general; and not having time to convert the

the fifteen hundred thousand crowns I had raised in a less bulky coin, I loaded seventy carts with them, making the eight receivers-general accompany them, under the guard of a provost and thirty of the marshalleamen, who conducted them to Rouen, where the king then was, on account of the opening of the states.

OF all the slanders which had been invented by the gentlemen of the council, to procure my disgrace, none seemed to them so specious as to make the king believe, that I had filled the prisons with the officers and clerks of his finances; to which they thought fit to add that, thro' an insolent vanity, I brought along fifty of the principal ones bound in my train. The king, who suspected no falshood in so positive a charge, received me, when on my arrival at Rouen I went to pay him my respects, with an air that convinced me my enemies had been very active in their endeavours to hurt me. He did me the honour indeed to embrace me, but with a coldness and reserve which were not usual with him. He asked me why I had given myself the usefess trouble of bringing money along with me, which I knew belonged to persons whom he had no inclination to disoblige; and was greatly surprized to hear that not one denier of it was due to the princes of the blood, nor to any of the pensionaries of the state, who were all paid the April quarter, and would be likewise as exactly those of July and October, since I had not taken up any of the payments beforehand. The king, after obliging me to repeat these words several times, and even to swear to the truth of them, broke into an exclamation against those wicked detractors, and impudent impostors, as he called them; "but," added he, "what do you intend to do with the receivers and officers, whom you keep prisoners in your train?" The astonishment into which this question threw me, was alone sufficient to convince the king of the falshood of this accusation; nor was it difficult for me to perceive that moment, that the malice of messieurs of the council would recoil on themselves; and that it would disclose more effectually the secret motives of their conduct than any thing I could say to him. His majesty required no other explanation from me; on the contrary, he loaded me with praises, and gave me a thousand proofs of his friendship and esteem.

HAVING been told that the sum I had raised must be very considerable, upon his asking me what it was, I replied, that being unwilling to keep any part of it in my hands, either for my charges, expences, or pension, that the receivers-general might find the full sum

1596.

sum specified in the accounts, and learn from thence never to keep back any part of his revenues, his majesty might himself deduct my expences from the fifteen hundred thousand crowns which I had brought him. A sum so considerable gave great pleasure to the king, who was in extreme necessity for money: he told me, that he would take care my expences should be all paid; and that besides my pension of ten thousand livres a month, which he raised to eighteen, he would present me with the sum of six thousand crowns, as a reward for the service I had just done him. He commanded me to say nothing of what had passed between him and me, and sent me to lay apart from the money I had brought him what was necessary for the payment of the six companies of Swiss, at the rate of eighteen hundred crowns a company, and to give it them the next day.

I RETURNED to my carriages, which stood in two courts belonging to the sieur de Martinbault, under the same guard that had conducted them to Rouen. I ordered them to be unloaded, and the barrels that contained the money to be placed in apartments, the locks of which were changed, and secured by large padlocks, with three keys to each; the two receivers had one a-piece and myself the third. The next morning I sent the Swiss officers the ten thousand crowns that were due to them by three clerks, escorted by ten of the guard.

A SHORT time after I had sent away this escort, Sancy, to whom the king had said, that he must pay the Swiss, and who was generally charged with this employment, sent me a billet, in which he desired me to deliver to the sieur le Charron, the bearer, ninety thousand crowns for the payment of the Swiss. These were the terms in which the billet was conceived; for this counsellor would have thought it a degradation of his high rank to have condescended to any politeness or explanation with his colleagues. I was equally offended at the stiff air of this letter, and the impudent demand of a sum that I knew to be three times more than was due; therefore answered the bearer haughtily, that I neither knew Sancy, his writing, nor his orders. "How! do you not know Sancy?" said Charron, surprized, no doubt, at my presumption, for at this name the whole council trembled, the rank Sancy held in it approaching very near to that of superintendent. Perceiving that I had no intention to send any other answer, he went back to report it with all the timidity of a servant who is apprehensive of awakening the bad humours of his master. Unfortunately for Sancy, he repeated my message before several persons who were witnesses likewise of his transports.

transports. "We shall soon see," said he, swearing, "whether he knows me or not." Then, after loading me with what invectives he thought fit, he went directly to Saint-Ouen to the king. "Well, Sancy," said his majesty to him, "have you been to pay our Swiſs?" "No, ſire," replied Sancy, with a fullen air, "I cannot go, for it does not pleaſe your monſieur de Roſny that I ſhould, who plays the emperor in his apartment, ſits upon his barrels of money like an ape upon a block, and ſays he knows no one; and I am not ſure whether you will have more credit with him than any one elſe." "How is this!" replied the king, "I ſee you will never be weary of doing this man bad offices, becauſe I conſide in him and he ſerves me diligently." His majesty added, that my reſuſal was ſo much the leſs probable, as I had, by his order, agreed to give this money to the Swiſs. Sancy ſupported his aſſertion by the teſtimony of le Charron, whom he had brought along with him. The king, ſuſpecting ſome new inſtance of malignity, ordered Biart, one of the grooms of the bedchamber, to go and fetch me.

1596.

As ſoon as he ſaw me, he aſked me what had happened between Sancy and me. "I am going to tell you, ſire," replied I boldly: and accordingly, without fearing the leaſt reſentment of the terrible Sancy, I related all that had paſſed, in terms that ſufficiently terrified his vanity. Sancy, who was not of a temper to yield, became more inſolent than before, and aſſuming an imperious tone, an altercation ſo ſpirited enſued between us, although in the king's preſence, that his majesty was obliged to command us to be ſilent. That inſtant, ceaſing to ſpeak to my adverſary, I turned towards the king, and intreated him to give me no ſuperior in affairs wherein I acted ſolely by his order. The gallery at Saint-Ouen, where this ſcene paſſed, was crouded with a great number of perſons, who, being weary of Sancy's inſolence, rejoiced to ſee him ſuffer this little diſgrace. "It would have been very difficult," ſaid ſome, as I was afterwards informed, "for two ſuch genuiſſes to have exerciſed the ſame employments, without one of them being ſupplanted by the other; but in the humour the king is in at preſent, the beſt œconomist will be his choice." Others beheld my increaſe of favour with envy; and others, who probably had very little regard for either of us, laughed at the novelty of the ſight, and cried, "There is one hot-headed man, who has met with another that will ſtick by him."

1596.

THE report of those great sums with which I had filled the king's coffers was no sooner spread, than I was overwhelmed with the demands of an infinite number of his creditors, most of whom were sent by messieurs of the council; who through impatience to see it dissipated soon, agreed with the creditors to have the usual drawbacks upon their debts. My principal view in raising this money being to make a fund for those military expeditions which the king was shortly to begin, without his being obliged to load the people with new imposts, I was resolved not to suffer it to be squandered away; and therefore resisted all their importunities, and continued unmoved by their insolence and threats. But reflecting afterwards, that there was an absolute necessity for sending home the eight receivers-general, who alone were acquainted with the uses to which I put this money, I was afraid of giving too much occasion for slander, by keeping so large a sum in my possession after their departure; and I resolved to send it to the royal treasury. The king, who thought his money was no where secure but in my hands, endeavoured several times to vanquish my scruples; but in vain: I was determined to prevent the least suspicion upon this occasion, and therefore confided it to the care of the two treasurers, Morfontaine and Gobelin. I removed his majesty's fears by promising him that I would observe so carefully how this money was laid out, that he should not suffer the least loss. I separated, in the presence of the receivers, those sums that were necessary for the payment of the army, the expence of an artillery of twenty pieces of cannon, with double equipages, a sufficient quantity of powder, besides a convoy of other implements necessary for a siege, such as pick-axes, &c. which I caused to be carried to Amiens. I likewise laid aside fifty thousand crowns more for the king's privy purse, out of which he generally bestowed presents, unknown to the catholics, on many old officers and protestant soldiers that had served him faithfully in his wars. The remainder, which I calculated with the greatest exactness, amounted still to four hundred and fifty thousand crowns, and I carefully preserved both my former accounts, and those relating to the sums that were taken from the total. But being desirous of having a second proof of what the gentlemen of the council and their receivers-general were capable of, I affected great negligence concerning the disposal of the money; and when the receivers came to me, before they set out for their offices, to demand a copy of my accounts, I replied, that having

no longer any concern about a sum that was now under the care of other persons, and they having been witnesses themselves of the uses to which the money had been applied, I had destroyed those papers, as having now no further occasion for them. This the receivers did not fail to inform their masters of.

1596.

A MONTH was passed since the money was carried to the treasury, during which they made some payments out of it that I likewise pretended to keep no account of it: but here it was not possible to commit a mistake; for no sums being paid without a warrant from the council, all that was necessary was, to keep an exact memorandum of it, which I did. These warrants in a short time amounted to fifty thousand crowns, and consequently there was still four hundred thousand in the treasury. The king, however, some days after, demanding two hundred thousand crowns to be sent to Amiens, where the designed preparations were already made, particularly for the taking of Hedin, Sancy and the rest replied, that they believed this sum was still in the treasury, and that was all; and sending for d'Incarville, who was likely to know best, having the care of the registers, he assured the king that there was hardly two hundred thousand crowns in his coffers. His majesty, to whom I had said three days before that there was still four hundred thousand crowns remaining, was extremely surprized; but their assertions were so positive that they forced his belief; and he told me that I must certainly be mistaken. I was so sure of the contrary, that I mentioned before d'Incarville himself, and all my colleagues, whom his majesty had sent for, that there was a mistake of one half of the money. D'Incarville replied, that his registers were more certain than my memory; and offered to bring, the next day, an extract of all the sums that had been paid out of the treasury. I perceived from whence so great a security proceeded, and I was resolved to suffer them, till the last moment, to flatter themselves that they were going to gain a complete victory over me. I had courage enough to conceal, even from the king, the stratagem I had made use of, and to endure, without reply, the reproaches he made me, for letting this sum go out of my hands, contrary to his desire.

THE accounts were brought the next day, well attested, and no mistake was found in the sums that had been laid out; that would have been too palpable: the whole mistake lay in the receipt, which was founded upon their full persuasion that I had really destroyed the

1596.

papers, which proved the quantity and quality of the coin carried at different times to the royal treasury. I secretly reflected with astonishment on the subtilty with which they had acted with regard to this receipt, so as to spread over it an obscurity impenetrable to any one who was not possessed of a full proof of its falshood, and with what art they had given to this obscurity an air of truth, and even of conviction. I asked to see the receipts, with a feigned ill-humour, which seemed to these gentlemen a confession of my defeat. The council offered to make the receivers-general depose upon oath the numbers and contents of those carriages which had been sent to the royal treasury. I replied, that the discussion would be too tedious. D'Incarville, who took great advantages of my dissembled perplexity, told me, that I might go and examine the register of the finances upon the spot, since they could not be moved out of the offices. Although I easily comprehended that these registers, public and authorized as they were, might still be counterfeited like the rest, yet I could not imagine the manner in which it was done, the receipt for each of the carriages being signed by d'Arnaud and de l' Hôte, whose hand-writing I knew: I had therefore a curiosity to see these registers: all appeared very exact, and in the usual forms. Messieurs of the council began then to insult over me, and used their supposed advantages very ill.

I now thought it time to silence them, and to cover them in their turn with a real confusion. Accordingly, I produced the accounts, signed by the eight receivers-general; and likewise an exact memorandum of all the warrants. That instant all their arrogance vanished, and they would have been reduced to the necessity of confessing their roguery, had they not bethought themselves of a contrivance to avoid it; but so poor a one, as still left them all the disgrace. A clerk, instructed by d'Incarville, came to the king, and told him, that l' Hôte, who kept the key of the hall where the registers lay, being absent one day when one of the most considerable of the carriages was brought to the treasury, and the receivers who conducted it being in haste to return, he thought it would be sufficient to mark the sum contained in the carriage upon a loose sheet of paper, intending to make it be afterwards revised, and signed by d'Incarville, and inserted in the registers; but that he himself afterwards going to Heudicourt, it had slipped out of his memory; for which he intreated his majesty's pardon. The king contented himself with slightly reprimanding him for his neglect, ordering more care to be taken of the registers for the future.

Then

Then going towards the constable (who was at the end of the gallery where all this had passed, and who in the whole affair had appeared more favourable to the gentlemen of the council than me) he cried out to him at a distance, in the presence of several persons, that his money was found, and that he knew in good time those in whom he ought to confide.

AMIDST these contentions came the day appointed for the meeting of the states of the kingdom, or rather of the assembly of notables; that is, of persons of consideration; for so it is that they were called. The reason of adopting this name *, instead of that of the states of the kingdom, which should naturally have been used, arose wholly from the lawyers and financiers, who perceiving that at this time they had riches and influence to give them such a superiority to the other classes, as they were unwilling any but the clergy should share with them, disdained to see themselves levelled with the people by one common denomination; which yet must have been the case, if the forms used in these assemblies, and particularly the distinction of the three orders, had been preserved. They, indeed, made their appearance with magnificence and splendor, which sunk the nobility, the soldiers, and other members of the state, below consideration, since they were not able to dazzle the eyes with splendid equipages, the glitter of gold, nor a long train of attendants; things which will always draw the envy, the reverence, and the worship, of the people; or, more, truly, will always shew our depravity and folly.

* Percefixe says, that it is because the king had not time to assemble the states together: "The kings (says d'Aubigné, with his usual malevolence) "have recourse to such sorts of assemblies, when "those of the states-general are tedious, "difficult, or suspected by them. The design of assembling these little states being to find money to carry on the war "against Spain, there were several schemes "proposed and agreed to; the pancarte, "or old rate, was the chief, which was "but very ill received in many places of "the kingdom, &c." Tom. III. liv. iv. ch. 14. De Thou says very little of it, liv. cxvii. and Davila no more. All that is said in these Memoirs about this assembly is found, so far as I know, no where

else: and in order to render it the more intelligible, I have taken the liberty which I have desired in the preface to this work, and that was, to compare with each other all the thoughts that the compilers of M. de Sully's manuscripts have made use of in their Memoirs, without any order or connexion. As we may well suppose that they were all mutually connected, and had each their proper object in the mind of this great statesman, it entirely coincides with his views, to apply them to the subjects to which they naturally belong. And all that can be desired is, I think, never to alter the substance of the thoughts in my original; to which I have principally applied myself.

1596.

SUCH, in general, is the notion that ought to be formed of these great, these august assemblies; those men of whom one imagines, that they must come thither with minds full of wisdom and public spirit, warm with all the zeal that animated the ancient legislators, commonly think on no other business than how to make a ridiculous display of their pomp, and shew their effeminacy, to most advantage; and whose appearance would sink them into infamy, if they were beheld without prejudice. To complete the notion, we must take in the discord of the several bodies which compose these assemblies, their contrarieties of interest, their opposition of opinion, the desire of each to over-reach another, their intrigues, and their confusion; all which, together with that meanness discovered in the prostitution of eloquence, have their original from the same hateful cause: for by some fatality it comes to pass, that those improvements which an age makes in knowledge above preceding times, are not applied to the advancement of virtue, nor serve any other purpose than to refine wickedness. It is true, that in these assemblies there may be found a small number of men of great abilities and great virtues, men whose qualities no-body disputes; but, instead of being forced into public notice, they are treated with an affectation of negligence and contempt, which sink them into silence, and with them suppress the voice of the public good. Thus long experience has shewn, that an assembly of these states rarely produces the good expected from it: for that such might be its effect, the members ought to be equally instructed in true and honest policy; at least, ignorance and knavery should sit dumb in the presence of men of knowledge and integrity: but such is always the character of multitudes, that for one wise man, there are many fools, and presumption is the constant attendant of folly; and it is here more than in any place, that great virtues, instead of exciting respect and emulation, provoke hatred and envy.

BESIDES, if the prince that holds these assemblies is powerful and fond of power, he will easily defeat their schemes, or crush them into silence; but, if he is weak, and unacquainted with his own rights, an unbounded licentiousness of debate will soon sink the kingdom into all the miseries that naturally follow the depression of the royal authority. Necessity therefore requires, that there should be, both in the sovereign and the subject, a complete knowledge of their several rights, and mutual obligations. The first law of a sovereign is, that he should keep the law,

law, for he has himself two sovereigns, God and the law: justice ought to preside on his throne, and gentleness to support it. God is the true owner of kingdoms, and monarchs are but the ministers, who ought to exhibit to the people a true copy of the perfections of him in whose place they stand; and remember, that they do not govern like him but when they govern as fathers. In hereditary monarchies, there is an hereditary mistake: the sovereign is master of the life and property of his subjects, and by means of these few words, *Such is our pleasure*, is dispensed from giving the reasons of his conduct, and from having any reasons to give. Supposing this were really the right of a king, is it not the utmost degree of imprudence, to incur voluntarily the hatred of those who must every moment have his life in their hands? And hated he must certainly be, who forces a concession of power, which he declares beforehand his intention to abuse.

WITH regard to subjects, the first law which religion, reason, and nature prescribe them, is to obey; their duty is to reverence, honour, and fear their princes, as representatives of the supreme governor, who may be said to appear visibly on earth by these his ministers, as he appears in heaven by the orbs of light. These duties they are to pay from a principle of gratitude, for the security and advantages they enjoy under the shelter of the royal authority: for the calamity of having an unjust, ambitious, and arbitrary king, they have no other remedy but that of softening him by submission, and propitiating God by prayer. All grounds of resistance, however solid they may be thought, will appear, upon a careful examination, to be nothing more, than artful and subtle pleas for disloyalty; nor has it been found that, by this practice, princes have been reformed, or taxes abolished; but to the calamities, which gave room for complaints, has been added a new degree of misery, as may be found by enquiring into the sentiments of the lower people, and particularly those of the country.

SUCH are the principles upon which the mutual happiness of governors and subjects might easily be fixed, if in general assemblies of the nation, each party appeared fully convinced of the truth of these maxims: but, supposing this the case, there would still be less need of general assemblies, to which recourse is never had but when there is some disagreement between the members and the head. It may, however, be concluded, that, as these assemblies are at present useless, both on account of the occasions on which they are called, and of the methods

1596. thods in which they proceed, so they might be of great efficacy for the support of regularity and general virtue, if the prince, acting as the real head of united members, would call them with no other purpose, than to oblige those who lay down their employments, to give an account of their administration, in the face of the kingdom, and to chuse, with wisdom and discernment, those by whom their places should be supplied; animating them to a due discharge of their offices by his exhortations, and by a public distribution of praise and blame, punishments and rewards*.

HENRY, while he waited for the meeting of the assembly, took a journey to Arques, Dieppe, and Caudebec, &c. that he might have a sight of the places where so many memorable actions had been performed, and I accompanied him throughout his journey.

WHEN he returned to Rouen, he opened the assembly, by a speech, uttered with a dignity becoming a great prince, and a sincerity with which princes are unacquainted: he declared that, to avoid all appearance of violence or compulsion, he had determined not to call an assembly of deputies, named by the king and blindly obsequious to all his inclinations, but that he gave an admission at large to persons of all ranks and conditions, that men of knowledge and merit might have an opportunity to propose, without fear, whatever they thought necessary for the public good; that at that time he would not attempt to confine them by any limitations, but enjoined them not to make an ill use of this freedom from restriction, by an attempt to lessen the sovereign authority, which is the chief strength of the kingdom; and exhorted them to establish union amongst their members, to give ease to the people, to clear the royal treasury from debts, which, though it was subject to them, it never had contracted; to shew their justice in reducing exorbitant salaries, without lessening those that were necessary; and to settle, for times to come, a fund clear of incumbrances, and sufficient to maintain the army.

HE added, that it should be no objection to him, that the measures proposed were not of his own contrivance, provided he found them dictated by justice, and public spirit: that they should not find him

* There cannot, I think, any thing be added to the justness of these sentiments. And we need only remit hither those who, as Comines, Boulainvilliers, &c. have taken the side of the states, and the aristocratical party.

pleading

1596.

pleading his age, his experience, or personal qualities, as an exemption from any just regulations, though princes often made excuses far less defensible; but that he would shew, by his example, that it was no less the business of kings to enforce edicts, than of subjects to obey them*.

HENRY rose after this speech, declaring that neither he nor his council would be present at their consultations, that they might be wholly freed from constraint; and accordingly went out with all his counsellors, leaving only me, to lay before the assembly such accounts, memoirs, and public papers, as were necessary for their information.

WHEN I gave an account of the last assembly of these states at Paris, I spoke at large of their methods of proceeding, and the forms used in those great and numerous assemblies; and shall therefore only observe, at present, that, excepting the subject of their deliberations, this assembly resembled the former. As they were now necessarily to come to some conclusion, particularly with relation to the subsidies, and to settle the method of raising them, they could think of nothing better to be done, than to make a collection of old useless regulations of a nature contrary to the present state of affairs; instead of considering that the nation ought to be treated as a body afflicted with some new and extraordinary distemper, and therefore requiring an uncommon remedy, and that in proportion as its mechanism is better known, the operations performed upon it ought to be altered; such is the force of prejudice, that men continue obstinately to endeavour the cure of their present disorders, by means of which the inefficacy is demonstrated by their inability to prevent the evils or to stop their progress. An injudicious reverence for antiquity, a false notion of causes, occasioned by the

* “ If I were desirous, says he, to pass for an elaborate orator, I would have introduced here more fine words than good will; but my ambition aims at something higher than to speak well: I aspire to the glorious titles of the deliverer and restorer of France. I have not called you together, as my predecessors have done, to oblige you blindly to approve of my will and pleasure; I have caused you to be assembled, in or-

der to receive your counsels, to depend upon them, and to follow them; in short, to put myself into your hands as my guardians: this is a declaration which is not very common for kings, for grey hairs, and conquerors like me to make; but the love which I bear my subjects, and the extreme fondness which I have to preserve my state, have made me find every thing easy and every thing honourable.” Pref. part. 2.

1596.

distance of time; a want of diligent reflection on the past, and of clear views of the future, about which our self-love hinders us from coming to any agreement, all contribute to perpetuate the wrong measures of ancient times. It is a maxim with some, that laws and customs are not to be changed; a maxim to which I zealously adhere, except when the advantage, and what is much stronger, the necessity of the public * requires their alteration.

ACCORDINGLY they amused themselves with raking old schemes out of the dust, and went on still enlarging the collection, which they found already to be of no value, till an impossibility came full in their view, and destroyed their project; for it appeared that these old constitutions were adapted to a form of government in which royalty, tho' decorated with a specious title, was a state of servitude; and could therefore not be applied to a time when the public interest had centered, in a single person, the authority which was formerly distributed amongst great numbers, and established monarchy as the surest foundation of general security.

THIS fancy was followed by another, which held them for a time by some specious appearances, though, in effect, it was no less inconvenient than the former. This was the establishment of a new council, which they thought it proper to denominate the council of reason,

* The genius of the French nation, they say, is such, that this alone renders all change, even the most useful and necessary, extremely dangerous for us: a system, whose foundation it seems all the world, at this day, agrees was excellent, and which, notwithstanding this, has had very troublesome consequences, makes us insist more than ever upon this consideration. The duke de Sully, who lived at a time in which he did not want for proofs of the defects objected to the nation, would have answered to this, that two things are absolutely necessary in any nation whatever, in order to secure the success of such sort of enterprises: the first is an authority in the legislator, sufficiently great not to be obliged to change, or abate the least title of his plan thro' fear, or policy, or compliance: the second, is a wisdom equally great, to pre-

pare all the means for putting it in execution. Amidst a great number of real changes that have been made in the different parts of the government, which will be seen in the sequel of these Memoirs, we may observe a still greater number of projects which have not been executed, tho' formed a great while ago: and what is the reason? why, because Henry the Great and his minister watched and waited for the proper conjunctures and circumstances, &c. which should render them certain and infallible. I will not scruple to say, that perfect skill consists not in imagining, but in knowing, the hazards that proceed from too great precipitation, and too great slowness, to be aware of the proper opportunity; and in short, to know how to conduct and how to prepare for it.

whose

whose members should be first named by the assembly, and afterwards by the sovereign courts. But there was already a council of this kind, and that very council had been apparently the cause of the disorders of the finances, and the misery of the nation. This signified nothing; the whole multitude suffered themselves to be so dazzled by a fine name, and a new election, that it was proposed, and determined, to make the same evil its own remedy. It was settled, that the new council should divide into two portions the revenues of the king, which they estimated, without much examination, at thirty millions*; that they should keep one half in their own hands, for the discharge of arrears, pensions, wages of offices, and other public debts and engagements; and that out of the same sum they should repair or make cities, buildings, roads, or other public works; and that of this sum neither the king nor the sovereign court should have power to take cognizance, or examine the application. It may easily be imagined, how the members of the council flattered their rapacity by a disposal absolute and unaccountable of half the revenues of the state: let us for a moment suppose them dishonest in their management, what numbers must be distressed, what confusion and ruin must ensue?

THE other part was left to the king, to be managed by him, or his ministers, with equal exemption from account: this was burthened with all the expences of the artillery and fortifications, all foreign affairs, embassies, and negotiations, the support of his household, his buildings, and his equipage, the payment of his officers, and his privy purse. Neither party was confined by any prescriptions, as to the manner of raising or managing either share of the revenue; so they preserved that mutual independence on which the projectors valued themselves; as if the strength of the kingdom did not depend upon the power of assisting, according to their respective need, any part that should happen to be in distress, and supplying the sick, if I may use the expression, with the superfluous blood of those that are in health.

As the thirty millions at which the royal revenues have been rated, were suspected to be somewhat more than their real value, they resolved

* The author has reason to say that this computation is not exact, since, notwithstanding the augmentation of the king's revenues, and the clearing of his debts that happened under his ministry, and which may be seen in the sequel of these

Memoirs to amount to a very considerable sum, cardinal Richelieu did not value the whole revenues of the state, after all the alterations which he himself had made, at more than thirty-five millions. *Tert. Pol.* part 2. page 152.

1596.

to create a new tax, by laying a penny in the shilling upon all merchandises *, and provisions bought and sold in the kingdom, by wholesale or retail. When they computed the amount of the trade of particular persons, and the expences of necessity, convenience, and luxury, they concluded that this new tax might safely be rated at five millions; and the happy notion was blest a thousand times, though in reality the scheme was no less chimerical than the new computation was defective †.

WHEN the assembly had thus brought their scheme in all its branches to perfection, they sent it by their deputies to the king, who received the proposal in his council: the indignation raised by this project instantly appeared by such a confusion of outcries and murmurs, that the king had great difficulty to make the council give their opinions one by one. The field of discussion was boundless; every man was made eloquent by vexation and resentment. When my turn came, I satisfied myself with saying coldly, that I had nothing to add to such fine harangues. The king, who observed me attentively, and wondered at my caution, resolved to have a private conversation with me before he gave the suffrage which was to determine for, or against the scheme of the assembly; he therefore adjourned the consideration of the affair till the morrow, in the presence of the same persons. When we were alone, he asked me with eagerness, the reason of my silence; and I made to him the following observations.

IT is certain, that the assembly were so infatuated with their new scheme, that if the king should follow the opinion of his council, and reject it in high terms, he would expose himself to the danger of a general dissatisfaction; the more dangerous because the states assembled acknowledged no superior, nor allowed that even the king had power to alter their decisions. One of the most important maxims of mo-

* Corn was the only thing that was exempted.

† M. de Sully thinks and speaks of the establishing a *sou* or penny in the shilling, as almost the whole world thought and spoke of it at that time. *Le Grain* nevertheless gives his suffrage to this tax, liv. vi. *Matthieu* does not condemn it; and what is of greater weight, cardinal Richelieu finds it to be so much the more just, as it is esta-

blished, says he, in divers other states, and had been already resolved on by a body of the state, under Francis I. However, the difficulties and inconveniencies which M. de Sully mentions in the sequel are real, and partly the same which made Richelieu be the first entirely to dissuade Lewis XIII. from establishing it. *Test. Pol.* part 2. ch. 9. sect. 7.

narchy is, that the king would take care not to reduce his subjects to actions of disobedience, or even to words of disrespect; besides, the king would directly break the word, by which he had promised the assembly to conform himself to their resolutions: and to conclude, all they that contrived, or had adopted the scheme, would make the rejection of it by the king, an argument by which they would convince themselves, that this was the true scheme of affairs, till by an attempt to put it in execution they were cured of their notion, and would insinuate, that only their prince had prevented them from seeing that practice established in France, which had been for so long a time desired. Every body knows, that it is the disposition of the people, especially of those that have spirit and resentment, to abuse the actions of their sovereign.

1596.

ON the other side, it was equally certain that this project was at once destructive in its tendency, and impracticable in its execution; to give full conviction of this the least knowledge of the finances was sufficient: besides the obstructions which I have just been mentioning, how many more must arise from the competitions which would be produced by an election of the members of the council, who were to be taken equally from all the provinces of the kingdom. No sooner could this scheme, which was now only sketched out, be branched into particulars, than that appearance of impartiality and justice, by which the conduct of public affairs must be necessarily thrown into the hands of new and unexperienced men, would occasion innumerable miscalculations, and mistakes. It was apparent that the heads of the new council would immediately grow giddy, and that all the measures they would take would be only blunder accumulated on blunder.

FROM the impossibility that any advantage should arise from this scheme, I drew my arguments to persuade the king to consent to it; by which he would obtain, in the eye of his people, the honour of falling readily into the measures which they themselves had marked out; and this condescension would be so far from lessening the royal authority, that when the new council had made the melancholy experiment of their strength, he would ultimately receive this advantage, that all the parts of the finances would fall back into his hands, with exemption from dependence. As the calculation of the royal revenues was made by the assembly, and the council selected from it, it would be supposed that they had taken in all necessary considerations relating to those pay-
ments,

1596. ments, of which the collection was most difficult and expensive: they could not therefore take it amiss, that the king chose his fifteen millions of that part which he liked best. Chusing for his part the revenue of the five great farms, *des parties casuelles, du domaine, et des aides*, he might expect, without presumption, to see them doubled, if not trebled, in a short time. This I spoke with full confidence, because I had already provided myself of responsible people, who had engaged to take these farms at a considerable advance. With respect to that which remained in the hands of the council of reason, the case was quite otherwise; and I would have been bound to the king, that the penny in the shilling, amongst others, would not, when all expences were defrayed, bring in above two hundred thousand crowns clear money.

THE reason why I did not give this opinion openly in the council, was, because I thought it proper that it should seem to come from the king himself. The king, after having heard me with great attention, was afraid lest my advice should bring him into difficulties, and into a mistake in some sort irretrievable; but having considered my reasons very seriously, he resolved to follow my opinion.

WHEN the council met next day, they determined as the day before, and I determined in the same manner. The king declaring that he could not follow their advice, left them in the utmost astonishment, and went in to the assembly, where he declared, in strong terms, that finding himself disposed to promote, with all his power, the inclinations of so wise a body, he received their scheme without any qualification or restriction, which he considered as consisting of three articles; the erection of an independent council, the division of the public revenues, and the levy of a penny in the shilling; that the assembly had nothing to do but in twenty-four hours to name the new council; to give in a schedule of the thirty millions, that he might chuse his own share; and that they should see, by his conduct, whether he or the council were the best economists. The goodness and compliance of the king were loudly praised; and the council finding itself concluded by a determination so unanimous, which left no farther room for debate, at least between the king and his subjects, thought of nothing but returning to Paris, there to conclude this master-piece of policy.

1596.

THE new council was not formed with so little disturbance as had been expected; that change of temper which retarded the election was so great, that penetrating persons saw from that moment how chimerical a scheme had been embraced by the multitude. The nomination was at last completed, in which the clergy were very busy from the first; and the cardinal de Gondy*, famous for his æconomical abilities, was put at its head, as if public affairs were to be administered by the same rules as those of a private house. The council of reason held their meetings regularly in the episcopal palace, where the cardinal had assigned them an apartment.

BUT no sooner had they begun to lay papers upon the table for the collection of the payments of the next year, but these new money-mongers were so much perplexed, that they knew not on which side to turn them. The farther they went the more the labyrinth was perplexed; they found nobody that would undertake for the penny in the shilling; the farmers asked for other funds, but at a discount which put them quite at a loss; and to add to their vexation, the business could not be put off: all the pensioners of the state came upon them, and talked of nothing but millions to people that had not yet got a single farthing. Chagrin and vexation soon broke the unanimity of the new council; they began immediately to quarrel, and reproach one another with ignorance and rashness.

THE thing was come, in a few weeks, to this pass, that the council of reason could do nothing reasonably; and they were forced to apply to d'Incarville and me, and begged of us to come, at least once a week, and give them such counsel as we gave the king, whose part of the revenue they saw growing and flourishing day after day. I excused myself on account of my employ, which took me up altogether. They then addressed the king; who, with his ordinary goodness, commanded me to go: but I did not forget, on that occasion, what was necessary to his service. I lamented the state of the affairs of the council; I found no means of extrication, and I helped forward nothing but perplexity. In short, scarce three months had passed before these profound politicians, being at the end of all their art, and sinking un-

* Peter de Gondy, bishop of Paris, and a peer and marshal of France, of whom we have spoken before.

1596.

der their burden, went to the king to beg to be discharged. The king, whom I believe began to like this new regulation that set him at ease, told them that every thing was difficult at first; advised them to take heart, and sent them away comforted by their own reasons. But they soon came back, and changed their intreaties to importunity; confessed that they had been in the wrong when they undertook to govern the kingdom, and shewed a thousand times more satisfaction on their dismissal from their employment, than at their advancement to it.

THIS burden fell upon me, as an addition to that with which I was already loaded, and my labour was so great, that it required both my days and nights. As I had a kind of passion for the re-establishment of the finances, I made prodigious advances in the ancient registers of the council of state, the parliaments, the chambers of accounts, and the courts of aids, and even in the private accounts of the former secretaries of state, for the new ones would not communicate theirs. I did the same thing in the offices of the treasurers of France, in the treasury-chamber, and in the papers of the treasurers of the exchequer*: I raked even into that vast collection where all the ordinances are kept inscribed. Having a design to draw up a general state of the finances for the year 1595, which was the end of all my researches, I thought it fit to neglect nothing, that I might come as near as was possible, in the first year of my management, to the exactness to which I earnestly desired to carry it. Whatever fraud or mistake had crept into the finances, I imagined that it could be neither so great nor so general, but I should be able to prove and shew its original, by comparing these pieces which I have been mentioning, or by the inferences to be drawn from them, with a due observation of the different proportions of various times and alterations of affairs.

THE people of the king's council were frightened at the sight of my project, and beginning to imagine that I should throw every thing open, blamed themselves now more than ever for not having with

* "Rofny, before he entered upon this office of superintendant, had furnished himself with all the necessary informations, the better to be enabled to acquit himself therein: he perfectly knew all the revenues of the kingdom, and all

"the expences necessary in raising them: he communicated all that he knew of this matter to the king, who had in like manner studied all these things thoroughly himself." &c. Peref. p. 225.

much vigour opposed my admission into the council. Maïsses, to whom I must do this justice, that as soon as he discovered my intentions he joined his endeavours with mine, gave me information of their terrors and regret. To confirm them in their suspicions, I declared in public, that I had obtained such intelligence about the finances, that they would be presently regulated upon another plan; and I desired that the comptroller-general, the intendant of the finances of France, the treasurer of the exchequer, and the receivers-general, should be joined with me, in order to draw up this general state of the finances, of which these very men were in such terror. I had the care, however, to keep the pen always between my own fingers.

1596.

HOWEVER, I could not this time keep myself clear of several considerable errors, nor escape being tricked by these old practitioners. I think it is no shame to confess it; this very year they gained a profit of one fifth, which is exorbitant, though infinitely less than their ordinary gains. I proposed the next year to remedy both this and another mistake which I had committed: one of the chief tricks of the financiers was, to make the expence of the current year appear to be much more than the receipt, and to anticipate the revenues of the following year; by which means the expence of the next year, and of all the rest in succession, was thrown into a confusion from which these men drew many advantages, particularly that of appearing never to have money which was not pre-engaged long before, and of being able to alledge this excuse to the king, and all those whom they were not inclined to pay. In the second place, they made use of that money: and, to conclude, they paid off the old debts at a very low price, and yet charged them entire in their accounts. This negligence of mine cost the kingdom this year two millions.

THIS fault I corrected the following year, during my residence in Brittany; so that from that time forward the receipts and expences exactly agreed. And in the mean time, to fill up the deficiency which my mistake had made, I took the *parties casuelles, les gabelles*, the five great farms, and the toll of the rivers, out of the hands of the duke of Florence, who held them under the names of Gondy, Senamy, Zamiet, le Grand, Parent, l'Argentier, and other old managers, who had no share in the new finances; and I increased these farms with two millions that had been lost by miscomputation. The contractors for the finances, and their associates of the council, were thunderstruck with this last blow; but for this time their spite vented itself in smoke,

1596.

the king having supported me for some time in a manner so conspicuous, as sunk them all into inactive despondency. The consequence of his conduct to the assembly was, that he was made master, not only of the pretended council of reason, but likewise of his own, whose authority was now declining; and he had no longer reason to fear that his designs would miscarry, as formerly, by their obstruction.

THE design in which he was then actually engaged, was the siege of Arras, which had been proposed in the council of war, which, excepting only the secretary, consisted merely of men of action: it had there passed without opposition; but the resolution was kept secret, because only by concealment could we be assured of success. That the merchants with whom I agreed for supplies of all necessary provisions might know nothing of the matter, I named to them a great number of cities along all the frontiers of Picardy, and Arras among the rest, at any of which they obliged themselves to deliver, during the whole campaign, fifty thousand loaves a day. Santeny, Robin de Tours, Mauleville, and Lambert chevalier de Guet d'Orleans, engaged likewise for the conveyance of every thing else, and particularly of twenty-five cannons. The contract passed at so low a price, that if the misfortune that happened at Amiens a little after, had not obliged us to draw thither the forces designed against Arras, they would have been considerable losers: but as it happened, they made a reasonable gain.

M E M O I R S

O F

S U L L Y.

B O O K IX.

TH E preparations that were making for war, did not prevent their enjoying at Paris all the amusements that winter commonly brings along with it. The gentleness of the government secured the tranquility of the public, who tasted all the sweets of it, without any of that alloy which for so long a time had imbittered all their pleasures. Gallantry, shews, play, took up the time of the courtiers; and the king, who liked these diversions through taste, permitted them through policy. Monsieur and madam de Fervaques, intreated me to allow of the addresses of monsieur de Laval*, the son of this lady, to my eldest daughter. I referred them to the king, without whose consent I could not now dispose of my daughter, since it had been proposed by the princess, to marry her to monsieur de Rohan; with whom the king being at that time offended, approved of monsieur de Laval.

1597.

* William de Hautemer, count de Grancey, seigneur de Fervaques, who afterwards became a marechal of France. His wife was Andrée d'Allegre, widow to Guy count de Laval, whose son was likewise called Guy, the twentieth of that

name, count de Laval, de Montfort, &c. who was some time after killed in Hungary: in him ended that branch of Laval, or rather of Rieux, which continued only in the female line: for this Guy count de Laval was of the house of Coligny.

1597.

THE court every day had the pleasure of a new entertainment, from engagements of this nature, the most splendid of which was given by the constable, at the solemnity of baptizing his son. This was the pretence; but it was well known, that one of the most beautiful young ladies of the court, and who was afterwards married to an old man, was the real object of these gallantries. Montmorency, amongst all the courtiers, chose out twelve noblemen for his ballet, who he thought would appear there with the greatest magnificence; and prevailed upon the king to lay his commands upon me to be of this number. The elegance and propriety with which it was conducted, and which is the very essence of these sort of diversions, was superior to any thing I had ever seen of the kind. This entertainment was universally allowed to have greatly excelled all that went before it: it was likewise the last, and a strange disturbance happened at the end. I retired about two in the morning, and had been an hour and a half in bed, when I saw Berlinghen enter my chamber, with the utmost consternation painted in his countenance: he could but just tell me that the king wanted me; and assure me, in answer to my enquiries, that no accident had happened to his person; for this was the first question I asked, and his reply comforted me beforehand for the misfortune, whatever it was, since I saw none which were absolutely irremediable, but those that threatened his life. I put on my cloaths hastily, and ran to the Louvre, in great anxiety of mind: upon my entering the king's chamber, I saw him walking about very fast, his arms folded, his head reclined, and all the marks of a deep uneasiness * impressed on his countenance. The courtiers stood in different corners of the room, leaning against the hangings, without uttering a single word.

THE king coming to meet me, pressed my hand with great emotion, crying "Ah, my friend, what a misfortune! Amiens is taken. I confess, I continued immoveable, like all the rest, at this unforeseen blow: a place so strong, so well provided with every thing that was necessary, so near to Paris, and on the side of Picardy the only key to the kingdom, to be taken so suddenly ere we could be informed that it was

* " Being as it were thunderstruck at this, and yet looking up to heaven as he commonly does more in adversity than prosperity, he spoke aloud, This blow is from heaven! Then pausing a little said, I have sufficiently acted the part of

" king of France, it is time now that I assume the character of king of Navarre: and, turning to the marchioness, who wept, we must quit our present warfare, and take horse to engage in another.

threatened

threatened with an attack: the thing was almost incredible, and the general consternation appeared to be too well grounded. However, I took my resolution immediately, and while the king, who had received this news as he was preparing to go to bed, related to me the manner in which the Spaniards, with some sacks of walnuts, had surprized this important place *, I reflected that, instead of increasing, to no purpose, the general dismay, prudence suggested that, in the present circumstance, it was necessary to keep up every one's spirits, and to comfort the king. I therefore told him that I had in good time just put the finishing hand to a scheme, by which not only Amiens, but several other places, would be restored to him without much difficulty.

THIS hint alone seemed, on a sudden, to have robbed the late misfortune of half its force; and although it did not hinder the king from reflecting on all the difficulties of an enterprize which might have very fatal consequences, yet, as the astonishment the courtiers were in left them nothing to say in answer to the king's interrogatories but what tended to increase his disquiet, his hopes were greatly raised by what I had said, and he desired to know what methods they were by which I proposed to serve him. I replied, that he should be informed by the papers I had drawn up for that purpose; and I went out as if to fetch them, leaving the king at least in a more composed state of mind than I had found him. Had he been a witness of my perplexity and uneasiness, when I was alone in my closet, he would have suppressed part of those praises which he bestowed on me when I had quitted his chamber; for then it was, that, resigning myself up to reflection, I comprehended the whole extent of those misfortunes, which might be expected from the present posture of affairs. The king's treasure exhausted, not a single regiment fit for service, at the same time that there was an absolute necessity both for money and troops in great abundance, and that without any delay.

* It was on the eleventh of March, Hernand Teillo de Porto-Carrero, a Spaniard, the author of this scheme, had disguised like country men and country women, carrying goods to market, about thirty Spaniards, who stopped up one of the gates of the town, and amused the guard, by pouring out at the entrance thereof a cart loaded with sacks full of silbers which one of them untied; and during this time some Spanish troops, who lay concealed behind the hedges, marched up, and, putting the

guard to the sword, made themselves masters of the town. See an account of this in all the historians, under the year 1597. Hernand Teillo was killed in bravely defending this town against Henry IV. He used to say, that the three greatest commanders he knew, were Henry for the conduct of a large army, the duke of Maienne for the siege of a town, and marechal Biron for a battle. Mathieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 232.

1597.

I READ over my private memoirs: I revolved in my mind all those schemes for levying money, which I had employed my leisure hours in concerting, foreseeing that the king would have soon an occasion for them. Most of these schemes might be reduced to two different kinds; one very easy and plain, wherein all that was necessary to be done was to augment the land-tax, and other imposts already established; the other more difficult, which consisted in contriving new sources from whence money might be drawn. The first I did not think it prudent to have recourse to, since, after all the hardships which the country people had endured, to oppress them still more by an augmentation of taxes, the sole weight of which falls upon them, and at a time when they but just began to breathe again, was to complete the ruin of the state, and to deprive the king himself, for the future, of his most fruitful, and in one sense his most certain resources.

I THEN turned my thoughts another way, and fixed upon the following project, which was to demand of the clergy a free gift for a year, if not for two years, and oblige them to make immediate payment; to augment the old offices with new members, four in each sovereign court, besides four masters of accounts in every chamber, two in every office in the finances, two offices of counsellor in every presidial court, an assessor in every royal tribunal, and an elect in every election; to add a third to all the officers of the finances*; to keep back half a year's payment of the arrears of sums borrowed from the contractors in the last reign; to increase the tax on salt fifteen *sous* a pottle, and to leave it always in that state, because such an increase would give room for the suppression of certain offices too chargeable to the public; to raise the entry of goods, and the tolls of rivers a third part, by a new estimate; and, as all these measures gave us, for the most part, only the hope of money, to begin by borrowing twelve hundred thousand livres from the richest people of the court and principal cities, and to assign them payments out of an augmentation of the gabels and five great farms; and, to supply the ready money which we should have occasion for besides, to raise a prosecution in the chamber of justice against the old contractors, who had made considerable fortunes, and oblige them to suffer a new tax, in form of a loan.

* The offices of the finances were possessed by two persons: the first was called l'ancien; the second, who had been appointed after, was called l'alternatif; and

this third was called Triennial, because he had every third year his rotation with the other two, who alone had the privilege of reimbursing the Triennial.

THIS plan was indeed of sufficient extent. However, it was not my intention, that these methods should be all made use of at once, but, being uncertain how long the war would continue, they might employ them successively, beginning with those that were the least burthenome. With regard to the troops that were necessary, I thought they could not do better than to raise them in those provinces of the kingdom which had no longer any occasion for defence. Thus I taxed the isle of France, by joining Barry to it, with a complete regiment; the Orleanois with Touraine was to furnish a second; and Normandy itself a third: these regiments were to consist of fifteen hundred and fifty men, furnished and maintained by the provinces, from the day of their arrival before Amiens; because these provinces enjoyed the right of calling the regiments by their own name, and of appointing the officers.

FIVE days after I carried my project to the king, with the proper evidences formally drawn up in thirteen papers. His majesty retired to examine them with me, in the presence of d'Arambure, Lomenie, Beringhen, and l'Oserai. When I had finished reading them I told the king, that, with these supplies, there was nothing to retard his departure for the expedition of Amiens; since all the necessary preparations for a camp in Picardy were already made in such a manner, that, I durst assure his majesty, his army would not only find there provision in great plenty, but likewise every thing requisite for mere convenience, with the same ease, and at the same price as in a city. I added, that whatever resource this scheme might afford the king in his present necessities, his majesty must not imagine it would be carried into execution, without increasing the number of those wounds of which France was far from being wholly cured: that he need only take a slight view of the immense debts and engagements with which the state was overburdened; that, to an exhausted state, a new tax, in whatever manner disguised, is always the same; therefore the war should not be renewed, but with a view of procuring an advantageous peace, which was now become absolutely necessary: and however great the public misery was at present, I was fully convinced that twelve years of continued peace would be sufficient to restore the kingdom to a flourishing condition.

I DID not doubt but that, by the conduct which the king appeared disposed to observe, the enemies, notwithstanding the advantages they had gained, would be the first to wish for the end of the war; and that

1597.

that time I freely disclosed a thought to the king, the justness of which was verified by the event; and this was, that the first overtures for a peace would be made by the king of Spain, whom policy, in that state of weakness and incapacity to which the common course of nature had reduced him, would not permit to expose his crown to the uncertain chances of war, always to be feared, but chiefly in the beginning of a prince's reign who was still a child. I even went so far as to foretell, that Spain would purchase peace by the restoration of all the towns she had taken from France.

My scheme for raising money was so much approved by the king, that he resolved to propose it himself in full council; but he communicated it beforehand to a kind of little council of war, composed of the duke of Montpensier, messieurs de Montmorency, de Maienne, d'Auvergne, de Biron, d'Ornano, de Bellegarde, de Saint Luc, de Ferrières, de Roquelaure, and de Frontenac: he afterwards summoned an extraordinary council, to which he admitted all in Paris who had a right to a place there, particularly the chief persons of the assembly of Rouen, who still resided there. The king could take no happier measures to establish his authority upon the weakness of this great assembly, which was now acknowledged by themselves. He began with lamenting the loss of Amiens, declaring the necessity there was to recover this city as soon as possible, giving in a full plan of all that was necessary for that purpose: he concluded with asking the advice of all that were present, concerning the means of carrying it into execution, complaining, in order to conceal from them what he himself had to propose, that his most useful and necessary enterprises were always opposed by difficulties, and retarded by delays.

HERE the king stopped as if to wait for the deliberations of the assembly. Each looked upon the other without uttering a single word; at length the nobles broke silence, but it was only to refer the affair to the financiers, who in their turn replied, that it belonged wholly to the nobles. Henry urging them to deliver their opinions, some general proposals for new levies were made, which were immediately opposed by one half of the assembly; and the counsellors finding their speech all at one time, to ridicule, in a confused and disorderly manner, whatever might be offered by either party, the king, seizing that moment when their animosity was carried to such a height, that there was not the least probability of their coming to any agreement, drew the memorial out of his pocket, telling them, that, although he had but little experience

rience in the affairs of the finances, yet, upon the present occasion, he would offer his opinion, which he was always ready to give up for a better : he then prepared to read the paper, which threw all that were present into a fixed attention, and afterwards into an astonishment, that rendered them speechless and immoveable. Henry suffered them to remain in this silence for two moments, then declaring that he understood it as an unanimous consent, added, that as he had on intention to make use of all those measures at one time, he would begin by borrowing the sum of twelve hundred thousand livres ; and exhorted the nobles and the wealthiest persons in the kingdom, to comply voluntarily with the present necessity of the times, and depend upon his royal word, that the lenders should have their principal reimbursed in the space of two years, together with the interest. His majesty then brought forward the fifteen *sous* upon salt, the establishment of the third man in the finances, and an enquiry into the conduct of fraudulent contractors. The affair was decreed, and a decree drawn up upon that plan. We had, in a very little time, three hundred thousand crowns voluntarily lent : the creation of the third man brought in twelve hundred thousand, and the same sum was drawn from the collectors of taxes, to whom the treasurers of France were joined, but were suffered however to tax themselves.

THE council of the finances, accustomed to rejoice in the calamity of the people, were soon comforted under these new subsidies, provided they might pass through their hands. They represented to the king, after having greatly commended his memorial, that the success of it depended upon his employing persons of great experience, ready dispatch, and possessed of a full power to execute it. The king replied, that the person he was resolved to employ should be invested with his authority ; and that with regard to the other qualities, he pitched upon me (I was present at this discourse) as the most industrious and most prudent amongst them, although the youngest. He expressed himself in yet stronger terms to Schomberg (whom his majesty visited just before his departure, on account of an indisposition*.

* Gaspard Schomberg, count de Nanteuil. This disorder was a difficulty of breathing, that proceeded from the membrane that covers the heart becoming offensive on the left side, as also some others of the neighbouring parts ; and this was found so upon opening his body after his

death, which happened two years afterwards. He was employed in the making the edict of Nantes, as shall be observed hereafter ; and he did many other services to the state. M. de Thou highly commends his character and abilities, both as a warrior and as a statesman.

1597.

that confined him to his bed) and to the counsellors he found in the sick count's chamber. He told them, that as I only should bear the blame, if he was not supplied with every thing he had occasion for, while he employed himself wholly in fighting against his enemies, so he was resolved that every thing should be regulated in the council agreeable to my directions. And accordingly, before he went away, he invested me with his whole authority. This mortified Schomberg to such a degree, that he chose rather to go and serve at the siege, than see me at the head of the finances. Sancy likewise left the council, to hold his rank in the army as colonel of the Swifs.

THE gentlemen of the council gave me still more reason to suspect them, of which I had a proof in the affair of the third men. After having recorded the edict by which they were created, I endeavoured to raise as much money as was possible from these offices, And to deprive the gentlemen of the council of all means of serving, at a low rate, any relation or friend, as was usual with them, I applied myself with as much assiduity to the pen, as any clerk or treasurer *des parties casuelles*; and not satisfied with using this precaution, I gave a note under my hand to each purchaser, who was obliged to carry it to the treasurer, from whom, after laying down the money, he received an acquittance, and both were to be produced to me.

ALL artifice becoming ineffectual, the contractors had recourse to a method which, doubtless, had seldom failed before; they attempted to corrupt me with bribes. Robert de Tours, a very considerable contractor, after conferring with the council, whom he had gained over to his interest, came to my house, and entreated one of my secretaries to procure him an interview with my wife, to whom he offered a jewel worth six thousand crowns as a present for me, and another worth two thousand for her, that I might not oppose a determination of the council, who had assigned to him the nomination of all the third men in the districts of Tours and Orleans, for the sum of seventy-two thousand crowns. He was introduced to me by madam de Rosny, whom, by a severe reprimand in the contractor's presence, I made sensible of the fault she had committed. Nor did I spare him, in order to prevent such attempts for the future. He left me greatly surprized, and probably as much offended at my behaviour. I had just been refusing, from another contractor, sixty thousand crowns, for one half of that of which he had before offered me seventy-two thousand
for

for the whole ; and that very evening, that half brought me fourscore thousand crowns, because I divided it into small parcels.

1597.

THIS employment detained me at home all that day and the following, for I thought it of more consequence than to attend the chancellor's summons, who had sent a serjeant of the council twice to me, to desire I would come thither, and finish an affair which would procure the king, he said, seventy-five thousand crowns of ready money. I went as soon as I was disengaged, without thinking any more of Robert de Tours. The chancellor, upon my entering the council-chamber, made me some slight reproaches for my negligence : I answered him bluntly, that I had been more useful to the king, in my closet. " We have been no less so here," returned the chancellor, who sought to enhance the value of the service he had done the king, in procuring him this ready money, by the necessity his majesty was in for it, having, by two letters successively, demanded some of the council. When I discovered that this was the money which had just before been offered me by the contractor of Tours, he having only added three thousand crowns more to the sum, I represented to these gentlemen, in very strong terms, that since they could not be ignorant that Robert had first applied to me, they ought not to have concluded, without my knowledge, an affair which had appeared to me unjust.

FINDING that they were endeavouring to impose upon me, partly by complaint, and partly by an air of authority, I told them plainly, that if I had been of a humour to be gained by bribes, the bargain would not have returned to them ; but that since the king relied upon my fidelity, I would not fail to give him every proof of it in my power. The chancellor, Fresne, and la Grange-le-roi, sensibly affected with the reproach conveyed in these words, had the assurance to mention immediately, that a bargain by which the king lost more than half of what was due to him, was, notwithstanding, more advantageous for him, since he was paid with ready money, than mine, by which I commonly allowed the purchasers the term of six months for the payment of the second moiety. They did not stop there, but reproached me with setting myself up for a reformer of the finances ; and declared, with an air of contempt, that they were able to support their bargain against mine. Upon this, growing violent, the council determined that their assignment to Robert de Tours should take place.

1597.

I DID not think proper to say one word more concerning this unjustifiable method of proceeding, nor upon the regulation that was made in consequence of it, which was, that thenceforward the council would have no regard to particular notes. But when Fayet, the secretary, brought me this arret to sign, I refused to do so, till I had received the king's answer to a letter, in which, as I told Fayet, I had suppressed no part of the truth, nor concealed the persons: this letter gave Fayet some apprehensions, as I designed it should; he intreated me to shew it him; and pretending to be overcome by his importunity, I yielded. It turned entirely upon the underhand practices which Robert had made use of to gain the gentlemen of the council; all which I had had the good fortune to discover. I likewise gave the king to understand, that this contractor had procured the favour of the council, by making to madam de Sourdis *, mistress to the chancellor, the same offers which I had rejected; to which he had added other presents to madam de Deuilly, a relation of the chancellor's, and Fresne's mistress. Fayet repeating the contents of my letter to the persons most concerned in it, they sent him back immediately, to intreat I would not send it: the arret was suppressed, and Robert's bargain rejected.

IN this manner I divided my labours, between the care of receiving the money of the state, and laying it out advantageously for the necessities of the army, which wanted neither provisions nor artillery during the whole time that the siege of Amiens continued. I took a journey regularly every month to the camp, carrying with me each time fifteen hundred thousand crowns; which procured me the friendship of all the principal officers, who were not accustomed to such exact payments. I extended my cares and solicitude even to the private soldiers, by establishing an hospital in the camp, so convenient and so well at-

* Isabel Babou de la Bourdaifere, the wife of Francis d'Escoubleau, marquis de Sourdis; she had an elder sister, called Frances, who was married to Antony d'Estrees, and mother to the fair Gabrielle; and likewise a younger sister, who married Claude de Beauvilliers, the count de Saint-Aignan. This whole family was strangely cried down and satirized in the *Amours du Grand Alcandro*, and other sarcastical libels of that time, even as far back as the grandmother of these three ladies, who was

called Mary Gaudin. All the daughters of this line were remarkably beautiful. Leo X. was so charmed with the beauty of Mary Gaudin, at Boulogne, where he had seen her, when he had a conference with Francis I. that he presented her with a diamond, called by domestic tradition Gaudin's Diamond. It is Amclot de la Houffaye who speaks so; and he has collected several such-like anecdotes of this whole family, to which I refer the curious reader, in the article *Babou de la Bourdaifere*.

tended, that several perfons of quality went thither to be cured of their difeafes or wounds *.

1597.

THE king's folicitude for the fafety of my perfon, which, indeed, he almoft carried to excefs, more than compensated for all my trouble. Saint-Luc, to whom the count de la Guiche had refigned the poft of great matter of the ordnance, took me with him to fee his lodgments, knowing my fondnefs for that part of the military art: this engaged me very far in the trenches and other places in which there was fome danger. The king being informed of it, gave me a fevere reprimand, abfolutely forbidding me to appear at any hazardous poft; and faid publicly on this occafion, that I had enemies even in the camp, who fo eagerly defired my death, they would voluntarily expofe themfelves to any danger, provided I fhared it with them. It was hardly poffible for one who had been a foldier, not to feel his former ardour for war revive, near a prince who was equal to every military duty, and performed all with an application fo unwearied, and courage fo invincible, as might have animated hearts the leaft fenfible to glory.

HIS example, however, did not produce the fame effect upon all. In the very midft of his camp, a cabal of mutinous proteftants was formed, headed by meffieurs de la Tremouille, de Bouillon, and Du-Pleffis, which gave him great uneafinefs. Going to pay my refpects to him, before I returned again to Paris, I found him in deep affliction: he had juft received certain intelligence, that thefe three gentlemen, in concert with the two Saint-Germains, de Clan and de Beaupré, d'Aubigné †, la Cafe, la Valliere, la Saufaie, la Bertichere, Preaux, Baffignac, Regnac, Bellais, Cc n'tant, and other proteftants, to the number of twenty, had held an afsembly of the whole body of proteftant bigots, wherein they had made a propofal, which they fupported with

* D'Aubigné relates, that it was commonly faid at that time, that Henry IV. had brought Paris with him before Amiens, to fhew the abundance that reigned in his camp. And he likewife brought his miftrefs to Pecquigny, at which the marechal de Biron and other general officers murmured very much.

† This is the hiftorian d'Aubigné, who is always called d'Aubigny in thefe Memoirs: his name is Theodore-Agrippa d'Aubigné: his birth, his fervices, and his

courage, gained him great reputation among the calvinift party: he retired in 1620 to Geneva, where he died in 1631, aged fourfcore, leaving behind him only one fon, called Conftans d'Aubigne, whole daughter was Frances d'Aubigne, the late marchionefs de Maintenon. Addias de Chaumont, feigneur de la Bertichere, brother to John de Chaumont, the marquis de Guitry; his pofterity is ftill extant to this day. Hector de Preaux, &c.

1597.

all the power and influence they had, to take advantage of the opportunity the siege of Amiens * afforded them, which could not be carried on without their assistance, to force an edict from the king entirely to their satisfaction; or, if he refused, to do themselves justice, by taking up arms against him. Happily for the king, this proposal was objected to by many persons in the assembly, as well as in some of the great towns, which they had endeavoured to draw over to their party. His majesty was a little comforted by this circumstance, but he had reason to apprehend, that the most violent party would carry it at last. He commanded me to write to some of the principal amongst them, to prevail upon them, if possible, to resume more reasonable sentiments; and particularly the duke de la Tremouille, whom he knew to be the chief promoter of the conspiracy.

HITHERTO I had preserved some degree of intimacy with la Tremouille, insomuch that he thought himself obliged to require my presence in these assemblies, but concealed the occasion of them; and in his letter to me made use of such ambiguous terms, as it was not

* It is certain, that it was by this conjuncture of the siege of Amiens, and the several steps which the calvinists of France took to make their advantage of it, that they obtained the famous edict of Nantes, which was granted them the year following. The duke de Bouillon does not deny this. All the reasons by which he justifies this conduct, may be seen in Marfolier, liv. v. but the best of all is the protest which he and Du-Plessis Mornai make, that whatever might apparently be the view of the calvinists in these assemblies at Saumur, Loudun, and Vendôme, that were called together immediately after one another, and conducted with a great deal of warmth, neither they nor the other heads of the party ever had an intention of deliberating therein upon taking up arms, but only amicably to endeavour to obtain equitable conditions. We could wish, solely for the entire justification of the duke de Bouillon, that there had not been reason to upbraid him for refusing to follow the king in his expedition to Amiens; and that the surprize of this town by the Spaniards had not been followed, on the party of the calvi-

nists, by a translation of the protestant assembly of Vendôme to Châtelleraut, where the proceedings were so violent, that the king was obliged to send thither M. de Schomberg, de Thou, de Vic, de Calignon, and de Montgat, who were charged with full powers to offer such conditions as sufficiently shew, that Henry IV. thought he had every thing to fear from them. The reason why the calvinists have filled Europe with their complaints about the revocation of the edict of Nantes, is because the intervention of a space of time of upwards of fourscore years, has made them lose sight of the means they used at first to extort it. As to the above remark, consult the Memoirs of the duke de Bouillon; his Hist. by Marfolier; the Hist. of the edict of Nantes; the Life of Du-Plessis Mornai; the Verbal process of the assemblies of Vendôme and Châtelleraut, &c. but especially d'Aubigné, tom. III. liv. iv. ch. 11. where he relates, at very full length, all the schemes and cabals of the calvinist party, and the new turn which they endeavoured to give their affairs.

difficult

difficult to judge, that I was considered by these gentlemen as a man unfaithful to his own party; and that la Tremouille was not far from engaging in an open rebellion. This did not hinder me, however, from taking advantage of the remaining correspondence there was between us, to endeavour to bring him back to his duty. I wrote to him in answer, that although it were true, the king, in respect to him, was such as he imagined, there was neither honour nor greatness in extorting from him a declaration which was the effect only of necessity; but that, in reality, this prince had the same sentiments as formerly for the protestants; that he was not the cause of that injustice they suffered from the catholics, since he had equal reason to complain of them himself; that besides he should observe, that the consequence of this edict, obtained so unseasonably, would not be so advantageous for them as they imagined, since the catholics, always more powerful than they, were able to prevent it for the present; and for the future, the king, justly offended at their violent proceedings, would lose all inclination to grant them one day, voluntarily, what in so unfavourable a conjuncture they wanted to anticipate by force; and all the effect which an unsuccessful attempt would produce, would be to create a distrust of them in the catholic party, and put them upon their guard against them. I reminded Tremouille of the examples of those illustrious protestants, who, on all occasions, both by their words and conduct, shewed, that a protestant who acts conformable to his faith has the good of the state, and the true interest of his king always in view. Tremouille was so little moved with my letter, that he shewed it to every one, and made a public jest of it: but these designs not being supported by a sufficient number of partisans, fell to the ground.

THE post of great master of the ordnance became vacant, at my fourth visit to the camp. Saint-Luc*, looking between two gabions, where, in appearance, there was scarcely room enough for a cannonball to enter, was unfortunately shot dead by one. The king was conversing alone with me when Villeroi and Montigny came to tell him the news, which they would not impart in the presence of any other person, because of the particular designs each had on this post. I came up to the king again when they had left him, and his majesty informed me of Saint-Luc's death, and likewise that Villeroi and Montigny had first asked him for this post; the first for his son d'Alincourt,

* Francis d'Epinaï de Saint-Luc: he is called the brave Saint-Luc. See his eulogy in Brantôme's *Vies des hommes illustres*, in the article *Saint-Luc*, tom. 1.

1597.

or his nephew Châteauneuf-l'Aubepine *, and Montigny for himself. Saint-Luc had genius, readiness of invention, was capable of great industry, and possessed of much personal courage; the only fault he could be charged with, was his resigning himself up too much to a lively imagination, which furnishing him with scheme after scheme, he consumed in theory great part of that time which should have been employed in practice. The king, however, thought none of the candidates capable of filling his place; d'Alincourt wanted fortitude, and, said the king, has no colour on his nails: Châteauneuf † concealed his want of real genius, under an appearance of affectation and grimaces. Montigny was, in truth, valiant, and of warm affections; but these qualities were not sufficient to entitle him to so considerable a post, as he was without expedient, order, or œconomy.

His majesty, by talking to me in this manner, appeared to me to have no other reason for hesitating whether he should bestow this post upon me, but because he thought the duties of it incompatible with those of superintendant of the finances. It was not difficult for me to undeceive him; and that instant he promised I should have it; but deferred this proof of his friendship for me, till the siege was at an end, my presence being, in his opinion, necessary at Paris; during which time he would leave the place vacant. I did not see the king all the following day, and unfortunately for me he saw the marchioness of Monceaux in that interval, who omitted nothing to prevail upon him to change his resolution in favour of the elder d'Éstrées ‡, her father. The king resisted the intreaties of this lady, and even her tears, but he was not proof to her threats of throwing herself into a convent, if he refused her this favour. The fear of losing her rekindling all the ardours of his passion, she obtained the post for her father. The next day the king, with some confusion for the weakness he had shewn, informed me of what had passed; however, in one circumstance he took care of my interests, by conditioning with monsieur d'Éstrées,

* Charles de l'Aubepine, marquis de Châteauneuf. Francis de la Grange, seigneur de Montigny.

† He was made keeper of the seals in 1630, and resigned them in 1633.

‡ Antony d'Éstrées. "He (Saint-Luc) dying, M. d'Éstrées succeeded in his place, as well deserving it, by being thoroughly instructed in the duties be-

“longing to the post by his brave father.
“Thus right and truth, though they wait
“long, at length meet with their reward:
“for he was injured by not getting this
“place on his father's death. At the last,
“truth and right got the better with re-
“gard to him.” Brant. *Vies des hommes illustres*, tom. I. p. 227, in the article *M. d'Éstrées*.

1597.

who was utterly incapable of exercising this employment himself, that he should exchange it for the first post under the crown which should become vacant, and absolutely resign it (if a more considerable war should happen to break out) in favour of him whom his majesty should appoint: and he again engaged his word to me, that I should be the person.

I WAS satisfied with this assurance, and returned to Paris, where a few days afterwards I received news from the camp of the death of my youngest brother, governor of Mante*, whom I had left in good health. Of four brothers his death reduced us to two. The king rejected all the applications that were made to him by several persons for the government of Mante, to bestow it without any solicitation upon me. I received this gift by the same letter which his majesty wrote to me on occasion of my brother's death, together with the writings necessary to invest me with all the rights of my brother, who died without children. I sent Baltazar my secretary to Amiens, to procure my patent for the government, which as soon as I had received, I went to Mante to be acknowledged as governor, designing to stay there but four days.

THE gentlemen of the council, supposing my absence would be much longer, and probably followed by a resignation of my employment in the finances, were full of joy; and one of the first advantages they drew from it, was to take proper measures for appropriating to themselves part of those sums destined for the siege of Amiens. They all signed a letter to his majesty, written in the name of the council, in which they represented to him that, having been supplied with every thing that was necessary for the siege during five months, his majesty could not be surprized to hear that his funds were quite exhausted, having nothing remaining but some bad arrears and assignments of payment. Henry, who knew not that I was at Mante, and who, by an effect of his ordinary vivacity, had not examined the signatures of this letter, was so much the more surprized at it, as I had positively assured him that I was able to furnish him with the usual sums for four months longer, which was all the time the siege was expected to last. He exclaimed in very severe terms against the gentlemen of the council, in the presence of the chief officers of his army; nor for this once was I spared any more than the rest: but after a moment's reflection, casting

* Solomon de Bethune, baron de Rosne, and governor of Mante. This is the third of the four brothers, of whom we

have spoke in the beginning of these Memoirs: he was only six and thirty years of age when he died.

1597.

his eyes upon the names subscribed to this letter, among which he did not see mine, and learning from the courier that I was at Mante, he condemned himself immediately for his too precipitate anger; and that the reparation he made me might be complete, he read my answer to the letter he wrote me upon this occasion, in the presence of the same persons.

His interest indeed required that he should remove their apprehensions. A siege so extremely laborious had sometimes discouraged both them and their soldiers to such a degree, that an absolute desertion would have been the consequence of his treasure being exhausted, since, upon the least delay of the remittances, the king could not hinder many from leaving him. All went on well to the end; if the besieged defended themselves with vigour, and made sallies upon sallies, they were attacked with the same spirit, and were always defeated.

THE saps were carried as far as the ramparts, and the besiegers had just taken possession of two casemates, which they rendered useless to the besieged, when the cardinal archduke, with the count of Mansfield, who served under him in quality of lieutenant-general, thought it time to make an effort to prevent the reduction of the place: they marched towards it with an army consisting of between twelve and thirteen thousand foot, and two or three thousand horse, and passed the river of Authie, with an intention to offer the king's forces battle, or at least to throw a considerable supply into Amiens. All that endeavoured to enter were driven back*. The king went himself to reconnoitre the enemy's army: he had a full view of it; and notwithstanding the superiority of

* Perefice relates this fact very differently. "The archduke, says he, came and lay before the quarter called Longpre, on the 15th of September, at two in the afternoon, when no-body expected him. He might have easily thrown three thousand men into Amiens; so great was the consternation which was spread in the camp. Henry, doubting of the success of that day, spoke out aloud, O Lord (at the same time leaning upon the pommel of his saddle, with his hat in his hand, and his eyes lifted towards heaven) if 'tis to-day that thou intendest to punish me, as my sins deserve, I offer up my life a sacrifice to thy justice, spare not the guilty; but, O Lord, for thy great

mercy's sake, pity this poor kingdom, and chastise not the flock for the errors and faults of the shepherd. When he saw nothing appearing, he withdrew dissatisfied, said he gallantly, with the courtesy of the Spaniards, who would not advance one single step to receive him, and who, with a bad grace, refused the honour which he offered them." Perefice, part 2. Most part of the historians agree, that the Spaniards let slip one of the finest opportunities they ever had, of beating the king's army: and this prince said himself afterwards, that some of his chief officers told him all was now lost. Mattheu, tom. 2. liv. ii. p. 234.

their

their numbers, finding them a confused and disorderly multitude, without discipline or conduct, resolved to attack them; but at the first motion he made, the archduke retreated with precipitation*: probably it would not have been impossible to have forced the Spaniards to a battle, and to have beat them without discontinuing the siege: at least Henry was always of this opinion. Nevertheless he yielded to the advice of the greatest number, who were for allowing the archduke to retreat. After this, they applied themselves closely to the siege. The ravelin having been carried away, and the body of the place beginning to be fapped, Amiens surrendered the latter end of September this year, which had been almost wholly employed in this siege.

WHEN I look upon the great number of letters which I received from the king during the expedition of Amiens, I cannot help being surprized that a prince, who had the operations of a great siege upon his hands, and the care of a whole camp, should yet be so attentive to all affairs within his kingdom, and with equal facility and equal diligence acquit himself of such opposite employments. I shall spare the reader the trouble of perusing all these letters, as likewise those which his majesty did me the honour to write to me afterwards. I reckoned above three thousand, without taking in those that I have neglected to preserve, or have been lost through the carelessness of my secretaries. It would be too tedious to give a particular account of each: some of them I suppose in obedience to his majesty's orders, as they regarded persons whose reputation he had no desire to wound, and whom I have doubtless more reason to avoid offending, as I should do by revealing intrigues

* The king said of the cardinal archduke, that he came on like a captain, but went off like a priest. La Curee very earnestly desired of the king, that he would be pleased to let him go and discover the posture of the enemy's army, putting his majesty in mind, that the Spaniards had entered France four times, and that he had every time attacked them, and was the first who had beaten them. Henry made answer, M. La Curee, don't be in a hurry; and at the same time he gave him leave. La Curee was much spoke of upon this occasion for his valour, and the noble retreat he made before this army encamped at Betancourt, four leagues from Amiens. However, he afterwards said, upon this occasion, that when three or four hundred

men retreat in this manner before a whole army, it is only the fault of that army, if they are not cut off. He was an undaunted man: for one day he flung himself into the midst of the enemy, when by his hand being numbed with holding his pistol, he could not use his sword. There were even women dressed like men, who fought in the French army: four among them were very remarkable, who distinguished themselves in taking prisoners with their own hands, and one especially, who went under the name of captain Gascon. These particulars are taken from vol. 8929 of the king's MSS. See also on this head, tom. vi. des Memoirs de la Ligue, in which are given very high commendations of the spirit, alertness, and valour of Henry IV.

1597.

of state, or merely gallantry, which have still continued secret: as for the rest, they turned wholly upon accounts, application of particular sums, payments, pensions, and other things of the same nature, all of which were so dry and unentertaining, that they afford new matter for praises of this prince.

WITH regard to his finances, for example, he was so extremely exact as to make me give him an account once a week, of the money received, and the uses it had been put to*. He does not miss to remark that, in casting some cannon, they wanted to rob him of a piece. In a remission of six or seven thousand crowns which he was obliged to grant the people upon the land-taxes, he settles himself the gratification that ought to be repaid to certain parishes which had suffered most. He calculated exactly the number of the offices that were sold, and the money arising from thence. He never forgot any person to whom the state was indebted, or who had done it any service, either in the distant provinces or the neighbouring kingdoms, assigning with the utmost discernment a particular fund for all. His great care was, that the fund appointed for the support of the war should not be broken in upon by any other payment, as appears when he mentions a recompence to be given to the sieur de Vienne, who had brought back the city of Tour to its obedience, or the repayment of four thousand crowns that he had borrowed of madam de Beaufort.

THE number of his letters relating to his military affairs are prodigious. He calculated so justly the sums necessary for the making of trenches and other works, together with the soldiers pay, that there was no danger of a mistake in following him. The order he observed in the march of his troops was not regulated with less prudence, than that of the convoys of money which came to his camp, that the one might not be retarded, nor the other intercepted.

ALL this made up but one part of his cares. The letter wherein he speaks of the repairs of Montreuil, Boulogne, and Abbeville; those in which he expatiates upon the method of maintaining regularity in the provinces, obedience in the cities, subordination in the different bodies, on occasion of the chamber of accounts which had failed in the respect they owed him; that in which he says, "I would not mix the expences of masquerades with these destined for the use of my army;" for Mortier,

* A hundred crowns could not be expended, says Perefice, but he knew whether they were well or ill laid out.

1597.

who had provided dresses for a masque, had caused the money laid out on that occasion to be inserted in a memorial of military expences; that also which contained his reply to the offer which the city of Paris made him by her mayor and aldermen, to support, at their own expence, twelve hundred men, in consideration of which service, he discharged this city from paying the aids a second time, and many other of this kind; all these shew, that the same hand that was able to draw up a plan of attack, was equally capable of conducting the affairs of the cabinet.

THE only thing he neglected was his personal maintenance; to make him think of it, Montglat, the first steward of his household, was forced to inform him, as he tells us in some of his letters, that he could scarce make the pot boil any longer. He was not ashamed to confess a thing which affected his domestic enemies only; it was their part to blush that he was destitute of apparel, arms, and horses: however, he afterwards found means to settle a fund for his own subsistence, which could not be confounded with any other; it was the mark of gold arising from the offices which were sold, that he destined for this use. Such were the subjects of many of the letters he wrote me this year, from which the reader may judge of those of the following years, the originals of which I keep with the utmost care, but shall only transcribe the most important amongst them. It is remarkable, that although there are a great number of them, and almost all very long, there are few however, that are not written with his own hand, and particularly those which are directly addressed either to the council or me*.

I WAS present at the council which was held after the surrender of Amiens, upon the operations of the rest of the campaign. These propositions were made: to follow the enemy's army, seize some cities of Artois by surprize, and besiege Dourlens in form: upon which each

A city of Picardy.

* I observed in the preface the reasons that induced me not to transcribe here so many letters. They may be seen at the head of the new collection of Henry le Grand's: the originals of some of them are at this day to be seen in the fine museum of the duke de Sully, with marginal notes written by Maximilian de Bethune's own hand. But the most valuable pieces in this cabinet, beside a considerable number of original letters of Henry III. and other cotem-

porary princes, are papers of state, letters, serious or gay pieces, and other fragments, writ by Henry le Grand's own hand, and by his chief minister, or only signed or marked in the margin by them. We have already spoken of those that concern the accommodation of the admiral de Villars, and other governors and towns, especially in Normandy: we shall have occasion in the sequel to mention particularly some others.

1597.

one that was present gave his opinion; mine was, that it could not be expected the cardinal infant, who had so obstinately refused to fight, when he had no other way of succouring Amiens, should suffer himself to be obliged to come to an engagement now, when he was sensible he should have all the king's forces to encounter, and had had sufficient time to take measures to avoid it; nor was it more probable, that the enterprises upon the cities of Artois should succeed, in the neighbourhood of so numerous an army: yet that either of these designs appeared to me more judicious than the project of laying siege to Dourlens, since that in fifteen days we might know what was to be expected from the former, and incur no shame by failing in them; whereas, by following the latter, we should infallibly have the regret to find that we had consumed a great deal of time, money, and troops, to no purpose. It was resolved, that the two first measures should be suddenly attempted, without renouncing the siege of Dourlens. The Spaniards kept upon their guard, and the French gained no other advantage by this attempt, than the honour of having endeavoured to finish the war by a single action, which contributed as much as all the rest, to make the king of Spain desirous of peace.

It was quite the reverse with the enterprise of Dourlens, upon which they were obstinately bent. The king sent me at Paris, whether I had now returned, his last resolutions on that head. I did not scruple to represent to him, in terms still stronger, the reasons that had hindered me from approving that proposal; that his army, having suffered considerably at the siege of Amiens, was not in a condition to undertake a second equally laborious, in the month of October, a season when the ground about Dourlens, which is naturally fat and viscous, was made impracticable by the rains, and within sight of an army eager to seize an occasion of being revenged. The king did not take my freedom amiss, though he was not convinced by my reasons. He wrote to me in answer, that the expedition of Dourlens was absolutely necessary for the preservation of Amiens and Abbeville: that by putting Picardy in a state of security, he should facilitate the sale of the new offices; and that he would take such measures, that the siege should not continue so long as I apprehended.

ACCORDINGLY Dourlens was invested the ninth of October, and on the thirteenth, the rains had so much spoiled the ground and the roads, that the works could not be brought forward. Villeroi informed me in a letter, that they already repented of their attempt: in effect, the

the king set out almost immediately after, from his quarters at Beauval, and came to Belbat, where he gave orders for raising the siege, at which the soldiers had suffered so much during the short time it had lasted, that they were upon the point of disbanding. The king caused them all to be paid, placed them in winter-quarters upon the frontier, left his light horse there, retrenched part of the garrisons which the surprizing of Amiens had obliged him to throw into the neighbouring places, and set forward for Paris, to spend the winter there, taking his rout through Rouen and Monceaux, where he staid eight days.

FROM this place he sent me orders to over-rule the difficulties which the chancellor de Chiverny raised in parliament, to erect his country of Armagnac and Lectoure into a presidial; and to assign the money arising from it to the payment of costs granted in parliament to the sieur de Fontrailles, count of Armagnac, in a suit which he had carried in that court against his majesty. As the princess might have some claims upon this money, by virtue of the cession her brother designed to make her of all his estates in this province, the king desired me to keep the matter secret, and used the same precautions with Fontrailles and the chancellor, the last of whom observed this command very ill; but his indiscretion had no bad consequence, the princess leaving the court of France a short time after. In the same letter, the king ordered me to pay Demeurat his solicitor at Riom, as likewise la Corbiniere, who was employed to furnish provisions for the troops that were left in Picardy. It was in these intervals from business, that he extended his attention to the most inconsiderable objects. He made me give the sieur de Piles, an old faithful servant, a reward of three thousand crowns, and another of eight thousand livres to Gobelin, to whom, at the same time, he repaid sixteen thousand livres, advanced by him for the support of his household. There was no name, even to that of the poor woman who gathered the taxes at Gifors, which was not mentioned somewhere in his letters.

THE poverty of the people *, which was indeed excessive, having produced many blanks in the receipts for the taxes, the king suspected that the gentlemen of the council, who were very zealous in representing and exaggerating these deficiencies, would find means, when they

* Bougars, describing in his letters the desolation which the civil wars had caused in the kingdom, assures us, amongst other things, that the highways were so over-

run with briars and thorns, that their track could not but with much ado be discovered. Epist. 73. ad Camerar.

1597. had obtained a discharge for the people, to put large sums in their own pockets, by concealing the discharge that had been granted; he ordered me first to get information, whether the people were as much behind hand in the years 1594 and 1595, as those gentlemen had made him believe; which would easily be done, by examining the accounts of receipts and expences given in by the general and particular receivers, and by visiting the courts of the same provinces, whither I was already gone; and secondly, to examine whether this deficiency of the taxes did not proceed from idleness in the collectors, and disobedience in the people.

To conclude, his majesty began to busy himself at Monceaux with another matter of importance, that of drawing up articles, on which he desired to come to an agreement with the protestants. This work he pressed for some time upon the chancellor and Villeroi: I was likewise ordered to engage in it; but he would have had reason to complain a long time of the little attention which those men paid to his design, if he had not come himself to Paris to put it in execution*.

FOR these two last affairs concerning the financiers and the protestants more leisure was necessary than the king, upon his arrival at Paris, was able to afford them. He was obliged to turn his thoughts upon making new preparations for passing the following spring into Brittany, where the rebels, finding themselves out of the view of their sovereign, continued, with impunity, in disorder and disobedience. The duke of Mercœur, who was at their head, durst not, however, openly favour their revolt; on the contrary, the letters he wrote to the king were filled with seeming tokens of submission; and during the space of two years, it had been his whole study to amuse him with feigned proposals which he knew how to evade fulfilling. The king, on his side, had constantly dissembled with the duke, and hitherto contented himself with favourably receiving the officers of this province, who, weary of Mercœur's delays, addressed themselves directly to his majesty: but at length, the king thinking it time to go and attack this rebellious subject, even at his own doors †, this design, which was carried on with the utmost secrecy, employed us during the whole winter.

* He said to a deputation of the townsmen, who came to compliment him after the expedition to Amiens, shewing them the marshal de Biron, "Here, gentlemen, is the marshal de Biron,

"whom I freely present both to my friends and enemies." Peref. part 2.

† One of the duke de Mercœur's friends, having asked him one day, if ever he dreamed of being duke of Brittany, he

1597.

IT would have answered no purpose to have undertaken it without a body of twelve hundred foot, and two thousand cavalry, and a train of artillery, consisting of twelve cannons at least; and it was not possible to draw out these troops from the six thousand foot, and twelve hundred horse, which his majesty thought necessary for the defence of the frontier of Picardy, and which he had committed to the care of the constable, assisted by the counsels of messieurs Bellièvre, Villeroi, and Sillery. New funds were to be found for the support of all these troops; the taxes could not possibly be increased otherwise than by lessening the costs of the collection, which is with respect to the king a real increase. I likewise applied myself to collect the debts that were in arrear, and to recover such as were neglected; to which I joined some new imposts, few in number, and not oppressive.

THE king, without these supplies, would have been obliged to have listened to proposals for a peace, and could not then have concluded one, but upon terms very advantageous to Spain. Pope Clement the eighth desired it with great ardour; and, long before the campaign of Picardy, had sent the cardinal of Florence, in quality of legate, to propose it to the king; at the same time Calatagironne*, patriarch of Constantinople, went by his holiness's orders to Spain for the same purpose. The negotiation had been unfortunate in the beginning. The king more irritated than discouraged by the invasion of Amiens, only answered the cardinal haughtily, that he would defer hearing what he had to propose, till after he had regained this place. The king of Spain, on the other hand, although it was with regret that he beheld the war renewed, yet founded great hopes upon his success in Flanders, and particularly upon having surprized the city of Amiens, the possession of which might draw along with it that of all the neighbouring country from the Oise to the Seine.

Alexander
de Medicis.

THE expeditions of the campaign being more favourable to the French, drew both sides nearer an accommodation. Philip knew Henry to be a prince with whom it was as difficult to keep as to gain advantages, and having besides a foreboding in his own mind, that the

made answer, "I know not whether it
"be a dream, but it has lasted these ten
"years and upwards." The duchess de
Mercœur's grandmother was Charlotte,
heir of the house of Penthièvre, whose

pretended rights to the duchy of Brittany
were apparently the foundation of those of
the duke de Mercœur.

* Father Bnaventure de Calatagironne,
general of the order of Saint Francis.

1597.

illness he was seized with would be mortal, the fear of leaving at his death the prince his son exposed to such an enemy as the king of France, induced him to listen to the advice of Calatagironne, who when he was assured of the king's inclinations, returned to Rome to acquaint the pope with them, and was by his holiness again deputed to France, to give the cardinal of Florence an account of his success, and act in concert with him.

ACCORDINGLY their eminences renewed their former solicitations with Henry, and often represented to him, that the peace, in some measure, depended wholly upon him. The king, who was undeceived in his turn, and no longer influenced by those great and flattering hopes, which, through a reliance upon the promises of his courtiers, he had entertained, saw the return of the two negotiators with pleasure: tho' he appeared indifferent to their proposals, at length he told them, that he would not be against a peace, provided Spain would give up all she possessed in his dominions. The legates hinted, that this might possibly be obtained. And the king replied, that upon this plan he permitted them to treat and conclude a peace with the three ministers he had left in Picardy, to whom he referred them: in the mean while, that he might not lose the advantage of those preparations he had made for war, nor waste time so precious in mere negotiations, he set out for Brittany.

THE king took his rout through Angers, in the beginning of March, ordering his army to follow him by short journeys: he permitted his council likewise to attend him, but not till it had made the necessary dispositions for supplying his army in Brittany, and the troops and commissioners for the peace in Picardy, with all things that were needful. As I now had the absolute direction of the council, and met with no opposition whatever, I quickly put matters in such a state as I thought I might join the king without any bad consequence. I expected to have found him already far advanced in Brittany, and was greatly surprized to hear, as I drew near Angers, that the king had not left that city. The duke of Mercœur must have been infallibly ruined, but for the service he received from mesdames * de Mercœur and de † Mar-

* Mary de Luxembourg, daughter to Sebastian de Luxembourg, duke of Penthièvre and viscount de Martigues, was wife to Philip Emanuel de Lorraine, duke de Mercœur.

† Mary de Beaucaire, daughter to John, seigneur de Peguillon, widow of Sebastian de Luxembourg, and mother to the dukes de Mercœur.

1597

Frances
de Lorraine.

tigues upon this occasion: they began with obtaining, by the interest of the marchioness de Monceaux, a passport to meet the king at Angers †; where, as soon as they arrived, they intirely gained over the king's mistress to their party. The duchess de Mercœur offered her only daughter to be disposed of in marriage to whomsoever the king thought proper, hinting to the marchioness, that she would not be against marrying this opulent heiress to her son Cæsar ‖. The marchioness of Monceaux was so agreeably flattered by this alliance, that from that moment, considering the duke of Mercœur's interests as her own, she solicited for him with the utmost ardour and assiduity: the two ladies likewise employed every art to soften a prince remarkable for his complacency to the sex. He suffered himself to be disarmed by their submissions, promises, and tears, and no longer thought of chastising the duke of Mercœur.

THE moment I alighted at Angers I went to pay my respects to the king. This prince, who by the first word I uttered, and the turn only of my countenance, comprehended all I had in my mind, embraced me closely in his arms, and pressing me to his bosom, " My friend," said he to me, " you are welcome; I am truly glad to see you here, for I have had great need of you." " And I, sire," I replied (incapable of those mean compliances that are dictated by flattery) " am greatly grieved to find you still here." " It is long," said the king, interrupting me, " that we have learned to understand each other by half a word; I guess already what you would say to me; " but if you knew what has passed, and to what a forwardness I have " already brought affairs, you would alter your opinion." I replied, that those advantages, whatever they were, which he meant, he might have obtained, and many far more considerable, if, instead of stopping at Angers, he had presented himself before Nantes, at the head of his army. The king endeavoured to excuse himself upon the want of instruments proper for the siege of the city. I answered, that he would have had no occasion for them, because Nantes would have rendered them unnecessary by a surrender, and perhaps have delivered* the

† They had come thither before the king, but were refused entrance; upon which they withdrew to Pont de Cé, till the king arrived at Angers.

‖ " The espousals were celebrated at Angers with the same magnificence as if he had been a lawfully-begotten son of France: he was but four years of age, and she but six." *Perce.* 2d part.

* All the historians agree, that Henry IV. was in a condition to have made the duke de Mercœur smart for his disobedience: he would never suffer that this duke should send him any person in his name to Vincennes; and protested that he would rather endure a continual war, than consent that one of his subjects should seem to treat with him thus like a foreign prince.

1597.

duke of Mercœur into his hands. The first of these things it was highly probable would have happened, and the king acknowledged he believed so. After this confession I added, "It is true, I do not find the bravery of my prince in this instance, but I shall say nothing, because I know what it was that withheld you." With this prince, I was not apprehensive my sincerity would have any bad consequences. He confessed all to me, though with some little confusion, alledging as an excuse his compassion for those who were in a state of humiliation, and the fear of disobliging his mistress.

AFTER this the conversation turned wholly upon news: his majesty had just received letters from the queen of England, expressing her desire of sending an ambassador to him, to induce him, as we imagined with great probability, to continue the war. By other letters, from Bellière and Silery, he was informed, that the legates had offered, in the name of Spain, to restore all the cities, except Cambrai, that had been taken during the war. The king's carrying troops into Brittany, without being under a necessity of leaving Picardy defenceless, had given great surprize to Spain, and satisfaction to the court of London, ever solicitous to humble the pride of that crown. I advised Henry not to refuse a peace for the sake of a single city, and to be satisfied with having driven the enemy out of Picardy and Brittany.

THIS latter province, which had panted for tranquility a long time, was sensible how much it owed to his majesty, whose presence at the head of an army was the only thing that could procure them that happiness. The party of Mercœur became the king's party. The Spaniards were not in a condition to hold out long against their united forces. Blavet* and Douarnenes, where they were cantoned in the greatest numbers, could not fail of yielding soon to the common lot, and a few days were sufficient to clear the province entirely of its foreign enemies, who afterwards assembled her states, in order to prove her gratitude to the king, by granting him a considerable subsidy. His majesty commanded me to continue my rout to Brittany, and while I waited there for his arrival, to pay the troops, and quarter them in caserns in the neighbourhood of Rennes and Vitré, with strict orders to keep up an exact discipline there: after which I was to go to Rennes, to represent his majesty's person in the states, to hasten their resolutions concerning

* Blavet is now called Port Louis, and lies in the bishopric of Vannes: Douarnenes is another port and road, in the bishopric of Quimper.

the sums that were promised, and use all my authority to facilitate the levying it. The king having an inclination to stay some days longer at Angers, laid hold of the pretence, that something was still wanting to the treaty with the duke of Mercœur.

1597.

I HAD NO reason to be offended with the duchefs of Mercœur for having endeavoured to procure the most favourable conditions she could, yet I so far resented her making the king the dupe of her arts, that if his majesty had not obliged me to make her a visit, I would have left Angers without seeing her; although I was related to this lady by the same side by which I had the honour to be allied to the royal family, that is, by the house of Luxembourg*.

THE king remonstrated to me, that if the consideration of being related to her, together with the laws of politeness, were not sufficient to induce me to pay her this respect, yet the duchefs of Mercœur deserved it on account of that regard she had for me, which the knowledge of my intentions could not alter. In effect, I was received by her and madam de Martigues with the highest distinction and respect. Madam de Mercœur, after some gentle reproaches for having endeavoured to hurt her interest, and that of her daughter, my little kinswoman, told me, that there was nothing she so ardently desired, as to be able to put the affairs of the duke her husband into my hands, that I might conclude this treaty with the king in whatsoever manner I thought fit. I answered the duchefs, that while my respect and adherence to her were not inconsistent with the service of the king, which always carried me against any other consideration, she should find nobody more disposed to serve her than myself.

I WENT to Château-Gonthier that evening, and reached Vitré the next day, where I saw but too plainly of what importance it was to be extremely cautious and circumspect in quartering troops, that nothing might be neglected. Messieurs de Salignac and de Moüy, marechals de camp, were of great use to me upon this occasion. Tranquility was so perfectly established in all this part of the country, that the countrymen who at first had retreated to the woods, and fortified themselves there, where every moment they were ready to come to blows, now returned to their houses; and the city of Rennes thought that

* Jane de Bethune, daughter to Robert, the sixth ancestor to M. de Sully, was married to John de Luxembourg.

1597.

some acknowledgment was due to me : for this reason, when the states were assembled, a fine apartment was prepared for me during my abode in that city, at the house of mademoiselle de la Riviere : she was a woman of wit and gallantry, who being always looking out for pleasures for herself, was the fitter for the commission with which she was charged, of engaging me in all the entertainments which are commonly found in cities like Rennes, opulent and polite. If the life of a minister was to be at all times like that which I led in this city, and which lasted almost six weeks, it would have in reality all those charms which are falsely attributed to it. I had no other employment than being present at the assembly of the states, who, with all possible gratitude, agreed to the service the king required of them, and granted him, without any opposition, eight hundred thousand crowns; of which one hundred was to be paid the first month, as much the second, and afterwards two hundred each month, till the whole was paid. To furnish this sum, a tax was created of four crowns upon a pipe of wine. The assembly were desirous of adding a present of six thousand crowns to me, which I refused, without examining whether this was among the number of those occasions when I might have been permitted to have accepted a present. The king, to whom the merit of my disinterestedness had been highly exaggerated, and who had himself bestowed more praises on my conduct in the assembly, than it deserved, was resolved, that the expence of a present to me should be his, and instead of six, gave me ten thousand crowns. During six and twenty years, which I had spent in his majesty's service, I had never received so considerable a gift. On this occasion there was a kind of generous contest betwixt the king and the province of Brittany; which at last obtained, that these ten thousand crowns should be added to the eight hundred thousand the assembly had offered his majesty.

THE treaty with the duke of Mercœur being completed, the king sent it to the chamber of accounts at Rennes to be registered. As some private articles in this treaty were not expressed, the court thought it had a right to refuse registering it, without certain restrictions with respect to these articles. Henry, who knew better than any other prince in the world how far the power of these sovereign courts extended, and always appeared careful not to make the least encroachment upon it, resented this refusal with becoming spirit; and, together with the dispatches which I received from him regularly every day, he sent me an order in writing for the chamber of accounts, in which he observed, that this court could not be ignorant, that in all treaties or acts relating merely

merely to war or the king's person, the sovereign of France took counsel with no person, nor demanded his letters to be registered but as a formality, which otherwise was little essential; he reproved them for their rash conduct, and ordered them to repair their disobedience by an absolute submission to his will.

THE king did not shew less firmness on another occasion that likewise regarded the sovereign courts. These bodies assumed the privilege of furnishing immediately but half of the sum which the assembly had taxed them for their contingent, and endeavoured to take a more convenient and more distant time for the payment of the rest: they made the same difficulties about their share of the necessary contributions for the maintenance of those troops which they had demanded themselves. Henry easily comprehended, that they would not have had recourse to this artifice, but to avoid contributing any thing, as soon as he had quitted the province: therefore, he sent me word, that it was his will they should furnish the whole tax; which was done accordingly. Their murmurs on account of paying the troops ceased, as soon as they were convinced that the tranquility of their province depended upon this regulation, and they were the first after that to approve of my conduct.

THESE several orders were sent to me from Nantes, to which place the king had advanced, after the treaty with the duke of Mercœur had been agreed upon, to attend to two affairs of importance, namely, the edict for the protestants, and the reception of the two ambassadors from England and Holland. His majesty believing his presence in Picardy was necessary to forward the peace, intended to have left Nantes in a month's time, without taking a journey to Rennes, which he had looked upon as useless; and had already given orders for the march of the five regiments of Navarre, Piedmont, the Isle of France, Boniface, and Bréauté, which he drew out of Brittany, to fortify the frontier of Flanders. The king having informed me of his design with respect to these regiments, I represented to him, that the probability of a peace being now changed to an absolute certainty, it was necessary to disband part of his troops, and lessen the number of his garrisons, as being a burden too heavy for the kingdom to support, and that two of those regiments were now sufficient for Picardy; accordingly, only the two first were sent thither, under the conduct of the marechal de Brissac. I even insisted so much upon the necessity there was for his majesty to shew himself at least in the capital of Brittany, that the king, altering his

1597.

his scheme, resolv'd to come and spend some days there before his return to Paris; and for that purpose, to dispatch, as soon as possible, those two affairs that detained him at Nantes.

It was now become more necessary than ever, to regulate that concerning the protestants: these people assumed such a licentiousness of tongue in France, that the king himself did not escape the rage and malignity of their invectives. The remonstrances his majesty had made to the authors of the plot before mentioned, were so far from bringing them back to their duty, that, in appearance, it served only to make them use their utmost efforts to bring the whole protestant party in their several synods*, to the most violent resolutions: madam de Rohan did not scruple to cabal with many of them, in order to carry, by a plurality of voices, the proposal of taking up arms, and forcing the king to receive such conditions as they should prescribe to him; in which attempt she was seconded, with surprizing assiduity, by d'Aubigné, remarkable for his satirical turn, and propensity to slander †. It was he who in those assemblies had the assurance to mention, that they ought no longer to place any confidence in a prince who, together with his religion, had abjured every sentiment of his affection, good-will, and gratitude, for the protestants, that nothing but necessity forced him to apply to them and treat them with regard; that when this was over, he would have no longer any care about their consciences, liberties, or lives; that the peace with Spain, which was upon the point of being concluded, would plunge the party into the utmost distress, since the sole motive that induced Henry to consent to it, was to unite himself with that crown and the pope, to sacrifice them to their common hatred; and therefore, that nothing remained to be done, but to take advantage of the king's perplexity during so toilsome a siege, the distress he was in for money, the need he had of their assistance, and the power which the duke of Mercœur still possessed in Brittany, to obtain by force what Henry would afterwards refuse to grant them.

The siege of
Amiens.

To incite the members of these assemblies to a revolt, the protestants thought the blackest calumnies were lawful. D'Aubigné was not ashamed

* At Shumur, Loudon, Vendôme, and Châtelleraut: of these we have spoke before, on occasion of the cabals of the protestant party during the siege of Amiens.

† He is supposed to be the author of the Confession of Sancy, the Adventures of the baron de Farnesse, and other lampoons.

1598.

ed to represent Henry there, as a prince to whom all religions * were indifferent, and who was only zealous for that which would secure him a throne †. This was the notion he wanted to give of his conversion. According to him, the supposed injuries offered to the protestants left no room to doubt of the new system of politics that Henry had formed for himself. Those injuries opened d'Aubigné a vast field for exclamation; the least of them were represented as outrages of the most violent nature, and instances of the deepest treachery; and thus, without any regard to the extreme injustice he was guilty of, he placed to the king's account all those hardships which proceeded solely from the catholics or the court of Rome. The duke of Bouillon, leaving others to declaim, supported d'Aubigné, by his uncommon dexterity in sowing division between the king and all that came near him, whether catholics or protestants, and created him sufficient employment, that he might not for a long time be at liberty to turn his arms against him. The taking of Mende by Fosseuse, and the sitting out of the count d'Auvergne, were the consequence of these counsels.

In the Givaudan.

NONE of these persons neglected to make their court to the ambassadors from England and Holland, as soon as they arrived at Nantes; and depended so much the more upon drawing them into their schemes, as they were not ignorant, that it was particularly recommended to them to prevent a peace with Spain. These ambassadors were, Lord Cecil ‡, secretary to queen Elizabeth, and Justin de Nassau, admiral of the Republic: they demanded a private audience of the king; or, if that could not be obtained, at least to have no one present but Lomenie and me. But I was then employed at Rennes.

* M. de Sully is very much to be commended for sacrificing to the love of truth all interest and consideration for a party, as he does here, and in a thousand other places of his Memoirs, especially as he is so strongly attached to his religion; which he has always shewn: but in every one of these passages he furnishes us with very strong weapons against himself; and after having laid open, in this manner, the designs and the spirit by which the whole body of the reformed in France were actuated, there is no person but will agree, that the state had reason to apprehend every thing from them.

† “There are three things,” said Henry IV. “which the world is very unwilling to believe; and yet, for all that, they are still true and most certain; namely, that the queen of England died a maid; that the archduke is a great general; and that the king of France is a very good catholic.” *Journal de l'Étoile*, p. 233.

‡ This was not the secretary himself, whose name was William, but his son Robert. *De Thou*, liv. cxx. See likewise *Chronol. Septennaire* for the year 1598, concerning this interview of Henry IV. with the English and the Dutch ambassadors.

1598.

IF the two ambassadors had given credit to the protestants, all they had to do was to intimidate the king, and force him by menaces to come into their designs; but either this was not in their power, or being convinced of the protestants injustice, they thought it beneath them to be influenced by their passions; and therefore took no notice to the king of what they had suggested. They had indeed offers to make that were much more likely to prevail with a prince, whose inclination for war they were not ignorant of: the English ambassador offered, in the name of the queen his mistress, six thousand foot and five hundred horse, to be maintained at her expence; and Nassau four thousand foot, and a large train of artillery completely furnished and supplied, besides a particular supply, which they hinted would be very considerable, provided Henry would endeavour to retake Calais and Ardes. Upon the supposition that the king appeared inclined to accept these offers, the two ambassadors had orders to conclude a treaty of alliance immediately between France, England, and the Low-Countries, against Spain, and to stipulate that neither of these three powers should listen to any proposal, either for a truce or treaty with the common enemy, but with the consent of the two others.

HAPPILY the king escaped this dangerous snare; and the consideration of the present state of his kingdom had more weight with him than all others. He thanked the ambassadors with great politeness, and introduced his answer by assuring them that, although he could not accept the offers of their sovereigns, yet he would not depart from that friendship which had so long subsisted between them; and that the peace he was going to conclude with Spain (for he did not conceal the terms he was upon with Philip) should not hinder him from keeping up the same correspondence with them as before, nor from supplying them with money, when they had occasion for it, with this only precaution, that these loans were taken under the title of acquittances of debts, to give no pretence for a quarrel with Spain.

HE afterwards, with the same sincerity, explained to them all his reasons for putting an end to the war. His kingdom, he told them, was not like England and Holland, secured by nature from the attacks of her enemies, but open on all sides; his castles unfortified, and destitute of ammunition; his marine weak, his provinces laid waste, and some of them reduced to mere desarts. He went on to give a more particular description of the abuses that had crept into the government, and

and introduced a thousand disorders; all subordination being destroyed by the licentiousness that had been practised with impunity amidst the confusion of civil and foreign wars; his power weak, and unstable, and the royal authority, as well as the most sacred laws of the state, equally disregarded. These evils could only be remedied by a peace; and if that remedy was ever so little delayed, France was every hour approaching to its ruin, the distemper would soon reach the heart, and no human help would then be able to remove it. Henry did not forget to strengthen these motives, by a comparison of his present situation, in all these respects, with that of England and Holland, who could engage in a war, on which their safety depended, consistently at the same time with their safety and their interest; and the king drew this parallel with so much clearness and judgment, and so exact a knowledge of the state of those countries, as to make them feel the truth of what he was saying; so that the two foreigners, having nothing to oppose against such convincing arguments, looked upon each other in amazement. The king gave them to understand, that, when he had settled the affairs of his kingdom, he should then, with more assurance of success, renew his former designs against the empire, and the house of Austria; but that these two enterprises were not of a nature to be executed at one and the same time. The ambassadors, for form's sake, thought they ought to dissuade his majesty from his resolution, but did it so faintly, being themselves struck with the force of his arguments, that, before the conference was ended, the king brought them over entirely to his opinion, and obliged them to confess, that the peace he was going to conclude was for the advantage of all Europe. They left France soon after, and filled their respective countries with the opinion they had conceived of the great wisdom and extraordinary abilities of the king of France.

IN effect, what innumerable miseries would this prince have drawn upon his kingdom, if following the wild emotions of hatred and revenge, rather than the calm dictates of wisdom and prudence, he had at that instant engaged in a war, which, though in his power to begin, was not to end! How dreadful the consequence, if chance, which arbitrarily disposes of all the events of war, should have favoured the enemies of France! But granting that his arms were victorious, how little preferable to a defeat is that success, which a prince must purchase at so dear a rate, as by the alienation of his domains, by the anticipating and mortgaging his revenues, by the ruin of commerce and agriculture, from whence France derives her chief support, and lastly, by the utter devastation of his provinces! Such evils cannot be

1598.

balanced by the acquisition of new territories, the possession of which keeps the conqueror in perpetual alarms, and, remaining as so many hateful monuments to the enemy of the ambition and injustice of him that gained them, cherishes and keeps alive those seeds of envy, hatred, and distrust, that sooner or later never fail to produce the same miseries with which the kingdom was before overwhelmed: on this account, I am not afraid to say, that, in the present state of Europe, it is almost equally unhappy for its princes to succeed or miscarry in their enterprises; and that the true way of weakening a powerful neighbour, is not to carry off his spoils, but to leave them to be shared by others.

THE insolence of the protestant cabal was totally depressed, when they found that the ambassadors, upon whom they had so greatly relied, were entirely brought over to the king's opinion; and, not doubting but that a peace would now be soon concluded, they thought only of procuring reasonable conditions. It was happy for them that at a time when it would have been easy to punish them for their unjustifiable proceedings, they had a prince to deal with whose reason was always stronger than his resentment. Both sides were then very industrious to draw up that famous agreement known by the name of the edict of Nantes, by which the rights of the two religions were afterwards both clearly explained and solidly established. Schomberg, the president de Thou, Jeannin, and Calignon, were employed to draw it up, of which all I shall say is, that, by this edict, it was provided that the French calvinists, who till then had been only privileged by truces refused and continued, should have a fixed and durable establishment*. All that now remained to be done, was to make this treaty be registered and confirmed by the parliaments and sovereign courts, and to begin with those of Paris; which was deferred till the king's return to that city.

* The edict of Nantes was signed the 13th of April. De Thou says, that the judicial confirmation of it was put off till after the departure of the legate, whom they were loth to send away discontented. The concessions this edict contains, more favourable than those that had been formerly granted them, are, that thereby they were admitted to places of trust, both in the courts of justice and in the finances: all the rest is no ways essentially different from the edict of pacification that passed in 1577. Bayle

ascribes the honour of composing the edict of Nantes to the reformed minister Chamier. See it in Matthieu, tom. II. book ii. and in several other historians. There were likewise some secret articles, of which the most disadvantageous for the calvinists is that which forbids them the exercise of their religion in a great many towns and particular districts, as Rheims, Soissons, Dijon, Sens, &c. because Henry IV. had so engaged himself by particular treaties before, with the different lords of the league.

HAVING

HAVING paid what he owed to the protestants *, according to the exactest justice, the king thought himself not obliged to shew much regard to those who still continued to stir sedition, such as the duke of Bouillon in particular, who had most reason to reproach himself, and for once, he resolv'd to speak to him like a master: he had now acquired a right to do this, even though we suppose him not to have had it in the character of king. He propos'd as soon as he arriv'd at Rennes, to execute this design, and took his rout thither without delay. The duke of Bouillon then lodg'd at the house of l'Alloué, where he was confin'd to his bed by the gout: the king went to visit him, and after the first compliments, signifying that it was his pleasure to be left alone with the duke, the rest of the company quitted the chamber, and his majesty desired that he would, without interruption, hear what he had to say to him. He began with a particular detail of all his proceedings, to shew that he was not ignorant of any of them: he dwelt chiefly upon some steps the duke had taken since the edict of Nantes, and were therefore so much the more criminal, as it ought to have prevented him from entertaining a thought of revolting against a prince who had so generously adhered to his interest. The duke attempted to offer something in his excuse, but he was stopp'd by the king, who told him, that without any justification, he would from that day forget all that was pass'd; and since he had pardon'd whatever the most inveterate malice had been able to suggest to his enemies, he had no inclination to exclude from his favour an old servant, with whom he had been pleas'd for a long time: in conclusion, he advis'd the duke, with an air of authority, which became him better as he us'd it seldom, to make good use of the counsel he was now giving him as his friend, to think no more of his past behaviour, but for the sake of acting in a manner quite contrary; for if he should again fail in his respect to his king and master, he was resolv'd to make use of that convenience which the peace now establish'd in the kingdom gave, to bring him to punishment: after which the king, without waiting for his answer, went out and left him to his own thoughts.

THE inhabitants of Brittany were charm'd with the affability of their king, and his complaisance in being present at all the entertainments with which the ladies contended to divert him. Henry divi-

* Le Grain mentions a good saying of Henry IV. One day as the protestants were importunately teasing him with their de-

mands, "Apply to my sister," says he to them, "for your affairs are now fallen into the hands of women to conduct them." ded

1598.

ded his time between these assemblies, the sport of running at the ring, balls, and tennis-playing, without lessening his assiduity about the marchioness of Monceaux, who was very far advanced in her pregnancy.

In the midst of these amusements, the king at certain intervals appeared so pensive and reserved, that it was not difficult to guess some secret uneasiness preyed upon his mind; and I was the more convinced of it when his majesty, who often diverted himself with hunting, ordered me twice to follow him apart, that he might have an opportunity of conversing with me alone; yet when I did so he was silent. I then remembered that the same thing had happened at Saint-Germain, and Angers; and I concluded that he had a design in view, which he had some difficulty to disclose to me, knowing with what freedom I sometimes opposed his opinions; but what this design was I could not possibly guess. Returning from the abovementioned visit to the duke of Bouillon, his majesty being at the foot of the stair-case, saw me as I entered the court, and calling me, made me go with him into the garden, which was extremely large and beautiful, holding my hand with his finger between mine as usual, then ordered the door to be shut, and that no person should be allowed to enter.

THIS prelude made me expect to hear a secret of great consequence. Henry did not enter upon it immediately, but, as if he had not sufficient resolution to explain himself, began to tell me what had just passed between him and the duke of Bouillon. This conversation was followed by news relating to the negotiations of Vervins, and led him insensibly to reflect on the advantages France would receive from a peaceable government. One circumstance, the king said, gave him great uneasiness, which was that, not having children by the queen his wife, it would answer no purpose to be at so much trouble to procure peace and tranquility to his kingdom, since, after his death, it must necessarily fall into its former calamities, by the disputes that would arise between the prince of Condé and the other princes of the blood, concerning the succession to the crown. His majesty confessed to me, that this was his motive for desiring, with such ardour, to leave sons behind him. Unless his marriage with the princess Margaret could be dissolved, it was not possible for him to be absolutely happy; but the informations he received from the archbishop of Urbin, messieurs de Perron, d'Osât, and de Marquemont, his deputies at Rome, of the pope's favourable dispositions in respect to that affair, gave him great hopes of its success: in effect, Clement the eighth, who was as good a politician as any prince

1598.

prince in Europe, revolving in his mind what means were most likely to hinder France, and the other christian kingdoms, from falling again into a state of anarchy and confusion, could find none so effectual as to secure the succession of the crown of France, by authorising Henry to engage in a second marriage, which might produce him male children.

OUR conversation being fixed upon this subject, it was easy for me to perceive that it was from hence his majesty's uneasiness proceeded; but I could not so soon know what particular circumstance it was that disturbed him. The king began to consider with me what princess of Europe he should chuse for his wife, in case his marriage with Margarer of Valois should be dissolved; but indeed he set out with a declaration that shewed any reflections on that head would be fruitless. "That I may not repent, said he, of taking so dangerous a step, nor draw upon myself a misfortune which is with justice said to exceed all others, that of having a wife disagreeable in person and mind, it is necessary that in her whom I marry I should find these seven things, beauty, prudence, softness, wit, fruitfulness, riches, and a royal birth;" but there was not one in all Europe, with whom he appeared entirely satisfied. "I should have no objection to the infant of Spain," pursued Henry, "although she is a little advanced in years, provided that with her I could marry the Low-Countries, even though I should be obliged to restore to you the earldom of Bethune: neither would I refuse the princess Arabella * of England, if, as it is publicly said that crown really belongs to her, she were only declared presumptive heiress of it; but there is no reason to expect that either of these things will happen. I have also heard of some princesses of Germany, whose names I have forgot; but the women of that country don't suit me: I should always fancy I had a hog'shead of wine in bed with me; besides, I have been told that France had once a queen of that country, who had like to have ruined it: all these considerations have given me a disgust to the German ladies. The sisters of prince Maurice have likewise been mentioned to me; but besides that they are protestants, which would give umbrage to the court of Rome and the more zealous catholics, they are daughters of a nun; which, together with a certain reason that I'll inform you of some other

* The marchioness Aibelle, or Arabella Stuart. She was daughter to Charles, earl of Lenox, who was grandson to Margaret queen of Scotland, eldest sister to Henry VIII. Her cousin-german James VI. king

of Scotland, having in 1602 been declared lawful heir to queen Elizabeth, the following year a conspiracy was formed in her favour; and she died in 1616, a prisoner in the tower of London. See the historians.

1598.

“ time, has prevented my entertaining any thoughts of them. The duke of Florence has a niece who is said to be handsome, but she is descended from one of the most inconsiderable families in Christendom that bear the title of prince, it not being above threescore or fourscore years since her ancestors were only the first citizens in Florence; she is likewife of the same race with the queen-mother Catherine, who did so much mischief to France, and to me in particular.

“ THESE,” continued the king, observing that I listened attentively to him, “ are all the foreign princesses that I have any knowledge of: of those within my own kingdom my niece of Guise would please me best *, notwithstanding the malicious reports that have been spread that she loves *poulets* in paper better than in a fricassée; for my part I not only believe those reports to be false, but should rather chuse a wife who is a little fond of gallantry, than one who wanted understanding; but I am apprehensive that the violent affection she discovers for her family, particularly for her brothers, would create some disorders in the kingdom.”

AFTER this the king named all the other princesses in France, but to as little purpose: he acknowledged that some were beautiful, and genteel, such as the eldest of the duke of Maienne’s two daughters, although of a brown complexion, the two daughters likewise of the duke of Aumale, and three of the duke of Longueville; but all these were either too young, or were not in his taste. He afterwards named mademoiselle Rohan, the princess of Conti’s daughter, of the house of Lucé; mademoiselles Luxembourg and Guénézi; but the first was a protestant, and the second not old enough, and the persons of the two others did not please him: and all for some reason or other were excluded. The king closed this enumeration by saying, that although these ladies might be all agreeable enough to him in their persons, yet he saw no way to be assured that they would bring him heirs, or that he could suit himself to their tempers, or be convinced of their prudence, three of the seven conditions without which he had resolved never to marry; since, if he entered into an engagement

* Louisa Margaret of Lorraine: she was a very beautiful princess. It was proposed, at the time of the siege of Paris, for her to marry Henry IV. in order to unite the two parties. The sarcastic lampoons of that time charge her with carrying on

an intrigue with the duke de Bellegarde, master of the horse: and what Henry says here of *poulets*, is taken from a song that was made against mademoiselle de Guise, which may be seen in l’Etoile, for the year 1596.

of that kind, it would be with a design to give his wife a share in the management of all his domestic affairs; and that, as according to the course of nature he should die before her, and leave children very young behind him, it would be necessary that she should be able to superintend their education, and govern the kingdom during a minority.

WEARY at length of endeavouring to no purpose to find out what the king aimed at by this discourse, “ But what is it you mean, sire,” said I, by so many affirmatives and negatives; and what I am to conclude by them, but that you are desirous to marry, and yet cannot find a woman upon earth qualified to be your wife? By the manner in which you mentioned the infanta Clara Eugenia, it should seem that great heiresses are most to your taste; but can you expect that heaven should raise a Margaret of Flanders, or a Mary of Burgundy, from the dead for you, or at least restore the queen of England to her youth?” I added smiling, “ that for proof of the other qualities which he demanded, I saw no better expedient than to bring all the beauties of France together, from the age of seventeen to that of twenty-five, that by talking with them in person, he might know the turn of their temper and genius; and that for the rest he should refer himself to experienced matrons, to whom recourse is had on such occasions.” Then beginning to talk more seriously, I declared that, “ in my opinion, his majesty might contract his expectations, by striking off a great fortune and royal birth, and content himself with a wife who was likely to keep his heart, and bring him fine children; but that here again he must content himself with mere probability, there being many beautiful women incapable of child-bearing, and many illustrious fathers unhappy in their offspring*; but that whatever his children should prove, the blood from which they sprung would secure the respect and obedience of the French nation.”

“ WELL,” interrupted the king, “ setting aside your advice concerning this assembly of beauties, with which I am mightily diverted, and your sage reflection that great men have often children who possess none of their qualities, I hope to have sons whose actions shall exceed mine. Since you confess that the lady whom I marry ought to be of an agreeable temper, beautiful in her person, and of

* The author, on this head, mentions, very improperly, Ninias, Anaxindaris, Nebuchodonosor, Cyprus, Alexander, Trajan, Constantine, and Charlemagne. I like-

wife retrench in this conversation, as in many other passages, several discourses that are too prolix, and full of useless erudition.

1598.

“such a make as to give hopes of her bringing children, reflect a little, whether you do not know a person in whom all these qualities are united.” I replied, that I would not take upon me to decide hastily upon a choice wherein so much consideration was requisite, and to which I had not yet sufficiently attended. “And what would you say,” returned Henry, “if I should name one, who, I am fully convinced, possesses these three qualities.” “I should say, sire,” replied I, with great simplicity, “that you are much better acquainted with her than I am, and that she must necessarily be a widow, otherwise you can have no certainty with regard to her fruitfulness.” “This is all that you would desire,” said the king, “but if you cannot guess who she is, I will name her to you.” “Name her then, said I, for I own I have not wit enough to find out who she is.” “Ah! how dull are you,” cried the king, “but I am persuaded, you could guess who I mean if you would, and only affect this ignorance to oblige me to name her myself; confess then that these three qualities meet in my mistress: not” pursued the king (in some confusion at this discovery of his weakness “that I have any intention to marry her, but I want to know what you would say, if, not being able to meet with any other whom I could approve of, I should one day take it into my head to make her my wife.”

It was not difficult for me to discover, amidst these slight artifices, that his majesty had already thought of it but too much, and was but too well disposed to this unworthy marriage, which every thing he had said tended to justify. My astonishment was indeed very great, but I thought it necessary to conceal my thoughts with the utmost care: I affected to believe that he was jesting, that I might have an opportunity of answering in such a manner as might make the king ashamed of having entertained so extravagant a notion. My dissimulation did not succeed; the king had not made so painful an effort to stop there. “I command you,” said he to me, “to speak freely; you have acquired the right of telling me plain truths; do not apprehend that I shall be offended with you for doing so, provided that it is in private; such a liberty indeed in public would greatly offend me.”

I REPLIED, that I would never be so independent as to say any thing in private, any more than in public, that might displease him, except on such occasions when his life, or the good of the state was in question. I afterwards represented to him the disgrace so scandalous an alliance would draw upon him, in the opinion of the whole world, and the reproaches

proaches he would suffer from his own mind upon that account, when the ardour of his passion being abated, he should be able to judge impartially of his own conduct. I shewed him that if this was the only means to which he could have recourse to free France from the calamities a doubtful succession would occasion, that he would expose himself to all the inconveniencies he was anxious to avoid, and others still greater: that although he should legitimate the children he had by madam de Liancourt, yet that could not hinder the eldest, who was born in a double adultery, from being, in this respect, inferior to the second, whose birth was attended with but half that disgrace; and both must yield to those whom he might have by madam de Liancourt after she was his lawful wife: this bye circumstance making it impossible to settle their claims, could not fail of becoming an inexhaustible source of quarrels and war. "I leave you, sire" pursued I, "to make reflections upon all this, before I say any more." "That will not be amiss," returned the king, who was struck with my arguments; "for you have said enough of this matter for the first time." But such was the tyranny of that blind passion, to which he was subjected, that in spite of himself he resumed the discourse that very moment, by asking me if, from the disposition I knew the French to be of, especially the nobility, I thought he had any reason to apprehend they would rise in rebellion, while he was living, if he should marry his mistress.

THIS question convinced me, that his heart had received an incurable wound: I treated him accordingly, and entered into arguments and expostulations, with which I shall not trouble the reader, since his own imagination may suggest to him all that it was necessary to say upon this subject, which has been already dwelt upon too long. We continued three hours alone in the garden, and I had the consolation to leave the king in a full persuasion of the truth and reasonableness of all I had said to him.

THE difficulty lay in breaking those too powerful ties; the king had not yet brought himself to that point: he had many dreadful *conflicts

* In this inward struggle, the voice of reason and decorum had not the strongest sway with Henry IV. and even though M. de Sully does here and elsewhere say it, the world has always been persuaded, upon very good grounds, that, if the death of his mistress, whom he so tenderly loved, had not prevented this prince, he would ei-

ther have married her, or he would not have married again at all. He was not always directed on this head by the sole advice of the duke de Sully, at least if we believe a very curious anecdote, which may be seen in vol. 9590 des MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi; where it is observed, that Henry IV. being at Saint-Germain-en-Laye (this was prob-

1598.

of mind to suffer ere that could be effected; and all he could do for the present, was to defer taking his last resolution till he had obtained the permission he had been so long soliciting from the pope, and till then to keep his sentiments secret. He promised me not to acquaint his mistress with what I had said, lest it should draw her resentment upon me. "She loves you," said the king to me, "and esteems you still more; but her mind still entertains some remains of distrust, that you will not approve of my design in favour of her and her children: she often tells me, that when one hears you perpetually talking of my kingdom and my glory, one is apt to think that you prefer the one to my person, and the other to my quiet." I answered, that against this charge I could make no defence; that the kingdom and the sovereign were to be looked upon with the same eyes: "Remember, sire, added I, that your virtue is the soul that animates this great body, which must, by its splendor and prosperity, repay you that glory and happiness that it derives from you, and that you are not to seek happiness by any other means." After this we left the garden, and it being night separated, leaving the courtiers to rack their imaginations in vain to guess the subject of so long a conference.

NEITHER the king nor I had attended to a circumstance absolutely necessary on such occasions, which was Margaret's consent to the dissolution of her marriage: I conceived it to be highly proper to enter upon this negotiation while we expected the success of that which was carrying on at Rome. I was willing first to found the intentions of the

bly but some months at most after his return from Brittany, sent for his three ministers (M. de Rosny, de Villeroi, and de Sillery) to consult with them about this so important a question, relating to his marriage; and that the first (who to be sure was M. de Rosny) was of the same opinion as is mentioned in this place of his Memoirs: that the second advised him on the contrary not to marry, but leave the succession to the prince de Condé, who by birth-right was his true heir: and that at last the third (this was M. de Sillery, the most artful courtier of the three) in opposition to both the former advices, told him, that the best thing he could do was to marry his mistress, and legitimate the eldest of the children he had by her. Henry IV. (continues the author of this anecdote,

who plainly shews himself to be a person to whom one of the three ministers themselves had communicated what passed between the king and them) I say Henry IV. seemed surprized at this, and afterwards said, "I had promised myself a great deal from your ability and fidelity, by the advice I wanted of you with regard to my marriage; yet still I fear, that instead of having satisfied me, you have only increased my irresolution by the contrariety of your opinions, which are backed with such strong reasons, that I find myself not a little embarrassed as to the judgment which I should make as to the best of them; as to that therefore I require a little time to consider of it," &c. and after he had said this, he got up and dismissed them.

princess; therefore the substance of the letter I wrote to her on this subject was, that, most ardently desiring a reconciliation between her and the king, upon which France founded her hopes of having a lawful heir to the crown, I thought it my duty to intreat she would authorise me to use my utmost endeavours to effect this reconciliation; but that, if the inclinations of both parties were such as to render this attempt fruitless, or that it should not conduce to the purpose I mentioned to her (a point I was sensible the sterility of this princess would make her secretly agree to) I hoped she would not be offended if I should afterwards take the liberty to persuade her to make a still greater sacrifice, which the state expected from her. I did not explain myself any farther, but after what I had mentioned just before, upon the necessity of giving legitimate children to the crown of France, it was not difficult to guess what I meant by this sacrifice.

THE queen took time to deliberate upon a matter of such importance, before she sent me an answer; which I did not receive till five months after I had written to her: it was dated from Usson*, where she usually resided, and was such a one as we would have wished for, prudent, modest, and submissive. Margaret, without explaining herself any more than I had done, upon a separation that was not yet publicly talked of, was contented with substituting, instead of it, an assurance that she would readily submit to the king's will; adding the most candid praises of his conduct, and thanks to me for my sollicitude and cares.

THE king staid at Rennes but seven or eight days, resolving to set out as soon as possible for Paris, that he might reach Picardy the beginning of May: he took his rout through Vitré †, from whence I received orders from him to give a gratuity to the garrison of Rochefort, and afterwards to cause the castle to be razed. From Vitré his majesty coasted along the Loire, and came to Tours, by the way of la Fleche, which he took pleasure in seeing again, it being the place where he had passed part of his time in his youth.

* This princess had at first retired, many years before, to Agen, and afterwards to Carlat. King Henry III. her brother, had not treated her better than Henry IV. her husband, but persecuted her every where, and at last shut her up in the castle of Usson in Auvergne, where, after his

death, she was contented to live.

† I have substituted this word in the place of that of Villeroi, as the original bears: there never was a place of that name in Brittany; and, in fact, Henry IV's road lay through Vitré.

1598.

I STAID behind him at Rennes five or six days, to put the affairs of the finances in order, pay the troops, settle their departure from Brittany, and their march through the midst of the provinces; after which I came to Tours to the king; his majesty having sent for me upon an affair of great importance. I left him to continue his journey to Paris, whither (notwithstanding all the haste he was able to make) he did not arrive till the latter end of May. I was so weary * of the formality of our reception into the great cities, and particularly of the long speeches that we were tormented with in every place, that taking a bye-road by le Maine and le Perche, I came alone to my estate at Rosny, where my wife was employed in attending the building of a house, and had narrowly escaped being crushed to pieces under the ruins of the old edifice, which was first to be demolished. I staid there but a short time, yet upon my arrival at Paris, I found the king was gone from thence; he had only passed through it, and taken the road to Amiens immediately: this city he thought convenient for corresponding with the plenipotentiaries at Vervins, and likewise for visiting all the fortresses upon the frontiers, to facilitate the evacuation of those that were to be restored to him by the treaty, and to provide for their security for the future. All this was but the work of eight days, and his majesty was no sooner come to Paris than the treaty was signed †.

* The king was no less so. L'Etoile relates some very smart repartees of his majesty to these importunate haranguers; one of them tired him with long titles and compellations of honour, and repeating often, "O very benign, O very great, O very merciful, &c. king." "Add too," says Henry to him, and very weary." Another having begun his speech with these words, "Agefilaus, king of Lacedemon, fire," &c. The king, interrupting him, says, "*Ventre, saint gris!* I have heard a good deal spoken of this Agefilaus, but he had dined first; but, for my part, I have not yet." Having twice told another, that he should cut short his harangue; and seeing that he went on tediously nevertheless, he left him, and so went away, telling him, "You must say the rest then to master William," meaning the fool that belonged to the court.

† On the 2d of May 1598, the peace was signed, in the name of the king, "by M. Pomponne de Bellièvre, knight, lord of Grignon, and counsellor of state to the king, and M. Nicholas Brulart, kt. lord of Sillery, counsellor of state to the king, and president in his court of parliament at Paris. In the name of the cardinal of Austria, having full powers from the king of Spain, by M. John Richardot, knight, chief and president of the privy council of his said majesty, and one of his council of state; M. John Baptiste de Taxis, knight, &c. and M. Louis Verreiken, knight, &c." See this whole treaty in the *Memoires & negotiations de la paix traitées à Vervins*, tom. II. with an account, in form of a journal, of all that passed between the plenipotentiaries, from the opening of that negotiation till the conclusion of the peace.

THE

THE treaty was very clear and plain: the resignation of all the towns and fortresses that Spain possessed in France was almost the only considerable article in it. No difficulty arose concerning the affair of the marquisate of Saluces; the king did not think fit to break off the peace on account of this article, which was looked upon to be of so little importance, that if Savoy should refuse to do justice in it, the king, it was said, might, with very little trouble, seize the whole territory without any obstruction from Spain. Both parties, however, obliged themselves to stand to the pope's* decision of the affair. Here the plenipotentiaries committed an error, which was the cause of engaging his majesty soon after in a war that might have been avoided. I shall take no notice of the rest of those formalities in use amongst them†, and leave it to others to extol those refined stratagems that in politics are thought the masterpiece of human wit.

THE king signed the treaty at Paris, in the presence of the duke d'Arscot ‡ and the admiral of Arragon; the arch-duc did the same at Brussels, in the name of the king of Spain and his own, before marshal Biron, on whom the king, to qualify him for this ceremony, had just bestowed the rank of duke and peer of France, a dignity that completely turned his head. Messieurs de Belliévre and de Sillery were

* What regards the duke of Savoy, who was represented by M. Gaspard de Geneva, marquis de Lullin, and counsellor of state, &c. is at the end of the 24th article, and imports, "that the remainder of the other differences that are between the said most christian king and the said duke, shall be referred to the judgment of our holy father Clement VIII. to be determined by his holiness within one year. . . . And matters shall continue in the state in which they are at present," &c.

† There were found the same difficulties as to the substance, and the same obstacles as to the formalities that are usually to be met with in such sort of deliberations. They may be seen in the *Lettres de M. de Belliévre et de Sillery*, and in the *Relation*, &c. *ibid.* These two negotiators have been generally commended for the firm and wise conduct which they shewed

therein. In their letters, and, among others, in those dated the 7th of April, and 4th of March, they give a particular detail of the motives that induced them to conclude with the agents for the duke of Savoy in the manner which M. de Sully complains of: and all this they did by the particular orders of his majesty, in his letter of April 9, &c.

‡ Charles de Croy, duke d'Arscot and prince de Chimay; don Francisco de Mendoza and Cardona, admiral of Arragon. Henry IV. took an oath for the observing of the treaty of peace on Sunday the 21st of June, the cardinal de Florence, the pope's legate, officiating in the most solemn manner. The account is also to be met with, *ibid.* tom. II. p. 266. of the MSS. de la Bibliot. du Roi, vol. 9361. Mem. de la ligue, tom. VI. Mem. de Nevers, tom. II. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. Cayet, and others.

likewise

1598.

likewise present. The duke of Savoy gave his solemn assent to the peace at Chamberry, in the presence of Gadagne Bothéon *, governor of Lyons, who was deputed to him from the king for that purpose.

THUS, notwithstanding a league so powerful as that of the pope, the emperor, the king of Spain, the duke of Savoy, and all the ecclesiastics of christianity, did the king of France accomplish his designs †, and crown them with a glorious peace: all those that had been employed in effecting it he rewarded with a royal munificence; and to prevent this measure from alienating Holland from his interests, he sent Buzenval to Amsterdam, to keep up a good intelligence with the States, and to pay the pension his majesty allowed them. It is not possible to reflect on the great abilities of this prince, and his surprizing diligence in shewing himself in every part of his kingdom where his presence was the least necessary, without giving him those praises he so well deserves.

* “ He is styled, in the oath taken by the duke of Savoy on the 2d of August, “ the illustrious lord, William de Gadagne, lord of Bothéon, knight of the orders of the most high and most excellent prince Henry IV. the most christian king of France and Navarre, counsellor in his council of state, captain of fifty gens-d’arms, and his lieutenant-general in the government of the Lyons, Foret, and Beaujolois, ambassador, intrusted and deputed,” &c. Mem. & Negotiations, &c. tom. II. p. 365.

† The letters which this prince wrote to his two ministers at Vervins, during all the time that this negotiation lasted, confirm this. They are inserted in the Mem. & Negotiations, &c. *ibid.* He says, “ that with one stroke of his pen he had performed more exploits than he could have done during a long war with the best swords of his kingdom.” It was also said, upon this treaty, that the Spaniards had got the better by arms, but the French by negotiation.

M E M O I R S

O F

S U L L Y.

B O O K X.

PEACE brought with it other labours and other cares. The king began by reducing the number of his troops, both French and foreigners: the Swiss, except three companies of an hundred men each, commanded by the colonels Galati, Heid, and Baltazar, were disbanded. This reduction was not so complete as I could have wished, and the necessity of the times seemed to require; but my advice on this head was not approved by his majesty: however, if it had been considered that the royal treasure was almost exhausted, and yet that there was an absolute necessity of furnishing money for many occasions so urgent, that new sums were obliged to be borrowed for that purpose, I am of opinion that I could not have been reproached with a sordid and misplaced œconomy. 1598.

THESE sums were to be applied to the fortifying a great number of towns, and the repairing of many buildings, that by the late disorders of the times were threatened with approaching ruin, which it was necessary to prevent without delay. Upon visiting the chief rivers of the kingdom, to settle the different claims (a business which was trusted

1598.

to four persons of known probity) it was likewise found necessary to raise several works, particularly upon the Charente.

AMONGST other political regulations which were thought necessary to be made, the king set bounds to that prodigious quantity of grain, which it was usual to send out of the kingdom, and which often exposed France to suffer the greatest inconveniencies from a scarcity of her own produce *: by another regulation, all that had no right to wear swords † were forbid, upon pain of the severest punishments, to appear in them.

* The most just consequence which it would seem can be drawn from all the reasonings we read and hear daily upon this point, namely of exporting corn out of the kingdom, is that which the duke de Sully infers here. It would be unreasonable to deprive this kingdom of one of the most happy resources and one of the richest supports of its commerce, by forbidding all exportation of this sort of commodity: and it would be no less imprudent to allow it without measure or proportion.

If to find this proper medium, the public and royal magazines do not appear to be an answerable and sufficient expedient, by reason of the great expences and still greater inconveniencies that attend them; it would seem that the objection cannot be made against commissaries that might be established to take care that the granaries of private persons might be filled, opened and shut, whenever the public exigencies required it. This part of political œconomy, whose great and almost sole view should be to know and to keep up the proportion betwixt the productions of the earth and their consumption, by fairly balancing the different years and different provinces, is not, I believe, so difficult as at first it appears.

† As to the regulation of carrying arms, several persons are of opinion that it would be proper to add some distinguishing marks in the form of the cloaths, that might serve to make known in public the different ranks of people.

As to arts and sciences, and the belles lettres: if it be true, as it appears that it cannot be doubted, that it is to the care

that has been taken for some years past to cultivate them in Europe, we owe the difference that may at this day be observed among Europeans, with regard to the softness of their manners, the politeness of their behaviour, their connexion with each other, and the means which a more pacific spirit has found out to discuss and terminate, in a less cruel manner, their respective differences: it appears that, by all kinds of public motives, independently of that of the glory and particular interest that results from it, a great state ought not to lose sight of this object. After all the care which has been already taken in this kingdom, in order to form and establish a library, museums, and collections of all kinds, that might be worthy of the powerful monarch that rules it, to institute academies where persons apply themselves to improve the arts and sciences; the world expects with impatience to see the design executed that was formed some time ago, namely to accommodate all these different parts a little more to one another, in such a large town as Paris, by bringing them all within the same walls, where one might conveniently find all, at once, as books, instruments, printing-houses, and in general, all the necessary implements, together with proper accommodations for lodging the persons appointed and set over to inspect and take care of them; and especially, to see established a tribunal of arts and sciences, consisting of proper persons in the different academies, and paid by his majesty, to make exact trials, and form a precise judgment concerning books, discoveries, and

AMIDST these occupations, polite literature was not excluded from a share of the king's attention. He heard Casaubon mentioned, and upon the reputation of this learned man, he invited him to come and settle in Paris with his family, where he fixed him by a pension that afforded him the means of living as became a man of his character, who is not called, said Henry, to govern the state.

I AM under a necessity of suppressing a detail of less important incidents, the number of which would be infinite, were I to recount in these Memoirs all that his majesty said or wrote to me from Fontainebleau, Monceaux, and Saint-Germain-en-Laye, where he passed the remainder of this year, and where, from time to time, he commanded my attendance to confer with me upon different occasions. I shall exactly fulfil my former promise, in suppressing all that are not in themselves of some consideration; and shall only observe here, that perhaps no ministers of state ever found in their prince more attention, or more readiness of expedience, with respect to all that could promote either the advantage or the mere convenience of a kingdom, than I found in the prince whom I served. Neither peace, nor domestic affairs, made him neglect to observe what was doing in the neighbouring courts: the question about the true or false Don Sebastian * made then a great noise in Europe as well as in Spain. He sent la Tremouille † into Portugal, to endeavour if possible to unravel the mystery, that he might not, but upon full conviction, determine upon the justice or iniquity of the council of Spain, which had begun their measures by causing the supposed king of Protugal to be arretted.

productions that might be useful to the public. At first there was an intention to make the square or place Vendôme serve for this purpose; after this the old Louvre was pitched upon: but exigencies of state that are still more necessary to be attended to, have ever since made the execution of this project be deferred.

* This question seems at present to be pretty well decided, by the authority of far the greatest part of the best historians, who make no doubt but that king Sebastian lost his life in the battle he fought with the Moors at Alcaçar, in 1578; and consequently that this pretended Don Sebastian was but an impostor, supported both at that time and since by the enemies of Spain.

See the proofs of this king's death in M. de Thou, book lxx. of which we shall say more in the sequel. France could besides have meddled in this question another way. Catherine de Medicis pretended to have a rightful title to the crown of Portugal, alledging that she was descended of Robert, son to Alphonfus III. by Maude his first wife, who died in 1262. Since which time she maintained, that all the kings of Portugal were no other than usurpers: but as these were points very difficult to be decided, it appears, that she made but little progress in making good her pretensions.

† Claude de la Tremouille, duke de Thouars, who died in 1606.

1598.

HENRY, not having yet explained himself concerning those great schemes which he afterwards formed against the house of Austria, was desirous of acting this year as a mediator between Spain and England; he therefore proposed a conference to be held at Boulogne * between the two crowns, and sent Caumartin and Jeannin, to assist at it in his name. It was in vain that I opposed a measure, which seemed to me to be founded in very bad policy; happily, however, this conference produced nothing that had been expected from it. The obstinate hatred these two nations bore to each other, gave rise immediately to so hot a dispute about precedency, that they separated before they had even begun to settle the smallest preliminary.

THE jesuits were not more fortunate in their endeavours to take advantage of that article in the treaty of Vervins, by which all French exiles as well as foreigners were at liberty to return into France and settle there; the arret of council which intervened, deprived them of this resource, and they were obliged to make use of other means that succeeded better.

THE assembly of the clergy that was held this year, and continued part of the following, shared likewise his majesty's attention, as well as the promotion of cardinals. The son of madam Sourdis † was one of those Frenchmen for whom the king procured a hat, although he was too young to be thought worthy of that distinction. Madam de Sourdis owed this favour to the duchess of Beaufort's interest, whom she prevailed upon to support her request.

THIS was the title the king's mistress now bore, for which she quitted that of marchioness of Monceaux, when the birth of a second son drew from his majesty an increase of tenderness and honours. This lady had for a long time set no bounds to her ambition; she aspired at nothing less than being declared queen of France; and Henry's passion for her, which increased every day, gave her hopes of accomplishing her designs. When she was informed that the king's agents at Rome were commissioned to solicit the dissolution of his marriage with Margaret, and that his majesty was on the point of sending the duke of

* This conference or congress, into which were admitted the states of the United Provinces, was not held till the year 1599, in the months of May and June.

† Francis d'Escoublau, cardinal de Sourdis, and archbishop of Bourdeaux, who died in 1628.

Luxembourg * to that court with the title of ambassador, to hasten the conclusion of it, she looked upon this to be a favourable opportunity ; but suspecting the agents, and probably the new ambassador, she cast her eyes upon Sillery, who was already deep in her interest, and whom this last instance of confidence would not fail of binding still closer to her service : she sent for him, and explaining her views to him, set no bounds to the reward which she pretended to give for his service and devotion. As she knew what was most likely to tempt Sillery, she assured him of the seals at his return from Rome, though at the hazard even of disobliging madame de Sourdis her aunt and intimate friend, and promised him likewise the post of chancellor, as soon as it should be vacant. At this price Sillery engaged, with all the oaths she demanded from him, to neglect nothing that might prevail upon the pope to legitimate the two children she had by Henry, and to dissolve his marriage with Margaret. This first step taken, few obstacles remained to hinder her advancement to the throne. She easily found reasons to make the king approve of the ambassador she had chosen : the duke of Luxembourg was only suffered to set out, to be recalled as soon as Sillery should be in a condition to take his place. The duchess was at no pains to conceal from the court the title with which she had just graced her favourite ; she assisted herself in preparing his equipages, and prevailed upon the king to give the necessary orders for Sillery's appearance with all the pomp and magnificence, by which the success of his negotiation might be secured.

THE duchess of Beaufort at the same time, to prepare the French for the change which she meditated for her children, obtained of the king, who had no less tenderness for them than for the mother, that the ceremony of the baptism of the second son she had lately born him, should be performed at Saint-Germain, where his majesty then was, with the same magnificence and honours which in this ceremony are only used to the children of France. Though I could pardon in this lady an intoxication in which she was kept by the servile respect the courtiers paid to her children, and the adorations they offered to herself, I could not have the same indulgence for Henry, who was so far from taking any measures to undeceive her, that he gave orders for the baptism of this child, with a readiness that shewed how agreeable the request was to him. I declared my sentiments of this proceeding with great freedom ; I endeavoured publicly to oppose the inference which

* Henry de Luxembourg, duke de Piney, who was the last of that branch of Luxembourg.

1598.

I perceived the courtiers would draw, in favour of children so dear to the king, for the succession to the crown. The king himself, after the ceremony, became sensible that he had permitted too much, and told me that they had exceeded his orders; which I had no difficulty to believe. The child was named Alexander *, as the eldest had been César; and the court flatterers, by a kind of second baptism, gave him the title of *Monsieur*, which in France no one is allowed to bear but the king's only brother, or the presumptive heir to the crown.

THE mistress did not stop here; she began to assume all the airs of a queen, not indeed wholly through her own presumption, for I think she knew herself too well to have indulged such extravagant ideas, but was driven on to take that step by the continual solicitations of her creatures and relations: madam de Sourdis, Chiverny, and Fresne, seconded her so well on their parts, that it became insensibly the public talk of the court, that the king was going to marry his mistress; and that it was for this purpose he was soliciting his divorce at Rome. I was shocked at a report so injurious to the glory of this prince: I went to him, and made him sensible of the consequence of it. He appeared to me concerned, and even piqued at it: yet his first care was to justify madam de Beaufort, who, he positively assured me, had not contributed to the report; for which all the proof he had was that she had told him so: he threw the whole blame upon madam de Sourdis and Fresne, to whom he shewed that he was capable of pardoning a conduct so little respectful to him, since, although he was assured they were guilty, he gave them not the slightest reprimand.

ONE circumstance added great weight to the steps I took on this occasion both in public and private. Queen Margaret, with whom the affair of the approaching dissolution of her marriage obliged me to keep a correspondence by letters, was the last who heard of what was said and done at court. With regard to madam de Beaufort's pretensions, as soon as she was informed of them she wrote to me, and gave me to understand, that she had not changed her mind with regard to a separation from the king, but that she was so much offended at their intending to give the place she resigned to a woman so infamous as the duchess was by her commerce with the king, that, although she had at first given her consent without annexing any conditions to it, she was

* They gave him the title of chevalier de Vendôme. Lady Catherine, sister to the king, and the count de Soissons, were

the sponsors at his christening. He died grand prior of France, in 1629.

now determined to insist upon the exclusion of this woman; and no treatment whatever should oblige her to alter her resolution. I shewed this letter to the king, who judging by it how much his marriage with his mistress would irritate the best of his subjects against him, began, in reality, to change his sentiments and conduct.

I WAS of opinion, that if madam de Beaufort was acquainted with the contents of this letter, it might probably produce the same effects upon her. I would not take this trouble upon myself, being unwilling to meet the insolence and rage of a woman, who looked upon me as a stumbling-block in the way of her advancement, but I communicated the letter to Chiverny and Fresne, who immediately informed madam de Sourdis of it, and she almost in the same moment the duchess of Beaufort. But this lady's counsellors were not so easily alarmed; they were very sensible that the design they had undertaken to engage the king in, could not fail of meeting with many difficulties, and they had settled their behaviour upon each: the result of their deliberations had been, to hasten, as much as possible, the conclusion of the affair; persuading themselves, that when it was once over they might give it a colour that should make it excusable; or, at worst, matters would be composed after a little talk, as always happens when things are without remedy. They knew well the disposition of the French nation, especially the courtiers, whose first law it is to be always of the same mind with the sovereign, and whose strongest passion the desire of pleasing him. In a word, they thought themselves secure of every thing, provided the king himself did not fail them.

FRESNE having drawn up the warrant for the payment of the heralds, trumpeters, and other under-officers of the crown, who had attended at the ceremony of the baptism, it was brought to me, as well as the rest, that I might give my order for its discharge. As soon as I cast my eyes upon this writing, a tender concern for the king's honour made me look upon it as a lasting testimony of his weakness, which was going to be handed down to posterity. I hesitated not a moment to return it, and caused another to be drawn up in terms more proper. The titles of Monsieur, Son of France, and all that could give any notion of that kind, was suppressed, and consequently the household fees reduced to the ordinary price, with which they were highly dissatisfied. They did not fail to renew their efforts; and in their discontent quoted Monsieur de Fresné, and the law by which their claims were

regu-

1598.

regulated. At first I restrained myself before these people, whose bad intentions I well knew; but growing impatient at last I could not help saying to them, with some indignation, "Go, go, I will do no thing in it; know that there are no children of France."

No sooner had these words escaped me, than, suspecting that a troublesome affair would be made of it, to prevent it, I went immediately to his majesty, who was walking with the duke d'Epéron in the palace of Saint-Germain: I shewed him the warrant Fresne had drawn up, telling him, that if it was allowed, there needed no more but to declare himself married to the duchess of Beaufort. "This is Fresne's malice," said the king, after he had read it: "but I shall take care to prevent it." Then, commanding me to tear the paper, he turned to three or four lords of the court who were nearest him, "How malignant are these people," said he aloud, "and what difficulties do they throw in the way of those who serve me with fidelity: they brought a warrant to monsieur de Rosny, with a design to make him offend me if he passed it, or my mistress if he refused it." In the state affairs then were, these words were far from being indifferent; they gave the courtiers, who had smiled at my simplicity, to understand that they might possibly be deceived themselves, and that the supposed marriage was not so near as they had imagined. The king continuing to converse with me apart, told me, that he did not doubt but that madam de Beaufort was greatly enraged against me, and advised me to go to her, and endeavour, by solid reasons, to give her satisfaction: "If that will not do," added he, "I will speak to her as her master."

I WENT directly to the duchess's apartment, which was in the cloister of Saint-Germain. I knew not what notion she conceived of a visit which she found I began with a sort of explanation: she did not allow me time to go on: the rage with which she was animated not permitting her to observe any measures, she interrupted me with a reproach that I had imposed upon the king, and made him believe that black was white. "'Tis well, madam!" said I, interrupting her in my turn, but with great calmness, "since you think fit to talk in this manner, I shall take my leave, but I shall not, however, neglect to do my duty." Saying this, I left her, not being willing to hear more, lest I should be tempted to say something more severe. I put the king in a very ill humour with his mistress, when I repeated to him what she had said. "Come along with me," said the king, with an emotion that pleased me

me greatly, "and I will let you see that women do not wholly possess me." His coach not being ready soon enough for his impatience, his majesty got into mine: and as we drove to the duchess's lodgings, he assured me that he would never have cause to reproach himself, that, through his complaisance for a woman, he had banished or even disgusted servants, who, like me, were only solicitous for his glory and interest.

MADAM de Beaufort, upon my leaving her apartment so hastily, had expected to see the king soon after: and during that time had taken sufficient pains to set off her person to the greatest advantage; believing, like me, that the victory which one or other of us must now gain, would be the preface of her good or bad fortune. As soon as she was informed of the king's arrival, she came as far as the door of the first hall to receive him. Henry, without saluting her, or expressing any part of his usual tenderness, "Let us go, madam, said he, to your chamber, and suffer no one to enter but yourself, Rosny, and I; for I want to talk to you both, and make you live together upon friendly terms." Then ordering the door to be shut, and that no one should be suffered to remain in the chamber, wardrobe, or closet, he took her hand, holding one of mine at the same time, and with an air that she had good reason to be surprized at, told her, that the true motive which had determined him to attach himself to her, was the gentleness he had observed in her disposition; but that her conduct for some time past had convinced him, that what he had believed to be real was only dissembled, and that she had deceived him: he reproached her with the bad counsels she had listened to, and the very considerable faults they had occasioned. He covered me with praises, to shew the duchess, by the difference of our proceedings, that I only was truly attached to his person: he commanded her to get so far the better of her aversion for me, as to be able to regulate her conduct by my advice, since, she might depend upon it, his passion for her should never induce him to deprive me of his confidence.

MADAM de Beaufort began her answer by sighs and tears; she assumed a tender and submissive air; she would have kissed the hand of Henry; omitting no artifice which she thought capable of melting his heart. It was not till she had played over all these little arts, that she began to speak, which she did by complaining, that instead of those returns she might have expected from a prince to whom she had given her heart, she saw herself sacrificed to one of his grooms; she repeated

1598.

all that I had said or done to the prejudice of her children, in order to awake his majesty's resentment against me: then, feigning to sink under the violence of her grief and despair, she let herself fall upon a couch, where she protested she was determined to wait for her death, not being able to endure life after so cruel an affront. The attack was a little strong; Henry did not expect it: I observed him heedfully, and saw his countenance change: but recovering himself immediately, that his mistress might not perceive it, he continued to tell her in the same tone, that she might spare herself the trouble of having recourse to so many artifices on so slight an occasion. Sensibly affected at this reproach, she redoubled her tears, crying, that she plainly perceived she was abandoned, and that doubtless it was to augment her shame and my triumph, that the king had resolved to make me a witness of the most cruel treatment that was ever shewn to any woman. This thought seemed to plunge her into a real despair. "By heaven, madam," said the king, losing patience, "this is too much, I know to what all this artifice tends; you want to prevail upon me to banish a servant whose assistance I cannot be without: I declare to you, if I was reduced to the necessity of chusing to lose one or the other, I would rather part with ten mistresses like you, than one servant such as him." He did not forget the term of groom which she made use of; and was still more offended, that she had applied it to a man whose family had the honour of being allied to his own.

AFTER this harsh speech the king suddenly quitted the duchess, and was going out of her apartment without seeming to be moved at the condition he left her in; probably because he knew her well enough to be assured that all this violence of grief was affectation and grimace. As for me, I was so far deceived by it as to be greatly concerned for her; and was not drawn out of this error till madam de Beaufort, perceiving the king was going to leave her so much offended, that she had reason to apprehend he would never return again, changed her behaviour in an instant, ran to stop him, and threw herself at his feet; no longer to impose upon his tenderness, but to sooth him to a forgetfulness of her fault: she began by apologizing for her past conduct; assumed an air of gentleness and complacency, and swore she never had, nor ever would, have any will but his. Never was there a change of scene more sudden: I now saw a woman perfectly agreeable, easy, and compliant, who behaved to me as if all that had just passed had been a dream; and we separated very good friends.

THE king being at Monceaux about the end of October, felt some slight touches of a fever, which ended at last in a violent attack*; it was attributed to the disturbance caused by a prodigious quantity of humours, which were discharged by a purge; and as the fever seemed to have wholly ceased, the king thought himself cured, and wrote to me to that effect; observing, however, that his indisposition had left a faintness and dejection upon him which was not usual with him, but that he would endeavour to disperse it by walking, if he could get strength enough. These symptoms were the forerunner of a distemper, which a few days afterwards seized him with such violence that he was soon in great danger, and I had the affliction to find him in this condition on my arrival at Monceaux, with Châtillon and d'Incarville, whom he sent for in the letter I have just mentioned. I thought for a long time that I was only come to see my dear master expire in my arms, for he would not permit me to leave Monceaux during his illness, and often called me to his bed-side. In one of these moments when the obstinacy and continual recurrence of his distemper baffled all the art of the physicians, and this prince himself thought that his last hour was approaching; "My friend, said he to me, you have often seen me meet dangers which it was easy for me to have avoided, know better than any other person how little I fear death; but I will not deny that I am grieved to die before I have raised this kingdom to that splendor I intended for it; or convinced my people, by discharging them of part of their taxes, and governing them mildly, that I love them as my own children."

1508.

AT length Henry's good constitution prevailed, and his distemper was removed almost instantaneously†; so that the grief into which his danger had plunged us, was followed immediately by the joy of his recovery. He had afterwards a slight relapse, which had no bad consequence: he sent me word of this at Paris, whither I had returned as

* In the following manner the historian Matthieu speaks of this disorder of Henry IV. "While he was very merry with his mistress and Bellegarde, and laughing heartily at some satirical verses, he was suddenly seized with a violent fit of vomiting, which kept him for seven hours together in very great danger, all that time having a constant desire to drink, and still throwing up the water while the glass was at his hand."

Tom. II. liv. ii. p. 277.

† It was during this malady that Henry IV. was very much troubled with a cancerous excrescence; which served as a pretext to the dukes of Beaufort, to let him know, by means of la Riviere, his first physician, whom she had gained over to her interest, that he could, after this, have no more children. Amelot de la Houffaye, num. I. sur la lettre 243 du cardinal d'Os-
fat.

1598.

soon as I saw him out of danger. . And in another letter, dated the 6th of November, which Schomberg, at his return from Monceaux, brought me to Paris from his majesty, he informed me that his health was perfectly established, except that he had some small remains of that dejection on his spirits, of which he had formerly complained, and which he could not get rid of, notwithstanding he followed exactly the advice of his physicians. The sieurs Marefcot, Martin, and Rosset, having, upon the news of his illness, hastened to Monceaux to assist his physicians in ordinary with their advice, he had the attention to cause them to be paid for their trouble, writing to me to give each of them one hundred crowns, and fifty to Rignault his surgeon.

THE king had not yet quitted Monceaux when the cardinal of Florence, who had so great a hand in the treaty of Vervins, passed through Paris, as he came back from Picardy, to return from thence to Rome, after he had taken leave of his majesty. The king sent me to Paris to receive him, commanding me to pay him all imaginable honours. He had need of a person near the pope so powerful at this cardinal, who afterwards obtained the pontificate himself: I therefore omitted nothing that could answer his majesty's intentions; and the legate having an inclination to see Saint-Germain-en-Laye, I sent orders to Momier, the keeper of the castle, to hang the halls and chambers with the finest tapestry of the crown. Momier executed my orders with great punctuality, but with so little judgment, that for the legate's chamber he chose a suit of hangings wrought by the queen of Navarre; very rich, indeed, but which represented nothing but emblems and motto's against the pope and the Roman court, as satirical as they were ingenious. The prelate endeavoured to prevail upon me to accept of a place in the coach that was to carry him to Saint-Germain; which I refused, being desirous of getting there before him, that I might see whether every thing was in order; with which I was very well pleased. I saw the blunder of the keeper, and reformed it immediately. The legate would not have failed to have looked upon such a mistake as a formed design to insult him, and to have represented it as such to the pope. Reflecting afterwards, that no difference in religion could authorize such sarcasms, I caused all those motto's to be effaced.

I HAD long hoped that a peace would afford me leisure to examine the finances of the kingdom thoroughly: all that I had hitherto been able to do, was only to alleviate the mischief; and far from having been able to dig to the root, so as to eradicate it at once, the different necess-

necessities of the state, which always followed each other so close during the war, made it be looked on as a great stroke of policy to manage the finances without increasing the confusion. It is certain that, upon a closer examination, they seemed tainted with an incurable disease, which could not even be enquired into without the most unshaken courage and invincible patience: the first glance was able to discover nothing but an universal loss of credit, the royal treasury indebted several hundred millions, no means of raising more money, excessive poverty, and ruin at hand; but this very state of despair made it necessary not to delay a single moment the undertaking this great work, while several opportunities concurring shewed at least a possibility of success. Every thing was in tranquility; the pay of the troops considerably lessened, the greater part of the military expences suppressed, the king's council weary at length of making useless endeavours to deprive me of any management of public affairs, almost all business was transacted by me; these gentlemen disdained even to come to the assemblies, unless forced thither by their own interest, or that of their relations or friends: in those assemblies nothing was proposed without my approbation, and nothing executed without my consent; the king had no secret he reserved from me, nor any authority that he did not occasionally invest me with; all these considerations persuaded me that, if the calamities caused by so many long and cruel civil wars were ever to be repaired, now or never was the time to accomplish it.

I HAD received from nature a strong constitution, a body able to support * long labours, and a mind capable of great application, a natural

* The picture which M. de Perfixe gives us of M. de Rosny, altogether agrees with that which we have seen drawn here. "He had especially, says he, a genius turned for the management of the finances, and all the other qualifications requisite for such a station: in fact, he was a regular man, exact, and a great economist; he was punctual to his word, no ways prodigal, without any pompous ostentation, not inclined to profuse expence, game, or women, nor addicted to any thing that did not exactly tally with a man bred to such an employment; besides, he was vigilant, laborious, expeditious, bestowing almost his whole time on business, and but little on his

"pleasures: withal he had the happy dexterity of seeing thro' such sort of matters, and of unraveling the puzzling perplexities, and untying the intricate knots, under which the farmers of the finances, when they have a mind to be knavish, endeavour to conceal their tricks." Part. 3. P. Matthieu gives him no less high a character. Tom. II. liv. ii. p. 278. "The king gave him," says le Grain, "the post of superintendent-general of his finances, investing him with so great an authority as had never been seen in that office before: in which, it must be confessed, there wanted a man at that time, who would have his eyes hood-winked. to every other consideration but the propensity.

1598.

propensity to regularity and œconomy, improved by a particular study of that science during twenty-five years that I was near the king's person; and, if I may be allowed to say it, a passion yet more forcible for honour and virtue: such are the qualities I brought to the conduct of public affairs; with these, although one cannot keep clear of committing faults, and those likewise very inconsiderable, yet (and experience as well as the success that attended my labours give me a right to say so) one may be assured that the revenues of a state are fallen into good hands, when a moderate degree of judgment, much diligence and exactness, and still more probity, are qualities remarkable in him that governs them. I dare not assume more likeness than this to the portrait I am going to draw of a good minister of the finances, because that, although I have always proposed such an one for my imitation, yet I candidly confess I am far from pretending to set up myself for a model.

It would be the shortest way to say, that a man who is called to the management of public affairs, ought to have no passions; but that we

“ king's advantage, that is, to the public treasure, which it was necessary to restore to its full vigour; and who would be more rigid than what either the dignity of some persons, or the respect due to others, would have endured at any other time; and indeed this great authority and power, which the king gave him, did, in a little time after, restore full strength to all the main resources of the state.” See the whole of what this writer says, with regard to M. de Sully, liv. vii.

“ He put,” says d'Aubigné, tom. III. liv. v. chap. 3. “ the finances into the hands of the marquis de Rosny, afterwards duke of Sully, because he found he had a very extensive and laborious genius, as also a natural sternness and severity of temper, which, without regarding the favour of any body, enabled him to bear the unpleasing irksomeness of rebuffs; and by that means, filled the king's coffers, to which the natural disposition of his master did not a little contribute.”

In a small piece, tom. III. of the Mem. d'Etat de Villeroi, we find the following account. “ This change in the face of affairs, which the said sieur de Sully had introduced into France, that had been

“ brought to the lowest ebb of distress, rendering it opulent and flourishing by means of his good management and industry, does sufficiently testify his abilities. The remonstrances which he made even to the king's pleasure, and the opposition which he maintained against all the great men, shew his virtue, prudence and courage. Even those who envy him say, that he alone was of more use to the public, and knew its interest better, than all the rest of the kingdom besides.” The manuscript which we quoted in the preface, coincides with this; and further may be added the suffrage of the greatest part of the historians and memoirs of that time, which all agree, that M. de Sully has, in strict justice, deserved the appellation of the most laborious, the most capable, the most upright, and especially the most steady minister that ever was. The severity, rigidity, and haughty carriage, which are almost the only faults with which he has been charged, arise from the last mentioned quality, that no doubt was carried a little too far. We shall have occasion to speak more of it in the sequel: but I thought myself obliged previously to add these testimonies, to the account he gives us, of his character and conduct.

may not wholly destroy the notion of such a being, by reducing him to an impossible and merely ideal existence, it is sufficient to say that he ought to have such a knowledge of them, as to be able to avoid their influence: he should be sensible of all the meanness of pride, the folly of ambition, the weakness of hatred, and the baseness of revenge. As I intend only to make such reflections as immediately relate to him, I shall not here take any notice of the great meanness of treating people ill, not only by actions but even words, and of never giving orders to inferiors but in the transports of rage, or peevishness of ill-humour, seasoning them with oaths and curses, since, living for the public, he ought to appear affable, and be easy of access to every body, except to those who only come to him with a design to corrupt him, and never to lose sight of this maxim, which holds one of the first places in the affairs of government, That a kingdom ought to be regulated by general rules, and that exceptions only occasion discontent, and produce complaints.

A JUST knowledge of what is due to rank, and of different degrees of distinction, is so far from being contrary to this maxim, that it is essentially necessary to it, as well for observing those rules of behaviour to persons of different ranks, which the French politeness has established, as to cure himself of that error that his riches and the favour of his king place every other person in a state of subordination to him. An inclination for the fair sex is a source of weaknesses and injustice, which will inevitably carry him beyond the bounds of his duty; a passion for deep play, will expose him to temptations a thousand times more difficult to be overcome by a man who has all the money of the kingdom passing through his hands; that he may escape this dangerous snare, I am under a necessity of prescribing to him to have no acquaintance either with cards or dice.

A DISLIKE of fatigue proceeds generally from the same inclinations which lead to voluptuousness, or create effeminacy. A statesman ought in temperance to seek for a remedy against a fondness for splendor, and the delicacies of the table, which serve only to enervate both body and mind. A virtuous man ought to be wholly unacquainted with drunkenness; a diligent man ought to be no less ignorant of what is called high living. As he ought to make his retirement in his cabinet at all times, and all hours, not merely supportable, but pleasing; he cannot be too careful to prevent his mind from running on the delights of balls, masquerades, and other parties of pleasure; in all these trifling amusements

1598. ments there is a nameless enchantment, that intoxicates the hearts of philosophers and misanthropes themselves.

THE same caution is necessary against hunting, keeping many servants, equipages, furniture, buildings, and all other occasions of expence that luxury has invented. A taste for any of these things soon degenerates into a kind of passion, of which the waste of time is not the only bad consequence; prodigality, ruin, and dishonour, are the usual effects of it: it belongs only to a man who cannot resolve to live and amuse himself with his own company, to think continually of galleries, columns, and gildings, and to run all his life after statues, antiques, and medals. Do you learn to be contented with a common picture; the delicacy of procuring, at a great expence of money and anxiety of mind, original and other scarce pieces, proceeds wholly from an affectation of taste.

I AM, however, far from carrying the severity of these maxims so far, as to forbid a man, invested with a public employment, from having any attention to his own ease; and to deny him all kinds of amusement. I would have him indulge himself in moderate pleasures, and take care of his fortune, provided that he does the one without dissipation, and the other without dishonour. It is one of those advantages that attends a disposition not prone to expence, and fond of regularity, that he who is possessed of it, if he lives long, finds himself insensibly in affluent circumstances. To have made a fortune, a phrase that has so hateful a sound, because, when it is applied to a man of business, it commonly means nothing but injustice, oppression, and cruelty; and when applied to a courtier, nothing but mean tricks, despicable flattery, cringing servility, and even at some times knaveries and treachery, is nothing more than a natural consequence, and even an act of virtue, where all see that the fortune is only the reward of labour, or an honest recompence of good actions: that I may not be mistaken, I will add, that this ought to appear so clearly as to force our greatest enemies to see it and confess it*.

IT ought therefore to be an established rule, that every man who undertakes the management of the finances, or any other part of the minist-

* A great part of the maxims which fill up chap. 8. part. 1. of the Political Testament of the cardinal de Richelieu, that treats both of the council and counsellors of the king, is evidently taken from this and many other places of M. de Sully's Memoirs; and chiefly what he says of the

four qualities requisite to constitute a perfect counsellor, to wit, capacity, fidelity, courage or resolution, and application. I shall have occasion in what follows to make some remarks upon that which seems overstrained in the maxims and manners of M. de Sully, with regard to what is called luxury.

try, should make, and renew from time to time, a kind of acknowledgment of the state of his income; that is, that upon his entrance into the ministry he should draw up an exact and particular memorial of his present possessions, and upon his leaving it give in another in the same form; so that whatever alterations have happened in his fortune may be known to others as well as himself. I have already taken care to give the public an account of every augmentation of my fortune, and each new dignity that was conferred upon me, according to the different periods of time when they happened, and I shall still continue this method: but as I look upon this affair to be subject to calculation, I am going to put every one into a way of doing it himself, and shall shew it completely done at the end of these Memoirs.

MY father's estate being equally divided between me and the only remaining brother out of four that I had, my share of it, joined to my wife's fortune, which was ten thousand livres, amounted only to fifteen or sixteen thousand livres a year; and as it increased but very little during five and twenty years when the king had no means of rewarding his servants, this was my whole income when the revenues of the state were committed to my care. I am sensible that there are many persons who would blush to make such a confession; but for my part I have already said, that in this respect I see only one thing that ought to give occasion for a blush, which is, the infamy of possessing riches either ill or doubtfully acquired: I have neither the reproach of extortion, confiscation, or unwarrantable profits to apprehend; all that I added to my first fortune arose merely from the king's bounty to me, so that I owe all to one God, and one master.

WHAT I had been able to add to my fortune till the present year 1598, amounted to the following sums; an appointment of two thousand livres a year as counsellor of Navarre; as much as counsellor of state, with a pension of three thousand six hundred livres, which the king annexed to this post: my salary as member of the council, having been augmented by degrees, and in proportion to the services the king found he received from me, was, at this time, brought to twenty thousand livres: the king doubled my company of gendarmes, which at first only consisted of fifty men, and after it was incorporated with that of the queen, of which I was made captain-lieutenant, the pay amounted to five thousand livres: the king made me likewise hono-

1598.

rary * counsellor of the parliament of Paris, but without any income. It was at this time, that Chauvelin the younger had the first dispensation that had been granted from the rule of forty days, paying for it four thousand crowns. I shall make but one article of the government of Mante, which had been just then given me, and that of Gergeau which I had afterwards. Such was the state of my fortune at that time; the course of it, till then extremely slow, became very rapid the following years, by the great offices with which his majesty honoured me, and by rewards so considerable, that when I collect them together they will make one of the most important articles. I shall take into it his least presents, and even those which I received from other royal persons. Before I enter into the discussion of affairs, and account of the finances which I have promised, since I have begun to inform the public of my personal character, I will finish the picture by giving a detail of my public employments, and my whole manner of living, after I was in a public employment: this is the proper place for it, although, in order to say all upon this head at one time, it is necessary I should suppose myself possessed of all those posts which were not given me till some time after.

SIX days in the week a council was held both morning and evening; the first and most important was called the council of state and the finances, which singly took up the Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, by sitting both in the morning and afternoon; the king was the head of it, and was generally present. The dukes and peers, the officers of the crown, the knights of the king's orders, or those who had a warrant from his majesty, had a seat and a voice in the consultations: here were received and examined all kinds of petitions on any occasion whatever, but especially those relating to the pensions of state, which from this time began to be paid with a punctuality that made them be preferred to every other establishment, and even to landed estates. The three other days of the week were likewise taken up morning and evening with different councils, which were called *conseils des parties*, composed of a certain number of particular counsellors, where examinations were

* The letters patent by which Henry IV. made the marquis de Rosny an honorary counsellor, and thereby gave him a privilege of sitting in parliament, &c. dated March 16, 1602, may be seen in the re-

gisters of the parliament of Paris; as also the enrolment of these letters, and his admittance accordingly on the 19th of March the same year.

held of things properly referred to each of these councils: if there was any controversy, it was dispatched to the courts of justice to whose cognizance it belonged; and care was taken that justice should be done honestly and speedily. I was a member of each of these councils, and commonly presided in them when the king was not present, which often happened, especially in the *conseils des parties*. I never failed to be at the council of state, the whole business of which lay upon me: all the letters and petitions that were to be presented there were addressed to me; and as the questions that require general deliberations are not very common, it often happened that in communicating the affair, I delivered likewise the resolutions to be taken; and often carried thither arrêts ready drawn up, that every thing might be dispatched at one sitting; and it happened but very seldom that alterations were made. I have always laid it down as a rule, that the answers which were given for regulating the conduct of persons employed in great affairs, cannot be too expeditious, or too distinct; all the time that is spent in contestations is lost time.

It may be easily imagined how much time these employments demanded: I accustomed myself to rise at four o'clock in the morning, both in winter and summer; and the two first hours were taken up in putting in as much order as possible those affairs that were to be each day brought upon the carpet: a minister who acts otherwise will leave all things in confusion and perpetual disorder, by the different perplexities he will find himself involved in at last. At half an hour after six I was dressed, and ready to attend the council, which began at seven, and generally ended at nine; and according to the importance of the business that was transacted in it, at ten, and sometimes eleven o'clock. It often happened that his majesty, instead of coming to the council, would send for me at nine or ten o'clock, when it was over, and either alone, or with his two other ministers of state*, Vil-

* Thus were those called then, who since have been intitled secretaries of state: and such as were named secretaries of state, as M. Forget, M. Lomenie, M. Beaulieu-Rufé, and M. Potier, were properly no more than four secretaries of the finances, or his majesty's first clerks. Tho' it appears that none of the three hath been called prime minister of state, yet so unequally was the distribution of the functions of the ministry made between M. de

Sully and his two colleagues, and Henry IV. gave the first so great a share, and so much authority in what belonged to their province, that we may say he was, in effect, prime minister, only that he had not the name: this title was not at that time much in use; for the chancellor du Prat, under Francis I. the constable de Montmorenci, under Henry II. &c. did not bear it, tho' they solely possessed the confidence of their masters. M. de Villeroi was at

1598.

leroi and Sillery, walk with us, acquaint us with his intentions, and give each of us orders relating to our particular employments : from thence I went home to dinner.

MY table generally consisted of ten covers ; and being served with a moderation that was not approved of by the lords of the court, especially the epicures, who make a serious affair of refining upon every thing that is eat or drank, I seldom invited any persons to dine with me ; so that my table was usually filled only with my wife and children, or at most with some friend who was not more difficult to be pleased than myself. Frequent attempts were made to alter my conduct in this respect, but I always replied to any reproaches of that kind, in the words of an ancient, That if the guests were wise, there was sufficient for them ; if they were not, I could suffer the want of their company without trouble.

WHEN dinner was over, I went into my great hall, where it was known that I regularly gave audience, and therefore at that hour always full : every one was admitted, and had free audience ; the reply was no less speedy : herein my particular taste agreed perfectly with his majesty's intention. I began with the ecclesiastics of both religions : the country people, who remained last, were kept but a little time in expectation. I took care to dispatch every one's business before I retired ; and even sent for those who, staying in the court or the garden, had suffered the hour to slip. If the affair that was proposed to me was equitable, and depended upon me, I promised in two words the execution of it ; if otherwise, I civilly chid the proposer, and honestly forbore to meddle with it : if it appeared doubtful, or complicated, I called an intendant, or one of my secretaries, to whom I gave the papers that led to an explanation of it. And such was my management, that the affair was totally dispatched within a week, if I had promised it ; and let the business be ever so much perplexed, the council before whom it was laid always dispatched it within the month.

As to the other councils, which were held on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, I assisted at them likewise as long as I could, before the increase of my employments had likewise increased my business, and even afterwards ; but when the direction of the marine, ar-

the head of foreign affairs, having also the president Jeannin for his colleague. M. de Sillery and Bellèvre, who became chan-

cellor some little time after, had the management of all domestic affairs.

tillery.

tillery, fortifications, buildings, bridges, and causeys, were entrusted to me only, to which must be added the affairs of my governments, I was obliged to apply to this business in the place of the other; and to devote the mornings of these three days to the dispatch of business relating to these offices, because his majesty thought them of consequence enough, especially that of surveyor-general of the highways, and superintendant of the fortifications and works, to be present at the clearing the accounts of each of these bodies of people, which was done in the presence of the governors and other officers, who were called together in a body on these occasions: notwithstanding this, I did not neglect the other councils, but took care to be present when any important affair was debated, especially when it related to war.

I REGULATED my time in such a manner, that I had still leisure enough for those other affairs, and also for many more which I have not yet mentioned. The extraordinary and unforeseen business I was engaged in, the conversations I had with his majesty, the orders and letters I received from him, may be imagined by a general declaration, that this prince not only informed me of whatever happened to him, but also entrusted me with his most private affairs *, his secrets, designs, reflections, private distempers, pleasures, domestic uneasinesses, fears, hopes, amours, friendships, and disgusts; in a word, all was confided to my fidelity and discretion, terms which I am justly entitled to make use of. In all these moments to comply with the king's desires and occasions, there was an absolute necessity to lay aside the most pressing business, to invent schemes, to go upon private errands, answer letters, and undertake journeys; by all which, the affairs of the state would have been injured, if by giving the night as well as the day to these accidental employments, which were not regulated by months, days, or hours, an extreme diligence in resuming those affairs that had been interrupted by them, had not restored every thing to its proper state.

ONE is surprized, in giving this detail, how, with such an exact œconomy of time, there should remain so little for affairs merely domestic: the fewer moments I could spare for them, I was never able to find but in one of the afternoons of those same three days; and these

* " Never any minister had the confidence of his master more entirely than this had; and never was any more worthy of it, on account of his fidelity, ac-

tivity, continual application to business, and disinterestedness in every thing that related to the king's service." &c. Hist. de France de Chalons, tom. III. p. 255.

1598.

I snatched by intervals. It was necessary therefore that my wife should accustom herself to do all that I was not absolutely obliged to do; otherwise I must have relied upon people of business, or upon my domestics.

As to amusements, and hours of ease and refreshment, which were necessary to soften the fatigue of such extreme application to business, they were regulated with as much exactness as my most serious affairs; but, like them, subject to frequent interruptions: when, by good fortune, this did not happen, I had no occasion to go out of the arsenal to find them; for it was in this castle that I resided from the time I was made grand master till the death of my king, which gave me up to the tranquility of a private life. The exercises of the arsenal, which was an excellent school for young people, gave the greatest relief to my mind, especially when I saw my children, my son-in-law, my relations and friends, mingled together: the good company which appeared in the afternoon at that little rendezvous, the exultations which were often heard, the air of gaiety without effeminacy, and of pleasure without negligence, which appeared there, is, of all things which I know, most proper to relieve a mind to which, by long habit of labour, all the amusements of mere idleness have been made insipid. In whatever manner I spent the afternoon, when the hour of supper arrived, I ordered all my doors to be shut, and no person to be suffered to enter, unless he came from the king. From this hour, till I returned to bed, which I always did at ten o'clock, there was no longer any mention of business, all was ease, mirth, and social joy, with a small number of good and agreeable friends.

THE office of prime minister, though at all times laborious, is not always loaded with the same difficulties; and the good fortune of those is to be envied, who are called to it at a conjuncture, when the whole stream of affairs having for many years run on in a calm and regular course, they have nothing to do but sit quietly at the helm, content themselves with a general inspection, and leave the rest to be performed by that great number of persons who act under their order. This advantage I never enjoyed, as may be perceived by what I have had occasion to say of it at different times; and, not to touch yet upon the affairs of the finances, which was at that time an ocean without bottom or shore, I desire the reader just to cast a look upon the different perplexities which must be met with, without examining foreign affairs; a cabal of disaffected people to watch narrowly, and, if possible, to
break;

break; a religious dispute to terminate, a powerful party to satisfy, and a general subordination and scheme of government to establish and cause to be observed. Things were in such a state, that of all those officers of war and *police*, of the finances, judicature, and the king's household, of pensioners, and those that received salaries from the state, nothing more was known than that their number was infinite, and that there was a necessity for learning their names, and marking them all in a register, in order to suppress part of them.

THE affairs of war were in the utmost disorder, the regulation of which did not, as may possibly be thought, depend upon the disbanding part of the troops; there was a necessity for taking cognizance of all the towns and fortresses, most of which were so near destruction, that upon this account, as well as to lessen the number of garrisons that were supported in France, those that were useless were to be demolished; which could not however be done till after the death of those persons from whom it would have been dangerous to take away the governments of them.

THE marine alone might have furnished business enough for one minister for a great number of years; for this part of the state, which requires so much application, does not make a very rapid progress; it can be derived only from that quiet and splendor which a kingdom gains by peace and a good government*. It is not to be imagined to what a degree the marine, and the commerce that depended on it, had been neglected in France. I agreed with the king, that this establishment should be begun at the foundation; that the sea-coasts should be visited, and ports examined, in order to take measures for repairing them. That the same ought to be done with those few disabled vessels and galleys that were yet to be found, till new ones could be built; after which, officers should be appointed, and sailors and pilots sought for, who might be stimulated to industry by rewards: in a word, to spare a longer detail, that an absolutely new marine should be created.

ALL this could not be performed but by degrees, and a little at a time, the finances being that part of the body of the state which was most diseased, required assistance first: the greatness of the evil may be

* "A nation must be very powerful," says cardinal Richelieu, after M. de Sully, "to pretend to this inheritance, (the possession of the sovereignty at sea) the titles to it being founded more in force

"than in reason." Testament politique de ce cardinal, part. II. chap. ix. § 5, 6. Cardinal d'Ossat, in several of his letters, advises Henry IV. to put his marine on a new footing.

imagined,

1598.

imagined, by an inventory of the sums which were drawn from the exchequer to bring over the heads and other principal members and cities of the league to the king's party. This inventory has something curious enough; it amounted to more than thirty-two millions of livres, and is as follows*.

To the duke of Lorraine and other persons comprehended in his treaty, three million seven hundred sixty-six thousand eight hundred and twenty-five livres: To the duke of Maïenne and others comprehended in his treaty, together with two regiments of Swifs, whom the king took upon himself to pay, three million five hundred and eighty thousand livres: To the duke of Guise and others comprehended in his treaty, three hundred and eighty-eight thousand livres: To the duke of Nemours and others, three hundred and seventy-eight thousand livres: To the duke of Mercœur, for Blavet and other towns of Brittany, four million two hundred ninety-five thousand three hundred and fifty livres: To the duke d'Elbœuf, for Poitiers, &c. nine hundred and seventy thousand eight hundred and twenty-four livres: To messieurs de Villars and the chevalier d'Oïse, for Rouen and Havre, comprehending likewise the indemnifications granted to the duke of Montpenfier, marechal Biron, the chancellor, &c. three million four hundred seventy-seven thousand eight hundred livres: To the duke d'Epernon and others, four hundred and ninety-six thousand livres: For the reduction of Marseilles, four hundred six thousand livres: To the duke of Brissac, for Paris, &c. one million six hundred ninety-five thousand four hundred livres: To the duke of Joyeuse, for Toulouse, &c. one million four hundred and seventy thousand livres: To monsieur de la Chatre, for Orleans, Bourges, &c. eight hundred ninety-eight thousand nine hundred livres: To messieurs de Villeroi and d'Alincourt, for Pontoise, &c. four hundred seventy-six thousand five hundred and ninety-four livres: To monsieur de Bois-Dauphin and others, six hundred and seventy-eight thousand eight hundred livres: To monsieur de Balagny, for Cambray, &c. eight hundred and twenty-eight thousand nine hundred and thirty livres: To messieurs de Vitry and de Medavy, three hundred and eighty thousand livres: To the sieurs Vidame d'Amiens, d'Etournelle, marquis de Trenel, Sesseval, du Pêche, Lamet, &c. and for the cities of Amiens, Abbeville, Peronne, Coucy, Pierrefont, &c. one million two hundred sixty-one thousand eight hundred and eighty livres: To the sieurs de

* Here the old Memoirs have an error, in the calculation, of about one hundred thousand livres.

Bellan, Quionville, Joffreville, du Pêche, &c. and for Troyes, Nogent, Vitré, Chaumont, Rocroy, Chateau-Porcien, &c. eight hundred thirty thousand and forty-eight livres : To messieurs de Rochefort, and for Vezely, Macon, Maily, &c. four hundred fifty-seven thousand livres : To messieurs de Canillac, d'Achion, Lignerac, Monfan, Fumel, &c. and for the city du Puy, &c. five hundred forty-seven thousand livres : To messieurs de Monpezat and de Montefpan, &c. and for several cities of Guienne, three hundred and ninety thousand livres : For Lion, Vienne, Valence, and other cities of Dauphiny, six hundred and thirty-six thousand eight hundred livres : To the sieurs de Daradon, la Pardieu, Bourcanny, Saint-Ofange, for Dinan, &c. one hundred and eighty thousand livres : To the sieurs de Leviston, Baudoin, and Beauvillers, one hundred and sixty thousand livres.

I SHOULD terrify my readers were I to shew them that this sum made up but a small part of that which was demanded from the exchequer, both for the French and foreigners, under the title of pay, pensions, loans, arrears, &c. and that the total of all these sums, after making some deductions, amounted, by the computation I made, to near three hundred and thirty millions of livres : this calculation I would lay down here, but that I think it will appear more properly when I shall treat of the discussion of all these particulars.

HERE was a large field displayed for the labours of a superintendant of the finances ; but the difficulty was, where to begin ; the exorbitancy of the state-debts demanded an increase of the taxes ; but the general poverty a diminution of the old : and every thing being well considered, I even found it for the interest of the prince, that the cries of the public misery should be heard. It is not possible to give a just idea of the dreadful condition to which the provinces were reduced, especially those of Dauphiny, Provence, Languedoc, and Guienne ; the theatres of long and bloody wars and outrages, by which they were wholly exhausted. I granted, over the whole kingdom, a remission of the remainder of the subsidies of 1596, which were yet to pay * ; a proceeding that necessity, as well as charity and justice, demanded. This gratuity, which gave the people time to breathe again, was the loss of twenty millions to the king ; but it facilitated the payment

* Together with the arrears of preceding years, for which private persons had given their bonds to the receivers of the

taxes ; some of which bonds, according to le Grain, liv. vii. being seven years backwards, were declared null and void.

1598. of the subsidies of 1597, which had been otherwise morally impossible.

AFTER this relief I endeavoured to procure the country people as many more favours as I was able, being strongly persuaded, that it could not be the sum of the thirty millions, which was raised every year in a kingdom so rich and of such extent as France, that could reduce it to the condition I now saw it in; and that the sums made up of extortions and false expences, must certainly infinitely exceed those which were brought into his majesty's coffers. I took the pen, and resolved to make this immense calculation. I saw, with a horror which gave new force to my zeal, that for these thirty millions that were given to his majesty, there were drawn from the purses of the subjects, I almost blush to say it, one hundred and fifty millions *: the thing appeared to me so incredible that I could not believe it, till with great industry I convinced myself it was true. After this, I was no longer ignorant from whence the calamity of the people proceeded, at a time when, although commerce was interrupted, industry stopped or persecuted, the farms neglected and without value, and every other kind of wealth diminished in proportion, they had been obliged to furnish a sum so much beyond their abilities, which had been forced from them with the utmost violence.

I THEN applied my cares to the authors of this oppression, who were the governors and other officers of the army, as well as the civil magistrates and officers of the revenue; who all, even to the meanest, abused, in an enormous manner, the authority their employments gave them over the people: and I caused an arret of council to be drawn up, by which they were forbid, under great penalties, to exact any thing from the people, upon what title soever, without a

* This sum, exorbitant as it is, will not, however, appear exaggerated, if we consider, that besides the ordinary expences of levying it, which were at that time excessive, the people had still a great number of other impositions and exactions to bear. "For France would become too rich," says cardinal Richelieu, *Teff. pol. part II. chap. ix. § 7.* and the people be in too flourishing a condition, if the public money, which other states expend with economy, were not squandered with

"prodigality here. She loses more, in my opinion, than those kingdoms that pretend to rival her lay out in their ordinary disbursements." Upon this he relates a good saying of a Venetian ambassador; to wit, that to render France happy, he wished no other, than that she knew as well how to expend the money she squandered without reason, as his republic did not to spend one single farthing without occasion and the greatest good husbandry.

warrant in form, beyond what they were obliged to on account of their share of the tailles and other subsidies fetted by the king; the treasurers of France being enjoined to give information of all contrary practices, on pain of being answerable for them themselves.

THIS arret was a check to the greediness of all these petty extortioners, but raised a furious resentment in them against me; and notwithstanding there was something shameful in expressing it, yet many of them made loud complaints of me, as if I had in reality stripped them of their lawful possessions. The duke d'Epéron was the first who explained himself on this head, and ventured to come to a quarrel with me about it: the mortification he had suffered had not lessened the fierceness and insolence of his temper. The Provençals had often blessed the moment when he quitted their province: no people could be more miserable than his vassals, and those that were too near neighbours to his lands; he raised every year, at their expence, a revenue of above sixty thousand crowns.

THE members of the council, to whom this arret gave as much pain as to the duke d'Epéron, informed him of the day when it was to be passed; and he flattered himself he should be able to prevent it. Accordingly he came, and took his seat in the council*; and addressing

* The quarrel which is here spoken of happened on Monday the 26th of October, 1598, at the chancellor's, where the council was held. "The duke d'Epéron having told M. de Rosny that he was not obliged to wait upon him at his house, valuing his quality at a very high rate; the latter made answer, with an air of rodomontade, That he was descended from one of the oldest families in France. "Yes, Sir, replied the duke d'Epéron, if you will allow that there is some difference betwixt you and me. Having mentioned his sword, and taken occasion to raise the profession of arms above all others, M. de Rosny returned, That he likewise had a sword, and knew how to use it. To which the duke d'Epéron replied, That he did not doubt that. "The chancellor then interposing pacified them: whereupon they began to talk a little more coolly; when M. de Rosny, resuming the discourse, said to

"him, Sir, you have treated me as if I were some petty tax-gatherer. No, replied the duke d'Epéron, you will find, that I am not come hither to give you any opprobrious language. I am not a person to be used so, says M. de Rosny, interrupting him: such treatment I would not bear from any man alive. I did not intend any affront, says M. d'Epéron. I am glad, returns M. de Rosny, affecting to take his antagonist's last words as an apology, that you did not affront me. I gave nobody any affront, replied the duke d'Epéron; and were even that the case, I carry about me what will give satisfaction to persons of my own rank, and to others according to their stations. It was, probably, after these last words, which were very provoking, that both of them clapt their hands to the hilts of their swords. The chancellor and the other counsellors had often interposed, and at

1598.

himself to me, made a comparison, with great arrogance and contempt, of the manner in which he supported the honour of his name, with that in which I disgraced mine, by the new trade I had taken up. To this impertinence I replied without any equivocation, by declaring to him, that every way I thought myself at least his equal. This plainness threw d'Épernon into a rage, instead of that insulting calmness he had affected at first; and he proceeded to menaces, which I heard with no more patience than the rest. I answered him with great spirit: he replied in the same manner: and, without further explanation, each of us laid his hand on his sword. If the persons who were present had not thrown themselves between us, and forced us to go out of the council at opposite doors, a very uncommon scene would have been acted in the place where this debate happened. Our quarrel being related to the king, who was then at Fontainebleau, his majesty was so well pleased with the zeal which on this occasion I shewed for justice, that he wrote to me that same hour with his own hand, and praising my conduct, offered to be my second against d'Épernon, to whom he said he would speak in such a manner, as to prevent him for the future from giving me any more insults of that kind. D'Épernon

“ length parted them.” The 805th volume of MSS. de la Biblioth. du Roi, from which I take these particulars almost word for word, relates them, with some other similar circumstances, to show the haughty and proud temper of the duke de Sully: and at the same time the whole of this account is given us in such a manner as is not at all favourable to him. Le Grain has also this fact in his eye in what I am going to quote. But tho' he agrees, that a minister ought, above all things, to have a great regard for moderation, yet he cannot forbear justifying M. de Sully: “ How was it possible, says he, that he should retrench so many pensions and salaries of officers who did no service for them, refuse so great a number of persons that pressinglly claimed and demanded rewards, and have a watchful eye over the many counsels that were given the grantees of the kingdom, which counsels he often turned to the king's advantage, and to their great dissatisfaction, without being invested with a very extensive authority, and shewing at the same time a lofty supercilious carriage? The king

“ too would have it so, to the end that all might be on an equal footing, till he had discharged his duty towards his kingdom and enriched it: for which reason subjects ought not to murmur. And in as much as the king testified his approbation of all M. de Sully's actions, when his majesty declared to some of the great ones that wanted to quarrel with him, that he himself would be his second; we are not at liberty to canvass such proceedings, nor injure his majesty's memory after his death, nor the duke de Sully's honour during his life, seeing he acted nothing but for the service of his master.—God grant,” adds this writer, after shewing the wisdom and necessity of the king's conduct; and that of his minister, “ that this treasure may be preserved with the same care that it has been acquired.” Liv. vii. I thought this remark necessary to be made, as in the sequel of these Memoirs I shall adduce a great many other examples, like the dispute we have just now seen mentioned.

perceiving

perceiving the king was greatly offended with him for this proceeding, asked my pardon in the presence of his majesty, who obliged us to embrace each other.

1598.

BESIDES those revenues which the princes of the blood, with the king's sister at their head, and the officers of the crown had contrived for themselves, the people were farther incommoded by the manner of their collecting the revenues. There was not one of these persons who was not a pensioner of the king, under the title of their employments, rewards, gratuities, or treaties made with his majesty on their returning to their obedience to him; and, by an effect of the licentiousness of the past times, it was customary for these officers, instead of addressing themselves to the treasurer of the exchequer for the payment of their pensions, to pay themselves out of the produce of the farms upon which they had assignments; some upon the tailles, some on the excise, others upon foreign commodities, the crown lands, five large farms, escheats, tolls of rivers, *comptables de Bourdeaux*, patents of Languedoc, Provence, &c. The king had no other means of paying more considerable debts which he had contracted with foreign princes, namely, the king of England, the count Palatine, the duke of Wirtemberg, the duke of Florence, the Swiss Cantons, the republic of Venice, and the city of Strasbourg. His majesty paid in the same manner those pensions that policy required he should allow foreign princes and communities; for France has always made herself a voluntary debtor to all Europe: from whence it happened, that all these different creditors set up new farms for their profit, in the midst of the king's; they had their commissaries and accountants among those of his majesty's, and who applied themselves with equal industry to pillage the people. Certainly there never was a more dangerous, and at the same time a more shameful abuse, that every one, and particularly foreigners, should be thus suffered to concern themselves with the revenues of the state; and monopolisers of all nations multiply usuries and extortions in the most audacious manner *, and, with impunity, arrogate to themselves part of the royal authority.

NOTHING seemed to me more necessary than to strike suddenly at the root of this evil, by a second declaration; in which all the foreign-

* This abuse must have drawn after it some consequences of so ruinous a nature, that we cannot too much bless the memory of him who had the courage to charge himself with the public odium, entirely to

extirpate it; instead of accusing him of a haughty behaviour and stern temper, without which it would have been impossible for him to have accomplished it.

1598.

ers, and natives, princes of the blood, and other officers, were forbidden, on pretence of any claim, title, or debt whatever, to levy money upon the farms, and other revenues of the state; and were enjoined to apply to the exchequer only, for the payment of their pensions, arrears, &c. I saw, unmoved, the storm which such a declaration could not fail of raising against me: in effect, the arret was no sooner published, than every place resounded with the clamours of the lords, and chief gatherers of taxes; from whose complaints and exclamations, it should seem that they had been reduced to beggary, when they were only brought back to the conditions of their original agreement, and had their payments transferred to different funds. The king, who had great sensibility in his temper, was moved at these complaints, and could not suppose them to be so unreasonable as they were; he was apprehensive that my zeal had probably carried me to commit some imprudence; he therefore sent for me, and as soon as I approached, “ Ah! friend, said he to me, what have you done?”

It was not difficult for me to convince his majesty, that I had acted upon principles of justice and regularity; that it was not fit his finances should have any longer so many masters, nor so many different mortgages; that the farms would produce him an income twice as great, as soon as their value should be raised by being in his hands, and that this profit had not before accrued to the different proprietors, but to their agents and clerks; and lastly, that whenever this was done, it was not depriving them of what was their own, but taking away profits which they had no right to. The king comprehended the justness of this proceeding, but he was perplexed about the discontent he must necessarily give to Sir Thomas Edmonds, agent to the queen of England; a certain German, factor to the duke of Wirtemberg; Gondy, farmer to the duke of Florence; and lastly, the constable, his godfather; the most distinguished persons in his court; and his own sister.

I INTREATED his majesty to send for some of them, to whom I might speak in his presence. The constable was but just gone out of his apartment: he was called back: “ Well, godfather, said the king to him, what complaint have you against Rosny?”—“ I complain, says he, that he has put me upon the level with the common people, by taking from me a poor little assignment which I had in Languedoc upon a tax, of which nothing ever came to you.” I answered the constable with great civility, that I should be the first to acknowledge

ledge myself guilty, if it had been my design that he should lose any thing. I asked him what profit he made of this impost, knowing well that he was one of these persons from whom the contractors exacted the highest price for their services. Monsieur de Montmorency answered my question; and I assured him, that he might depend on being paid the whole sum. " 'Tis well, said he; but who will promise me that I shall be paid exactly as I now am?" " I will, replied I, and will give you his majesty for security, who shall never turn bankrupt, I promise you, at least if he suffers me to manage his revenues as I propose to do; and I will be counter-security to him, because I expect, that if I make him rich, he will be so kind to me that I shall never break."

THE constable, who was a plain honest man, was pleased with my answer, and sincerely approved my sentiments; he even confessed to me, that he had let out the impost in question for only nine thousand crowns a year, out of which he was obliged to give two thousand to the treasurer. " All this I know, replied I, and I am resolved to give you the nine thousand crowns entire; yet the king shall have eighteen thousand, and there will still remain four thousand for me." The constable was amazed; he was not willing to own he had been so greatly imposed upon; while the king in the mean time laughed heartily. However, the next day I brought a person to his majesty, who in his presence took this farm at fifty thousand crowns, in the name of the states of Languedoc. The king offered to assign me, upon this sum, the four thousand crowns, which I had only proposed in jest. I refused it, and told his majesty, that the disorder in the finances, which I was endeavouring to remedy, having mostly proceeded from the easy temper of the deceased king, in appropriating his farms to the gratuities he bestowed on those about him, as well financiers as others, they would infallibly fall again into the same inconveniency, if it was not made a custom for men of business, who served his majesty usefully, to receive their rewards only from his hands. The king agreed that I was in the right, and I lost nothing by it, for having procured twelve thousand crowns to be advanced upon this farm, he sent Beringhen with a present of four thousand to me.

I SATISFIED all those persons who were in the same situation as the constable; and, indeed, what could be more reasonable, than that his majesty should himself receive his own revenues? As for all the rest, whose interest made them deaf to arguments so convincing, I gave myself

1598.

myself no more trouble about them. By this article, the revenues of the crown had an addition of sixty thousand crowns.

THIS trouble was slight, compared with that which I found in laying open the tricks of the traders : the most likely means I could think of to accomplish it, was to procure such a general and exact account of the finances as I have mentioned ; but here lay the difficulty : I was not satisfied with that which I drew up, as has been observed, in the year 1596, for 1597 ; nor even for the year following, altho' it was much more exact than the others, because I was under a necessity of regulating my calculations according to the reports, and by the accounts of the intendants and treasurers ; from all whom, without exception, notwithstanding the caution I used in chusing them for this purpose, I had reason to expect artifice and fraud. I therefore went to work again this year : I collected all the commissions of tailles sent to the several districts, and all the edicts by which money was raised throughout the kingdom : to these I joined the tariffs made in consequence of these edicts, and the leases and under-leases granted by the council to the first and second farmers : I compared all these pieces according to the knowledge which my former work had afforded me in this matter ; and at last I thought that I had come for once to the bottom of the business : there were some abuses in the ordinary commissions of the tailles ; these, however, were the least ; there were much greater in the extraordinary commissions granted before-hand for the ensuing year ; but the chief enormities appeared to arise from the under-leases : the farmers that took them from the council, and the treasurers of France, whom the farmers employed, fingered twice as much as had been assigned them ; and as these farmer-generals granted under-leases of under-leases, the series of under-leases proceeding without end, produced a multiplication of charges, endless likewise, and afforded no other advantage than that of maintaining in profusion those who did nothing to deserve it ; first, the gentlemen of the council, then the farmers, and the rest of the subordination, who kept the trade a profound secret into which they had been once initiated.

I WAS transported at this discovery ; and by the authority of the king, to whom I had told it, I stopt the produce of the tailles paid upon extraordinary commissions, and, without having any regard to them, sent word to the receivers, that they should account for it as for any other money, and should immediately remit it. I annulled for ever the under-leases ; and ordered, that for the future every

1598.

every part of the revenue should have only one farmer and one receiver. Great were the clamours on this occasion; but the most discreet amongst the farmers, knowing that these murmurs only served to make them be taken notice of, and finding that by the suppression of a great part of the contractors, places were likely to become scarce, came in haste to look for me, and took the same farms again upon their own account; with this difference, that their profit came to the king, the value of the farms being doubled*.

IN proportion as my work was improved by my experience, I brought my general state of the revenues towards perfection; it then came into my mind to go on no longer by the forms of accounts, such as the receivers had drawn up themselves, but to send them some contrived by myself; in which I endeavoured to have every thing clear, and drawn up to the minutest particular. When they were returned to my hands I examined them over again with the utmost accuracy, noting the slightest inadvertence or omission; so that there was soon nothing at all left out, even in the least and most obscure parts of the revenue, because every thing was to be justified by the writings which I ordered to be brought along with it, and which I compared with the utmost attention. Thus I blew up all the mines of the receivers, which were very numerous, such as, pretended differences, bad money, drawbacks, immunities, privileges of office, payments of rent, charge of carriage, fees to judges, and costs of auditing accounts; all these, and more, were very commodiously used to the advantage of the commissioners, because nobody had given himself the pain to rate, according to their real value, all those particulars which, being thus swelled beyond their bulk, swallowed up a great part of the sum received; and the people of the council, who ought to have examined them, knew the advantage of this jargon. So little care was taken of the accounts of the receivers, that a man often quitted his employment, charged with vast sums of arrears, which afterwards sunk into oblivion. I put an end

* Tho' we are more and more convinced of the justice of this, to wit, that the king should take for his advantage all possible share in the profits of his farms and other revenues; yet we find, it seems, and that with some ground of reason, that since the duke of Sully's time, there has not been made, in this respect, all that progress which his views, and the great care he

took, had apparently given hopes to expect. We shall have occasion to enter into this matter at some greater length, when our author comes to speak of the farming of the *tailles*, and other imposts, which is the true cause of all the difficulties that are to be met with in attaining to the end he proposed, and which all the ministers after him have endeavoured to reach at.

1598.

to this custom : I obliged those who came into office to enquire after the men that had gone before them, and used the only method that could have any effect upon them. As long as any arrears remained, they had no other fund for their salaries and allowance. They then knew very well how to hinder these little bankruptcies, instead of favouring them as they had hitherto done.

SEVERAL paymasters, and particularly those of the chamber of accounts, upon whom assignments are most frequently granted, had the ingenuity to contrive ways of tiring out those who brought the assignments, by frequent delays, till they were content to take part of the money granted them, and to give an acquittance for the whole. I ordered that no payment should be kept back ; and that no money should be taken for prompt payment. This prohibition put an end to all the accounts of the repayment of money payable by the precepts of the chamber, and to the multiplicity both of accounts and charges, by which the king's money was stolen to an incredible degree. From this time we had a clear insight into the finances, and confusion was at an end.

WHEN the general state, of which I have been speaking, with the regulations and different models were drawn up, I went to read them before the council, in the king's absence. I easily perceived that my colleagues were offended at my diligence, and at my neglecting to desire their assistance in my work. However, they contented themselves with answering me drily, and in a jesting manner, that my secretaries had an easy time of it with me : these papers were indeed all written with my own hand *. But as soon as I had left them, they acknowledged that my labour had been infinitely great and exact ; and that it would be in vain for the future to pretend to hide any thing from me. Two days after, when his majesty was present in the council, I read these papers again ; upon which he asked them their opinions of my accounts. They allowed them to be very right, and said, that for a soldier I was extremely expert in business. I know not whether it was they who were the authors of a piece of slander that was current about that time, namely, that I had employed † Du-Luat to write a book, in

* The present duke of Sully preserves, as a choice curiosity, a great part of these manuscripts, with many other originals of M. de Roigny's, which he takes pleasure to shew to such as visit him : he looks upon them as one of the principal ornaments of

the museum which his taste for the sciences induces him to augment daily ; and these are, in fact, so many glorious monuments of his illustrious family.

† Ange Capel, the sieur Du-Luat. There is mention made in vol. 8778 des Manu- which,

which, under pretence of giving a new view of the finances, I railed, without charity or reserve, at his majesty's best servants. The king assured me, that all the endeavours of my enemies should never alter his friendship for me. In effect, his majesty, from that moment, behaved to me in such a manner, as to make me look upon him rather as a friend than a master; he interested himself in all my concerns, shared in all my joys, and bore a part of every affliction.

I SHOULD be doubly ungrateful if I concealed the obligations I received from this prince: with regard to the finances, they were not confined to the supporting all my proceedings with the utmost resolution (as it happened when the mayor and aldermen of Paris refused to communicate their accounts to me, under pretence that they had no connection with the council of the finances) nor in preventing all my desires, or with the gentlest goodness consoling me under difficulties, as he generally did, by proposing himself for an example: his knowledge and his advice, especially in relation to the finances, had often been of great use to me; and I candidly confess, that without it I should have in vain attempted an enterprize so difficult as a reformation in them: most part of my designs were hinted by him*; and I keep, with the greatest care, whole memorials written, although very long, with his own hand, upon subjects which equally employed us both.

AFTER this I ought to own, with the same sincerity, that most of those praises which were given to the administration of affairs in the reign of Henry IV. ought with justice to revert to him. Others would have served him with equal abilities and as much fidelity as me; for it never happens that good subjects abandon their king; it is the king who abandons good subjects. The great difficulty will ever be, to meet with a prince, who in a minister capable of managing his affairs, seeks not for one who will comply with all his inclinations, and sooth all his passions; who uniting great wisdom to great penetration, calls none

scrits de la Bibliot. du Roi, of a book in which he gives many useful hints to the members of the council with regard to the finances: this, no doubt, is the book our author means here. Du-Luat is represented to us in the Remarks on chap. ix. de la Confession de Nancy, as a quick, ready, and agreeable flatterer, who in a

manner bewitched the duke de Sully, his master, with a genealogy, in which he derived his pedigree from the house of Courtenay. Journal du regne de Henry III. printed in 1720, tom. II. p. 477.

* M. de Perexie, p. 225. likewise assures us, that Henry IV. had thoroughly studied the subject of the finances.

1598.

to those employments but in persons whom he knows to have as much rectitude as capacity; in a word, who being possessed of great abilities himself, has not the weakness to envy that advantage in another. This jealousy of merit in a sovereign, which supposes, however, that he is himself master of some degree of it, creates in one sense more disorders in a state, than the hatred he is known to have of particular vices can do good.

WHEN I quitted Brittany I left there regulations for the finances, differing according to the nature and privileges of that province; and afterwards sent thither the sieur de Maupeou, master of accounts, as well to enforce the observation of them, and raise the value of the farms in that province, as to hasten the payment of the money for which I had settled a fund. I likewise sent, for the same purpose, Coesnard, auditor of accounts, to Poictou, and Bizouz to Champagne. I appointed Champigny over the toll of the rivers in the district of Orleans and Touraine. But for this time I have said enough of the finances.

I WILL now proceed to incidents of another kind, which by their singularity rendered this year remarkable. It is yet a question, of what nature that illusion might be which was seen so often, and by so many persons, in the forest of Fontainebleau: it was a spectre*, surrounded with a pack of hounds, whose cries were heard, and who were seen at a distance, but vanished when any one approached near to it. A whale was taken on the coast of Holland, eighty feet in length †. The Tiber overflowed in such a manner as to throw down

* Perefice mentions this apparition, and makes it speak with a hoarse and frightful voice, these words, *M attendez vous*, or *M entendez vous*, or *Amendez vous*. He ascribes these visions to the delusive arts of forcerers or evil spirits, *ibid.* part III. See likewise *Journal de Henry IV.* and *La Chronologie Septennaire*, ann. 1599, where it is said, that the king and his court, who laughed at this apparition as a fable, saw it one day distinctly among the bushes, in the shape of a tall black man; which so frightened them, that the best was he that could shew the lightest pair of heels. P. Matthieu assures us, tom. II. p. 268, that one day, at Fontainebleau, the duke of Sully, having heard the noise of it, came down, imagining it was the stamping of

the king's horses, after his return from hunting. Bongars, *epist.* 184. ad Cameracensis, tells us, with an air of gravity, that this was the ghost of an huntsman that had been killed in that forest in the time of Francis I.

† See the description of this monstrous fish in the *Chronologie Septennaire*, p. 17. and the account of this overflowing of the Tiber, in cardinal d'Ossat's letters, p. 365. "It was greater (says he) than any recorded in history; so that the whole plain on which stands the city of Rome was under water a pike's height in the streets and houses; and that not one among a hundred could go to hear mass on Christmas-day. This inundation did inestimable damage," &c.

a great

a great number of houses, and laid part of the city of Rome under water. A report was spread in Europe, that the Jews, thro' hatred of the Christians, had offered the grand signior five hundred thousand ducats to destroy the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem.

BUT the most interesting event, and with which this year was closed, was the death of Philip II. king of Spain, after suffering, for the space of eight or nine months, such agonizing * torments, as a principle of piety only could have enabled him to support with that patience he shewed for so long a time: however, this heroism of his was quite lost upon the vulgar. When they reflected, that thro' his avarice and ambition he had almost drowned the new world with the blood of its miserable inhabitants, and on his own subjects exercised equal cruelties, except taking away their lives, they looked upon those infectious ulcers with which his whole body was covered, to be not so much a natural accident, as the effect of divine vengeance. He left a will behind him, which, in my opinion, is too curious a piece to be passed over in silence; it is not certainly known whether he dictated it in his illness, and gave it with his own hand to his son, or whether it was found after his death, with his other private papers, in the box that he had put into the hands of Christopher de Mora, his favourite; but this circumstance, of small importance in itself, is likewise of no consequence towards proving the authenticity of this piece, which is clear from many others. The copy that fell into my hands was sent me by the same person who sent one to the king; this was Bongars, his majesty's agent to the protestants in Germany, who had it from the landgrave of Hesse, and that prince from the cities of Venice and Genoa; and it is in every respect so exactly conformable to those which were sent into different places, that it removes all doubt of its being forged by some of his catholic majesty's enemies †.

* "For two and twenty days together there was, says Perfixe, a flux of blood from all the vessels of his body; and a little before his death impostumes that broke in his breast, from which there continually issued so great a swarm of vermin, that all the care of his attendants could not destroy them." Ibid. M. de Thou, liv. cxx. adds to this dysentery, teneimus, dropisy, &c. and he gives as moving a description of the deplorable condition of this prince, as of his patience

and religious sentiments under it. Matthieu says, that he had no less than seven fistulas on two fingers of his right hand; and he ascribes this terrible disease to the debaucheries of his youth. He died on Sunday, September 13.

† Notwithstanding what M. de Sully says here, the piece which in his Memoirs is intitled, *Testament du Roi d'Espagne*, is neither the genuine latter will of that prince, nor even a faithful extract of it; which may easily be discovered, by com-

1598.

In this piece Philip begins with a candid enumeration of all the faults he had committed, and places at their head his chimerical scheme of universal monarchy, the absurdity of which he earnestly endeavours to make his successor sensible of, by his example, and by that of Charles V. his father, whose instructions he adds to his own, altho' he confesses he had not profited by them. To this will he joins the memoirs which had been left him by that emperor *, to the end that Philip III. might always keep them together. The emperor Charles V. being in the flower of his age, and of a healthy and vigorous constitution, master of Spain and Germany, covered with glory and elated with success, formed the design of subduing the Infidels, and reuniting all the powers of Europe, as well as all the religions, to his. After many years spent in fruitless attempts, he quitted his crown, and with it all his chimerical projects. Philip II. his son, suffered himself to be taken in the same snare, and succeeded still worse, which he was desirous his successor should know. The difference of religions, laws, and manners among the Europeans; their almost equal knowledge of the art of war, the great number of strong cities with which Europe is filled, and which made as many long and painful sieges necessary; the inconstancy of the several nations, who are always ready to obey the first comer, who offers to assist them in repelling a domination which it had taken immense labours to establish; all these Philip represented as unsurmountable obstacles to so great a design.

He acknowledges that he had not been always of the same opinion; that the impetuosity of youth had prevented him from making those prudent reflections at first, and that afterwards two great victories, and the divisions which tore the kingdom of France to pieces, contributed to continue his infatuation, and to make him reject with disdain all the offers that had been made him for an advantageous peace. And as he thought he had reason to fear that his son would not make

paring it with the particular and circumstantial one which M. de Thou gives us, liv. 120. But it might happen that this writing, which was likewise called *Instruction du Roi d'Espagne à son fils*, might really have been a secret, and have nothing more in common with the will and testament of this prince, than its being drawn, as is evident, in the same spirit, and in conformity to the same maxims, without

the precaution that is commonly used in writings designed to be made public. As to the substance thereof, it is given in the *Chronologie Septennaire*, in the same manner as in these Memoirs, only in a different style and order.

* M. de Thou finds nothing in the last will of Philip II. comparable to the wisdom of the dispositions, and the dignity of expression, shewn in that of Charles V.

a better

a better use of his understanding, it was by a declaration of all that a ridiculous ambition had made him unwisely undertake, that he sought to cure him.

HE therefore acknowledges as a fault, his having endeavoured to get himself declared emperor of all the new world; he accuses himself of a design to invade Italy upon frivolous pretences; to conquer the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, a project which in six years had cost him twenty millions in preparations only for a fleet with which he expected to overwhelm this power: this was the fleet called the Invincible Armado, which, however, was reduced to nothing, at one stroke, in 1588, as soon as it set out; to bring the Low Countries into subjection; to overthrow the French monarchy, by taking advantage of the weakness of the last king, and prevailing upon his subjects, especially the ecclesiastics, to revolt; and lastly, to deprive his own uncle Ferdinand, and Maximilian, king of the Romans, his nephew*, of the empire. He observes, that these intrigues cost him above six hundred millions of ducats †; a proof of which, he tells his son, he would find in the accounts which he left in his cabinet, drawn up and written by himself. He blames himself less for his profusion of money, than that of human blood, which he caused to be shed: and indeed the confession he makes, that he had sacrificed twenty millions of men to his lust of dominion, and laid more countries waste, than all those he possessed in Europe, is enough to raise horror in every mind not wholly divested of humanity.

WHAT has been the effect of all this? This is the reflection which he proposes to his son. Providence, as if it had thought itself concerned to prevent such wicked designs from succeeding, caused him to lose Germany, by the jealousy and hatred of his own relations; England, by the winds and storms; Ireland, by the treachery of its inhabitants, whom its great distance secured from his resentment; France, by the instability of the people, and their aversion to a foreign domination ‡,

* "Philip II. was called, The devil of the south, *Dæmonem meridianum*, because he troubled all Europe, in the south of which Spain lies." Notes sur la Henriade.

† P. Matthieu says, that the Indies yielded to the king of Spain two hundred and sixty millions of gold in the space of sixty-four years; and that he might have conquered all Turkey with that trea-

sure only which he spent in Flanders. Tom. II. liv. ii. p. 266.

‡ In the genuine latter will of Philip II. is an article with regard to Henry IV. the omission of which in our Memoirs is sufficient to prove, that the piece to which this name is given is supposititious; and that is, That this prince being troubled with strong remorse of conscience for the usurpation of the kingdom of Navarre, recommends to and

and

1598. and lastly, by the great qualities of their king. So that the mighty preparations he had made, and the torrents of blood that had been shed, procured him no other advantage than the acquisition of the little kingdom of Portugal to his dominions.

AFTER this, Philip made a more particular application of these instructions to the person and situation of the heir to his throne; and reduced to the following articles the politics from which no king of Spain ought ever to depart, and Philip III. less than any other, on account of his tender age: these articles were, first, To maintain with France the peace which Philip II. himself hoped to have concluded before his death, and this as well in consideration of his own interest and quiet, as out of regard to his people: To keep up a good correspondence with the pope, and to strengthen it by having always a great many cardinals in his interest: To be upon friendly terms with the emperor and his family; nevertheless, not to suffer the pensions to pass through his hands, which his interest required he should continue to the electors, princes, and prelates of Germany, in order to keep them always attached to him by those largesses; at the same time to take care to foment divisions amongst them, which would afford him the means of turning to his advantage those opportunities that time might produce for acquiring the empire: To be more vigilant on the side of Germany, as there is a greater multiplicity of interests in the northern countries than in any other place. Poland, Denmark, and Sweden, were powers from which he thought there was little to be apprehended; the first, not only on account of its distance, but because the policy of the princes its neighbours, as well as its own, being mistaken, made the king of Poland rather the minister than the master of his subjects: the two others, by reason of their distance likewise, joined to their poverty and unskilfulness in war, were as little to be feared. He took care not to say the same with regard to France, England, and Flanders, which he considered as powers very formidable to Spain, and against which he recommended it to his son, to be always upon his guard.

his son what had been before recommended to himself by his father, namely, to cause this point to be carefully examined by the most able lawyers, in order to restore the crown to its rightful owner, if it should come out so, according to equity. Charles V. had said as much to Philip II.

and Ferdinand and Isabel to Charles V. ... In this manner to refer the executing of a disposition known to be just, to a successor who, one might be assured, would pay no regard to it, is what M. de Thou calls an impudent trifling with the Deity.

WITH

1598.

WITH respect to England*, his advice was, to neglect nothing to prevent the three crowns which comprise the Britannie isles from being placed on the same head; an event which this able politician, from a spirit of prediction, mentioned as very near; and for that purpose not to regret the money which was distributed in those islands to make partisans, and to continue filling them with spies, but of another sort from those that were then there, whose fidelity Philip II. thought he had reason to suspect. To cultivate carefully those divisions which a diversity of religions might produce in that state, as well as in France: he considered those which the league gave rise to amongst us as things now stale and useless, since we had a king of Henry's capacity: but to give occasion for many other civil discords in each of those two states, and especially such as might keep them in war against each other, or at least in distrust and suspicion, which might be done, by favouring the pretensions of one upon the other, to which their mutual hatred naturally incited them. To consider as the greatest misfortune imaginable, that stroke which should join the United Provinces, and those two powers already united amongst themselves, in one common interest; since from thence must naturally result a power capable, says he, of subjecting sea and land. To find means to exclude all the princes of Europe from the navigation of the two Indies, an attempt which could meet with no obstructions but from those three powers; and less from France than the two others, because she had no marine; a new motive for gaining possession of the Low Countries, and yet more of England.

HOWEVER, amidst all these counsels that Philip gave his successor, he never advised him to enter into any war, not even with the rebels in the Low Countries, but earnestly dissuaded him from it. The conduct he recommended to be observed with the Provinces was, to grant a general pardon there; to require nothing of the people but that they should acknowledge the Spanish authority; to watch the behaviour of the governors, ministers, and officers, that were maintained there; not to continue them too long, nor to give them a too absolute power, because they would be the persons whom they would have the most reason to fear, if ever they entertained a design of heading the party.

* They also make him say at the point of death when speaking of England, *Pacem cum Anglo, bellum cum reliquis*, "Peace

"with the English, and war with all the rest of the world."

1598.

IF, however, Spain could not avoid engaging in a war, Philip was not willing that his successor should be deprived of that knowledge which experience had given him in that respect. He apprised him, that if he proposed not to sink under it, he must not undertake a war but in such favourable opportunities as might, from time to time, present themselves, such as, changes in the government, civil dissensions, faults or necessities of the sovereigns, &c. This maxim of Philip, that a prince should make himself acquainted even with the most particular inclinations of the princes his neighbours, is so true, and of such vast importance, that no change should ever happen in the states about him, but what he should be prepared for, and in readiness to take advantage of that instant. He concluded this article by shewing the new king, that he is answerable for his actions at the tribunal of a God who judges wars, and, unhappily, not by the same rules which warlike princes lay down for themselves.

AFTER these maxims, which regarded only the government abroad, Philip proceeded to those which he thought necessary for the government at home. He held it just, that a king of Spain, having nations under his command, between whose customs and manners there was as great a difference as distance in their realms, should study to govern each according to their respective character, and all with gentleness and moderation: That he should be acquainted with the talents and dispositions of his counsellors and secretaries, and chuse them himself: That he should likewise expedite all his dispatches, and render himself expert in the use of cyphers, that he might not expose a secret of consequence to be betrayed by a confidant: That he should be careful to seek for men of honour and sufficient abilities to bestow employments upon: That he should avoid giving any person any great cause of complaint, especially those of high quality; he observed, that the prince, his eldest son *, had suffered by it; and that he should make a just distinction between the ancient and the new nobility, in order to advance the last, as being generally susceptible of pure and disinterested sentiments: That he should lessen the number of the persons that were employed in the revenues, administration of justice, and the officers of the household; and recommended the same conduct to be observed with regard to the ecclesiastics; to which he added, that

* Don Carlos, prince of Spain: it was by order of his father that he lost his life; and it appears that his crime was rather

gaining over the affections of the grandees than treating them with contempt.

they,

they, as well as others, ought to contribute to the necessities of the state, not only because they could better afford it, on account of their riches, but likewise because it became necessary for them to do so, if they would not forfeit the respect that was due to their character, by luxury, sloth, and impiety, the ordinary fruits of great riches, and the indolence in which they lived; but that he should increase the number of merchants, husbandmen, artists, and soldiers; by whose industry, labour, and frugality alone, a state is supported against the ruin with which it is threatened by the dissoluteness of the other ranks. All principles, which, like these, tend to maintain subordination and œconomy in a state, against corruption and disorder, merit praise from whatever mouth they proceed.

PHILIP closed his will with the article relating to domestic dispositions. He enjoined his successor to fulfil the promises and other clauses of the infant's sister's marriage. He proposed a match for the young king, in which he had already made some advances, and privately regulated all the articles, which he informed him he would find in the hands of Loo. He observed, that no king ever loved his father's favourite; yet, notwithstanding, he would propose Christopher de Mora for his confidant, who had been his own. Philip III. chose rather to prove the truth of the observation, than comply with the request, and gave Mora's place to the marquis of Doria. He required, as an instance of respect due to the memory of a father, that all those persons to whom he had given employments should be continued in them; but he expressed himself in such a manner with regard to this article, as shewed he rather wished than hoped for a compliance with it. He recommended to his son the doctors Ollius and Vergius, who had attended him in his illness. He mentioned Antonio Perès* as a dangerous man, with whom it was necessary he should be reconciled; and afterwards not to permit him to stay either in France, Flanders, and especially Spain, but in the useless country of Italy. Philip concludes this piece with a short maxim, To love God, to endeavour to be virtuous, and to profit by the precepts of a father. It

* Antony Perès had been chief minister to Philip II. with whom he fell into disgrace for reasons which have no manner of relation to the subject of these Memoirs: he retired to Paris, where he died in 1611. He was a great politician, and a man of very considerable parts: the following

maxim was one of his, which includes a deal of meaning in three words, namely, *Roma, Confejo, Pisologo*; that is to say, To gain over the court of Rome, compose the council of proper persons, and to be master at sea.

1598.

must be confessed, that in this piece there are likewise many more strokes of * piety and resignation to the will of God, who he said had in mercy chastised him in this life rather than the other.

THE first of these articles which was executed by the king of Spain was that relating to his marriage with the arch-duchess of Gratz †: he sent immediately after the death of his father to demand her in marriage; and in the beginning of the year following she set out for Spain, accompanied by her brother, the arch-duke Albert, with whom she landed upon the coast of Marseilles, for the benefit of that air. The duke of Guise, who was governor of the province, having notice of it, sent to let the king know of her arrival, and received orders to give this princess a very honourable reception; his majesty destined fifty thousand crowns to be expended for that purpose, and ordered them to be paid at Marseilles. I was upon the point of sending thither, to direct how this money was to be disposed of, either La-Font, or another of my domestics, who was only a footman of my wife's, a man of low stature and a mean figure, but in whom I had discovered so much capacity, fidelity, and prudence, that I thought I ought to endeavour his establishment: but there was no occasion for it, a person I had upon the spot was sufficient: for the arch-duchess, notwithstanding the instances that were made her by the duke of Guise and the city of Marseilles, would not enter any of the great cities, to avoid the ceremonial, but ordered tents to be set up upon the shore, where she rested and heard mass; the arch-duke, indeed, was so devout as to visit the churches at Marseilles, but went to them incognito, and without any train; and after kissing the relics, returned without either eating or drinking.

THIS marriage united the two branches of the house of Austria by a double tie, the deceased king of Spain having already, on the 5th of May the preceding year, married the infanta Isabella, his daughter, to the arch-duke Albert, who, for that purpose, had divested himself of the cardinal's purple. This princess had, in appearance, a very large portion, since it was made up of no less than the seventeen

* "He ordered his coffin to be brought him, which was made of copper, and a death's head to be laid upon a beaufet, with a crown of gold by it;" says la Chronologie Septennaire, where, ann. 1598. we may find, together with an ac-

count of all that this prince said and did in his last illness, the history also of his public and private life.

† Margaret of Austria, daughter to the arch-duke of Gratz.

provinces of the Low Countries, Franche-Comté, and Charolois: but the additional clauses that were inserted, that this new sovereign should be excluded from any commerce in the Indies, and not suffered to permit in his states the exercise of any religion but the roman catholic, without which the donation was made void, reduced it, in effect, to nothing, by the difficulty he would find in obliging the Flemings to accept of such hard conditions.

THE arch-duke, till he could go in person to Flanders, to remove all these obstacles, sent the high admiral * of Arragon thither, in the quality of his lieutenant-general, who performed some actions on the frontiers of Germany; and afterwards his cousin, the cardinal André, who issued out many edicts, but without effect. The house of Austria began to think there was danger in delays; therefore the arch-duke went himself into the Low Countries, taking with him his bride, on the 5th of September this year; the remainder of which was spent in threatening on his side, which likewise produced nothing; so that there was a necessity for coming to open force: and this was the beginning of that long and bloody war between Spain and the Flemish, the progress and event of which I shall take notice of each year.

AT the same time that the marriage of his catholic majesty was celebrated in Spain, that of the princess Catherine with the prince of Bar † was celebrated at Paris. It was upon this establishment that the princess at length fixed her destiny, hitherto so uncertain. During the life of queen Catherine it was first proposed to marry her to the duke of Alençon; but Henry III. would not consent to it, on account of the hatred he bore to his brother. Afterwards, they talked of giving her to Henry III. himself: but this the queen-mother opposed, through the aversion she had to the family of Navarre. This princess, in her turn, refused the old duke of Lorraine, because he had children by a former marriage. The king of Spain demanded her, on condition of a strict union between the king of Navarre and him, which the first of these princes would not hear of. The princess was after-

* Consult the Chronologie Septennaire, both as to these military expeditions, and as to all that is here said of the marriage of the king and the infanta of Spain, for the year 1598, 1599. Matthieu, *ibid.* p. 298, &c.

† Henry, duke of Bar, who became

duke of Lorraine, after the death of his father, Charles II. "The king gave his sister, at her marriage, three hundred thousand crowns of gold for her portion," says the historian Matthieu, *ibid.* p. 278.

wards fought by the duke of Savoy; but in circumstances wherein this marriage might prove prejudicial to the protestant religion, and therefore the protestants themselves threw difficulties in the way. She would not have the prince of Condé on account of his poverty; and refused the king of Scotland, without giving any good reason for it. The prince of Enhalt made likewise his advances. And in those transports of anger with which she was sometimes animated against the king her brother, she reproached him, that he would have thrown her into the arms of three or four other princes, or, as she called them, gentlemen, for the payment of their subsidies. Lastly, her inclination for the count of Soissons made her reject the duke of Montpensier, who was a suitable match for her. At length, the necessity of procuring an establishment* determined her to accept the prince of Bar.

THIS designed marriage was no sooner made public, than the ecclesiastics in general, and the French bishops in particular, then assembled at Paris, found, in the difference of religion of the two parties, a reason for hindering its conclusion, which they did not suffer to escape them. The first measure they took was to hinder, at Rome, with all their power, the dispatching of the dispensation, without which, they imagined, it was not possible to proceed to the declaration of the marriage. In this respect, they could not trust the care of their interests to one more faithful than d'Ossat, who nevertheless was sent to this court to manage those of the king. But this is not the first time, nor will it be the last, that this ecclesiastic has suffered from me, and will again, the reproach of having not only exceeded but betrayed his commission. If I may give credit to the memorial from Rome which has been already mentioned, d'Ossat, in the name of the whole party of whom he was the instrument, neglected nothing to dissuade the pope from granting the dispensation†, which he was particularly

* "Madame" (says on the contrary the *Chronologie Septennaire*, ann. 1599.) "shewed on her part, all the satisfaction imaginable . . . she used to say, *Grata supervenient quæ non superabitur hora.* "For she was a lady that was very well skilled in Latin."

† Cardinal d'Ossat, in his letters, does not begin to speak of his negotiation for obtaining the dispensation in question, till after the duke of Bar had come himself to solicit it at Rome in the year 1600, when

he resumed again, by order of the king, the making of new instances on this head. He tells us, by the bye, the reasons upon which the pope founded his refusal of the desired favour: "His holiness," says he, "having told at Ferrara, M. Luxembourg and myself, when we required the said dispensation, that he neither ought nor could grant it, by reason that one of the parties did not only not desire it, but did not acknowledge him as the pastor of the catholic and apostolic church, employed

1599.

employed by his majesty to solicit. These persons gave his holiness to understand, that if he continued firm in his refusal to grant this favour, it would produce two things equally to be desired; one, that the princes would turn catholic; the other, that such a change would be thought by the protestants an effect of the violence used to her by the king her brother, for that purpose, which would increase the distrust they already openly shewed of his majesty, make them consider him as their enemy and declared persecutor, and bring on, at length, that intestine war which, according to them, was so much to be desired, for the interests of the holy father and the true religion.

THE clergy did not stop here; they made remonstrances severe enough to merit the title of threats. His majesty had the complaisance to listen to them, and permitted a conference to be held, in which doctor Du-Val on one side, and the minister Tilenus on the other, endeavouring to support their cause, debated with much heat, and, in my opinion, to little purpose; though each boasted afterwards, that he had vanquished his adversary. I speak as one who was a witness

“ nor as having any power to grant a dispensation; and in like manner, did not believe that marriage was a sacrament, nor that it was unlawful even for cousins-germans to intermarry. These reasons of the pope, &c. &c. still continue in force.” And on every occasion, indeed, he so enforces them by all the theological arguments imaginable, that there is no reader but must conclude, that a man, who was so thoroughly persuaded that the pope could not in conscience consent to the dispensation, insisted on it very faintly; and endeavoured to oblige the courts of France and Lorraine, by all possible means, to procure previously the conversion of the princes; without which, according to him, this affair could never be brought to a happy issue. However, we may see, on the other hand, that M. d’Ossat executed the king’s orders, and was even beforehand with his master in that respect, with so much assiduity, fidelity, and zeal, that we must, from his letters, be obliged to do him the justice to own, that he served his majesty, even in contradiction to his own real sentiments, as much as possibly he could. A proof of

this, which alone preponderates every other consideration, is, that in spite of all these obstacles, he at length obtained, a long time after, it is true, this dispensation which he had despaired of. I find in all this cardinal’s letters a great deal less foundation for the second motive that is here ascribed to him. In order to lay before the world in the gross, that which will be displayed by piecemeal in its own time, my opinion concerning this prelate’s sentiments on all the different subjects whereon he is attacked, keeping always to the conjectures that may be drawn from his letters, is this: He loved the king’s person: he thought there was no good policy that could be independent of religion: he was prepossessed, that the interests of the latter are no where in such safe hands as in those of the pope, the jesuits, and all such as had maintained it in the days of the league. He did not at all like Spain, much less the house of Austria, or the duke of Savoy; and he had an utter aversion to the calvinists. See on the subject of the dispensation, p. 480, 492, 519, 596, 615, 701, 717, 727, 758, 769, &c.

1599.

of the dispute, for I suffered myself to be drawn along with the crowd which ran thither, as to a very interesting spectacle. I did not come in till toward the conclusion, when the two disputants were beginning to sink under the fatigue. I know not for what reason they were desirous of making me play the part of a judge upon this occasion; probably because they were informed I had been employed by his majesty to draw up the articles of marriage between the princess Catherine and the prince of Bar. They were beginning to repeat to me all the points of a dispute, which had already taken up several hours; but I earnestly intreated them to spare me either this trouble or this honour, telling them, that if two such learned men had not been able to reconcile the canon and decrees of the pope with the holy scripture, or to prove that such a task was impossible, it could not be expected that such an ignorant person as I should be equal to it; and this was really my opinion.

THIS conference not having produced all the effects the clergy expected from it*, and finding likewise that they succeeded no better at Rome, they declared, that nothing should be capable of prevailing upon them to give their consent to this marriage. Little regard would have been paid to this; but as there was a necessity for getting a bishop to perform this ceremony, and that all those gentlemen held together, hence arose an obstacle, upon which they founded their last hopes.

In this perplexity the king was advised to have recourse to the archbishop † of Rouen, from whom, being his natural brother, and obliged to him for the bishopric, more compliance was to be expected; besides, his majesty, as well as all France, knew this prelate to be not very scrupulous (to say no more) in matters of religion. However, upon the first proposition made him by the king, the archbishop, like a devout rebel, overwhelmed him with citations, as often ill as well chosen, from the holy fathers, the holy canons, and the holy scriptures.

* This conference was held in the presence of the lady Catherine: "But," says the Journal d'Henry IV. "because the doctors of the Sorbonne made use of such subtil and scholastic terms as the said lady did not at all understand, the calvinist ministers easily persuaded her to continue in her religion." Prefixe says, that the king not being able to ac-

complish her conversion, though he made use of threatenings, said one day to the duke of Bar, "My good cousin, 'tis your business to break her."

† Charles, the natural son of Antony of Navarre by mademoiselle de la Beraudiere de la Guiche, otherwise called la Rouët, who was one of the maids of honour to the queen-mother.

The

The king, astonished, as may be well imagined, at such uncommon language from a man who generally talked of quite different matters, could hardly hinder himself from laughing in his face, asking him, by what miracle it was that he had become so learned and conscientious? Supposing, however, the archbishop might be wrought upon by serious arguments to comply, he tried their efficacy; but finding him still untractable, he grew angry, and reproached him with his ingratitude. "Since you carry it so high," added Henry, resuming his first air of pleasantry, "I will send you a great doctor, your usual confessor, who is wonderfully skilful in cases of conscience." This great doctor and director of consciences was Roquelaure, an old companion of monsieur de Rouen's, and an actual sharer in his debauches, by whose intreaty he had obtained the archbishopric. The prelate understood perfectly well the meaning of this little threat; and the embarrassment he appeared to be in was a proof that he was under some apprehensions of those great advantages which an accustomed familiarity would give Roquelaure over him, without the addition of those which he derived from that wit which all the court acknowledged to be free, ingenious, and fruitful in the most happy sallies; and the archbishop himself was not often guilty of carrying too far the respect due to the episcopal character.

THE king having quitted monsieur de Rouen, sent for Roquelaure. "Do you know, Roquelaure," said he to him, "that your archbishop takes upon him to play the prelate and doctor, and would quote the holy canons to me, which I believe he understands as little of as you or I; however, by his refusal my sister's marriage is stopped: therefore pray go to him, and talk to him as you used to do, and put him in mind of past times."

"By the Lord, sire," replied Roquelaure, "this is not well done of him; for it is high time, in my opinion, that our sister Kate should taste the sweets of marriage. But pray, sire, tell me what reasons this fine fellow of a bishop gave you for his refusal? he seldom has much better to give than myself. I will go to him and teach him his duty."

HE did not fail to perform his promise. "What is this I hear, archbishop?" said he, as soon as he entered his apartment: "they tell me you have been playing the coxcomb; by the Lord, I will not suffer it; it derogates too much from my honour, since every one says you are governed by me. Know you not that at your entreaty I became

1599.

“ your security to the king, when I prevailed upon him to give you the archbishopric of Rouen ; therefore I desire you would not make me out a liar, by continuing thus obstinately to act like a fool : this might do between you and I, who are often seen quarrelling at dice, but such disputes must not be thought on when our master’s service and his absolute commands are in question.”

“ MERCIFUL God !” replied monsieur de Rouen, “ what is this you would have me to do, Roquelaure ? What ! must I make myself ridiculous, and suffer the reproaches of all the other prelates, by an action which the whole world agrees is unjustifiable, and which every one of the bishops to whom it has been proposed by the king has refused ?” “ Hold a little, pray,” interrupted Roquelaure : “ there is a wide difference between them and you ; for those men have puzzled their brains so much about Greek and Latin, that they are become fools--- and you are the king’s brother, and obliged to obey all his commands, without any hesitation : the king did not make you an archbishop to preach to him, and quote the canons, but to do whatever his service required : if you continue this perverseness and obstinacy, I will acquaint Jeanneton de Condom, Bernarde l’Eveille, and master Julian, with the whole story : do you understand me ? don’t let me tell you this a second time : know, that nothing ought to be so dear to you as the king’s favour, which, together with my solicitations, have done you more good than all the Greek and Latin of the others : By the Lord, it is a fine thing to hear you talk of the canons, of which you know as little, as of High-dutch.” Monsieur de Rouen endeavoured to persuade him, that he ought to quit that ludicrous style, which was agreeable enough when he was in his youth ; and hinted something concerning paradise to him. “ How ! paradise !” interrupted Roquelaure : “ Are you such an ass to talk of a place where you have never been, where you know not what is doing, or whether you shall be admitted when you attempt to get in, till another time !” “ Yes, yes,” said the archbishop, “ I shall be admitted there, I do not doubt of it.” “ You talk finely,” said his companion, pressing still harder upon him. “ By the Lord, I believe paradise is as little designed for you as the Louvre for me : but let us lay aside a little your paradise, your canons, and your conscience *, and do you now resolve to marry

* There is something original in the turn of this conversation ; but the author might very well, one would think, have

spared some expressions which favour a little of libertinism.

“ the

“ the princeſs to the prince of Bar ; for if you fail, I ſhall take from
 “ you three or four paltry Latin words that you have always in your
 “ mouth ; farther the ſaid deponent knoweth not : and then adieu to
 “ the croſs and mitre ; and, what is worſe, to your fine palace of Gail-
 “ lon, and revenue of ten thouſand crowns.”

MANY other things paſſed between theſe two men, which may be gueſſed at by this ſample. Roquelaure would not leave the arch-
 biſhop till he had made him promiſe to marry the princeſs, and ac-
 cordingly he was the perſon that performed the ceremony *. I re-
 ceived from both parties very magnificent preſents, in return for the
 pains I had taken ; among others, a Spaniſh horſe of great value, which
 was given me by the duke of Lorraine : I ſent him to his majeſty, who
 ordered me to keep him.

THIS was not the only occaſion on which the clergy were againſt
 the king ; they made a more reſolute and likewiſe a more important
 oppoſition againſt the regiſtering the edict of Nantes, which always
 appeared to them a difficult morſel to digeſt : as they had for almoſt a
 year held an aſſembly at Paris on this account, they had had time to
 prejudice the parliament, and other ſovereign courts, as well as the Sor-
 bonne, againſt this edict. All theſe bodies, as ſoon as it was publiſh-
 ed, rebelled, and occaſioned diſorders that may be better imagined than
 deſcribed. It was the ſubject of all diſcourſe, every one applied him-
 ſelf to criticiſe the piece, and to offer different arguments againſt it, all
 which were far from being juſt, as well as the reaſons the parliament
 gave for not regiſtering it : but that candor and ſincerity I have propoſed
 to obſerve here in matters that neareſt concern me, oblige me to con-
 feſs, that they were not abſolutely to blame.

FOR example, the proteſtants, by one of the articles of the edict,
 were permitted to call and hold all ſorts of aſſemblies, convocations, &c.
 when and where they pleaſed, without aſking leave either of his ma-

* “ The ceremony was performed one
 “ Sunday morning,” ſays the Chronologie
 Septennaire. . . “ The king came to fetch
 “ the lady Catherine, his ſiſter, when ſhe
 “ was dreſſed ; and leading her by the
 “ hand into his cloſet, whither her ſaid
 “ future ſpouſe had come before her, he
 “ ordered M. . . the archbiſhop of Rouen,
 “ to marry them, &c. and that it was his

“ pleaſure it ſhould be ſo. This the arch-
 “ biſhop at firſt reſuſed, alledging, that
 “ the uſual ſolemnity ought to have been
 “ obſerved therein. To which the king
 “ very learnedly made anſwer, That his
 “ preſence ſupplied the want of all other
 “ ſolemnity, and that his cloſet was a con-
 “ ſecrated place.”

1599.

jeſty or the magiſtrates; and likewiſe to admit in them all foreigners whatever, without acquainting any ſuperior tribunal; as alſo on their ſide, to be preſent, without licence, at the aſſemblies which were held amongſt the foreigners. It is very plain, that a point as abſolutely contrary to all the laws of the kingdom, as prejudicial to the authority of the king *, the right of the magiſtracy, and the utility and quiet of the people, could not have been obtained but by ſtratagem; and it was upon this point likewiſe that the enemies of the proteſtants inſiſted chiefly, in the ſeveral remonſtrances they made to the king, each alledging thoſe arguments in which they were moſt intereſted. The parliament remonſtrated, that this article completed the ruin of their authority, which the clergy had already confined to ſuch narrow limits, as well as the king's (for it was pretended, that theſe two authorities were ſo cloſely connected that they could not be ſeparated) that if appeals againſt the irregular exertion of eccleſiaſtical authority ſhould be taken away, they would have only the ſhadow of any power. The clergy and the Sorbonne complained of the ſuperiority this conceſſion would give the proteſtant over the catholic church in France, which had never been poſſeſſed of ſo large a power in its juriſdiction; and this was certainly true. Laſtly, they enumerated all the bad conſequences which this abſolute independence of the French huguenots might produce, either amongſt themſelves, or their aſſociations with all the enemies of France in Europe.

THE king had not yet examined the edict with care: all he knew of it was from a ſlight reading, in which he had, doubtleſs, glanced over this clauſe, or probably wholly omitted it. The ſurprize he diſcovered to thoſe who talked to him in that ſtrain, ſhewed he had been deceived; and he promiſed them to conſider it attentively, and give them an answer. When they left him, he immediately ſent for

* "This point," ſays le Septennaire, "the marechal de Bouillon had managed with ſome perſons, who perhaps were not aware of the danger of it; but the ſieur Berthier, who was agent for the clergy, and biſhop of Rieux, diſputed it ſo warmly with the marechal, in the preſence of the king, that after hearing his reaſons, and in regard of the importance of the point itſelf, his majeſty ordered it to be erazed." Ann. 1599. p: 66. This account of M. Cayet's agrees

with that of F. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 280, & ſeq. ſo that the article of the edict of Nantes, which was ſo warmly conteſted, being apparently the eighty-ſecond, is at preſent as diſadvantageous to the calviniſts, as it was formerly favourable to them; ſince it forbids them all cabals, negotiations, intelligences, aſſemblies, councils, leagues, aſſociations, either in or out of the kingdom, aſſeſſments and raiſing of money, &c. without his majeſty's expreſs permiſſion.

me, and shewing me the edict, I concealed from him none of the sentiments I have delivered here : I added, that by too great zeal to make that article advantageous for the protestants, I thought he was doing them a mischief, in that it would give large scope for all the slander that would be invented against all the worthy men of the party, of their intriguing with foreigners against the state, or of suffering themselves to be suborned. Henry, still more confirmed in his opinion, sent me back with orders to prepare myself to support all these motives in the assembly of the protestants, which he would have to be called immediately ; while he, in the mean time, went to demand an explanation of the edict from those who had drawn it up.

Messieurs de Schomberg, de Thou, Calignon, and Jeannin (for the king sent directly for them all four) were greatly disconcerted by the reproaches the king made them of having abused his confidence. Schomberg and de Thou, in the name of them all, replied, that they had been obliged to act in the manner they had done, by the threats of messieurs de Bouillon and de la Tremouille, who declared, in the name of the whole party, that if this article was denied to them, they would break all agreement, and even commence war against the catholics ; which seemed to them of the utmost consequence, the peace with Spain labouring at that time under great difficulties. The king contenting himself with this excuse, ordered Berthier, syndic of the clergy, to report it to the assembly, and to add from him, that amongst four persons, to whom he had committed the care of drawing up the edict, there being no protestant but Calignon, he could not persuade himself that the three others would have given the protestant religion such an advantage over the catholic. The answer made by the bishops shewed plainly, that they had not the same opinion of those three gentlemen that his majesty had ; they were treated in full assembly as false catholics, who in many articles agreed with the protestants, and had no scruple about the rest. Whilst we condemn this second imputation *

* If a certain private conversation be true, which d'Aubigné makes the president de Thou to hold with the duke de la Tremouille, when he was sent by his majesty to the assembly of the calvinists, the suspicions of the clergy would not be ill founded : " You have too much judgment," says the president to him, " not to know very well, that considering

" the point at which matters now stand,
 " and the concessions we have already made
 " you, the demands which you may make
 " are not at their utmost height
 " M. de Schomberg is a lutheran, and very
 " far from being a good calvinist ; as for
 " my own part, you shall know the in-
 " most thought of my heart." Tom. III.
 lib. v. ch. i. But it is very probable that

1599.

as it deserves to be, we still allow, that with regard to the first, every thing made against the writers of the edict; and that their reply to his majesty did not so effectually destroy the opinion that might be conceived of it, as the silence they observed in his presence gave it strength*.

THE duke of Bouillon, however, had certainly those sentiments they attributed to him. By endeavouring to come at the bottom of the affair, I learnt that he had in reality discovered an insurmountable obstinacy: but was there no other means to make the others more reasonable? and then, what could he do by himself? If all the protestants were like the duke de Bouillon, what could the writers of the edict mean by this blind compliance with their inclinations? was the king and the realm to be betrayed for necessity? as nothing could be thought worse than that by honest and skilful negotiators, they can hardly be charged with such a notion. For my own part, I always thought Bouillon the sole favourer of the project contained in that article.. as he had been the author of it: he considered only himself, and disregarded others. I will now shew the ultimate design of all his politics.

THE duke of Bouillon, in order to terminate in his favour the dispute for precedency between him and the dukes and peers of France, as well as the marshals that were more ancient than him, formed a design to get his sovereignty of Sedan † declared a fief of the empire. But this prerogative was not to deprive him of all communication with the protestant French lords, otherwise he would lose more than he gained. The medium he thought upon to reconcile his interest with his ambition, was to have his church of Sedan comprehended in the protestant churches of France. This he did by means of the article in question: mean time he would continue to make himself be treated as a foreign prince.

BERTHIER came back to the king, to give him an account of the disposition in which he found the prelates of the assembly, together with the result of their deliberations; which was to take from the four

d'Aubigné has related this conversation upon the credit of persons not to be depended on, as also some other points of his history, which at that time drew an arret of parliament upon that work.

* M. de Sully's sincerity in all this is

so remarkable, that we cannot, in my opinion, sufficiently admire it in a protestant.

† Consult l'Histoire du duc de Bouillon, which we have quoted several times already, liv. v.

persons

persons who drew up the edict all cognizance of the affairs of religion; and the disputed article, and some others less essential, should be mended; which his majesty likewise promised.

NEVERTHELESS, the assembly of the chief protestants then at Paris having been summoned the day after that in which this agreement betwixt the king and the commissaries was made, I received, as usual, a note inviting me to be there. I had left off going to these assemblies, ever since I perceived that my presence laid a restraint upon three or four of the leading men in it, and was good for nothing but to produce altercations. I deceived them, by presenting myself at this. The duke of Bouillon easily comprehended the design which had brought me there thus contrary to my usual custom, and hinted as much with an ironical severity; which I answered, by excusing myself on account of the multiplicity of affairs that took up my time, and by feigning not to know the occasion on which the present assembly was held. I gave no attention to the sullen air which the duke de la Tremouille assumed, nor the expression he let fall to intimate, that he was not persuaded of the truth of what I said; but went and seated myself near messieurs de Moüy, de Clermont, and de Sainte-Marie-du-Mont, who informed me of the business that was to be brought upon the carpet; assuring me, that the article which had made so much noise was disapproved of by almost all the protestants; and that none but messieurs de Bouillon, de la Tremouille, du Plessis, and some others of the cabal, insisted on it, in order to bring on a civil war. They could not obtain their point, notwithstanding the tumults they had occasioned, and the clamours they made in the assembly. When it came to the vote it was carried against them, the contrary opinion prevailed, and with reason, for the best arguments were on our side*.

* The edict of Nantes was at length verified on Thursday the 25th of February this same year, after many difficulties started by the clergy, the university, and parliament. It was upon this occasion that Henry IV. told the bishops; "You have exhorted me concerning my duty; let me now exhort you concerning yours: let us excite a mutual emulation in each other, which of us shall perform their parts the best. My predecessors gave you good words; but I, with my grey jacket on, will shew you good deeds: though I am all grizzled without, yet I am all

gold within: I will look into your papers, and answer them as favourably as I can." The following was the return he made to the parliament, when they came to make him remonstrances; "You see me in my closet, where I come to speak with you, not in my royal robes, nor with my sword and other military habiliments on, as my predecessors were wont, nor like a prince who is to receive an ambassador, but clad like the father of a family, in his plain doublet, to speak familiarly with his children; what I have to say to you is,

THEY

1599.

THEY likewise agreed upon some qualifications with regard to two or three other articles, in which the public good did not seem to be sufficiently considered. The justice and mildness of Henry's conduct was acknowledged by every one. After the affair was thus settled, he explained his motives to the greater number; and for the rest, he thought only of hindering them from doing worse.

HE acted with the same prudence with respect to some disaffected catholics, who being unwilling to appear openly themselves, brought one Martha Broffier, a pretended demoniac, in play, who was become the object of the people's curiosity, who are always struck with the marvellous, whether true or false. It is indeed surprizing, that a matter so ridiculous in itself, and which was even below the consideration of the mob, should be talked of for a year and a half, and become an affair of state: one half of the world suffer themselves to be dazzled by every thing that seems to be supernatural, and others are kept in awe, not by the thing itself, but by the motives upon which it is founded. Martha Broffier met with many protectors among the clergy, even as far as Rome, whither she took care to be carried. The king, without any extraordinary notice, allowed * both the time and means

“ to intreat you would register, with the usual solemnities, the edict which I have granted to those of the calvinist religion. “ What I have done is for the sake of peace, which I have concluded with the neighbouring powers around me, and would have the same observed within my own dominions.” After he had told them the reasons that induced him to make this edict, he added; “ Such as would hinder my edict from passing, are for war, which I will to-morrow declare against the protestants, but I will not carry it on, I will fend them to it. I made the edict, and would have it observed: my will ought to be a sufficient reason; for in an obedient state they never ask their prince any other. I am king, I speak to you as such, and I will be obeyed.” *Peres. ibid. and Journal de Henry IV. ibid. See also in M. de Thou, and in le Septennaire, ann. 1599. the several modifications which were added to the edict of Nantes, and all the conferences held on this occasion.*

* We have a very curious account of all that relates to this pretended demoniac in *M. de Thou*, at the beginning of book *cxiii. ann. 1599.* an abstract of which is as follows: One James Broffier, a baker at Romorantin in Sologne, taking a dislike to his own trade, turned conjurer, with a design to travel about the country with his three daughters, Martha, Silvina, and Mary; the eldest, who is the person spoken of here, had succeeded so well, by the instructions which her father had given her, to counterfeit a demoniac, that she imposed upon every body at Orleans and Cleri, except Charles Miron, bishop of Angers, who found out the imposture, by putting common water in the place of holy water, and holy in the place of common; by repeating a verse from Virgil instead of the beginning of the exorcism, and touching her with a key instead of his episcopal crozier. This did not hinder her from coming to Paris, where she pitched on the church of St. Genevieve for the scene on which to shew herself to the people, who flocked thither in necessary

necessary to make itself known: after which, the whole trick ended in the general contempt of its authors and actresses.

THE death of a great many persons of distinction afforded matter for other discourse. The chancellor de Chiverney, Schomberg, and d'Incarville; all three members of the council of finances, dying within a short time of each other, occasioned a great alteration of affairs: the seals were given to Bellièvre; the office of comptroller-general, which d'Incarville had possessed, was, at my solicitation, granted to de Vienne; and that of superintendant of the finances was restored in my favour. Henry having sent for me to the garden of the Tuilleries, where he was walking, told me that he was resolved to entrust the care of the finances to one man only; and assuming a very serious manner, made me promise to give freely my opinion of that man, when he should name him to me. Having assured him that I would, he smiled, and tapping my cheek, told me, that I had reason to know him well, since it was myself. His majesty bestowed on me likewise the post of surveyor of the highways, for which he sent me the patents, together with those of superintendant of the fortifications. And Sancy, resigning himself up to his usual whims*, having thought proper to retire from the council, and to give up the office of overseer of the works, the king added these employments likewise to the other favours he had loaded me with. The appointments for the superintendancy were settled at the rate of twenty thousand livres; those of

great numbers. She imposed upon all the credulous ecclesiastics, and upon the capuchins, who began to exercise her in good earnest; and even upon some physicians whom Henry IV. had sent to see her: though all the rest deposed formally against her, especially Michael Marecot, one of the physicians, who publicly convicted her of not understanding Greek or Latin, and having no greater capacity than what is common to her sex; and, in short, of being an impostor and arrant cheat. But notwithstanding all this, the ecclesiastics and preachers knew so well how to interest religion in this affair, and the pretended demoniac played her part so well, that the arret of parliament, that enjoined her, as also her father, to return home, how wise and reasonable soever it was, occasioned fierce murmurings, and almost a revolt in

Paris: and this gave the king a deal of uneasiness, who saw, that what enemies he had remaining of the old league, did appear again on this occasion. Alexander de la Rochefoucaut, lord of Saint-Martin, and count de Randan, even undertook to revive this affair, by causing Martha to be sent to Avignon, and thence to Rome, where she gained still more partisans. But, unluckily for her, cardinal d'Osat was there, who employed himself so effectually in this affair, that at length Martha and all her family saw themselves utterly abandoned; and they lived and died despised and quite miserable. Consult also the other historians.

* Joseph Scaliger speaks, as well as our author, of M. de Sancy as a fanatic, and as very subject to enthusiastic reveries.

1599. surveyor of the highways, and of Paris in particular, were ten thousand livres.

His majesty was so well pleased with this method of fixing the rate of salaries, that he was likewise desirous of regulating in the same manner the rewards he proposed to grant me, as well, he said, to prevent me from expecting a gratuity for every considerable service I did him, as to spare himself the trouble of causing all the presents he made me to be registered, since without that, I would not receive any from him, however little their value was: he therefore declared to me, that all those rewards and presents should for the future be comprized in one settled gratuity which should be paid me the beginning of every year, in the form of letters patents, registered by the parliament; and asked me beforehand if I was satisfied with the sum, which was sixty thousand livres: adding, that it was his desire, that with this money I should purchase estates, which I should be at liberty to dispose of in favour of those of my children who made themselves most worthy of my affection, in order to keep them more firmly attached to me. This goodness of the king's merited my most grateful acknowledgments. However, this regulation which I have mentioned here was not made till the year 1600, and did not begin to take place till the year 1601.

MADemoiselle de Bourbon * died likewise this year: and monsieur d'Espinaç †, archbishop of Lyons, who may be said to have tasted all kinds of fortunes; then madam la Connetable; and after her madam de Beaufort: these two last deaths made a prodigious noise every where, and were attended with a great similitarity of very uncommon circumstances; both were seized with a violent distemper, that lasted only three or four days; and both, though extremely beautiful, became horribly disfigured, which, together with some other symptoms, that at any other time would have been thought natural, or only the effects of poison, raised a report in the world, that the deaths of these two young ladies, as well as their elevation, was the work of the devil, who made them pay for that short felicity he had procured them. And this was certainly believed, not only amongst the people

* She was daughter to Henry I. the prince of Condé, by his first wife, the princess of Nevers, marchioness de l'Isle, &c.

† Peter d'Espinaç: he had been a great partisan of the league: however, P. Matheu assures, that he had done consider-

able services to Henry IV. against Spain, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 308. where he gives an eulogium of his virtues. M. de Thou, on the contrary, represents him, in book ex. as an incestuous and simoniacal person.

generally

generally credulous to a high degree of folly, but the courtiers themselves: so prevalent at that time was the infection of trading in the occult sciences, and so great was the hatred and envy to these two ladies, on account of the high rank they enjoyed.

1599.

THIS is what was related of the constable's* lady, and (as it is said) by the ladies that were then at her house: She was conversing gayly with them in her closet, when one of her women entered in great terror, and told her that a certain person, who called himself a gentleman, and had indeed a good presence, saying that he was quite black, and of a gigantic stature, had just entered her anti-chamber, and desired to speak to her about affairs of great consequence, which he could not communicate to any but her. At every circumstance relating to this extraordinary courier, which the woman was ordered to describe minutely, the lady was seen to turn pale, and was so oppressed with grief, that she could scarce tell her woman to intreat the gentleman, in her name, to defer his visit to another time; to which he replied, in a tone that filled the messenger with horror, that since the lady would not come willingly, he would take the trouble to go and seek her in her closet. She, who was still more afraid of a public than a private audience. resolved at last to go to him, but with all the marks of a deep despair.

THE terrible message performed, she returned to her company, bathed in tears, and half dead with dismay; she had only time to speak a few words to take leave of them, particularly of three ladies who were her friends, and to assure them that she should never see them more. That instant she was seized with exquisite pains, and died at the end of three days, inspiring all who saw her with horror at the frightful change of every feature in her face. Of this story the wife thought as they ought to think.

MADAM de Beaufort was the weakest of her sex with regard to divination; she made no secret of her consulting with astrologers, and always had a great many of them about her, who never quitted her, and what is most surprizing, although she always, doubtless, paid them well, yet they never foretold her any thing but what was disagree-

* Louisa de Budos, second wife to daughter to James de Budos, viscount de Henry, Constable de Montmorency, was Portes.

1599.

able*: one said, that she would never be married but once; another, that she should die young; a third, that she should take care of being with child; and a fourth, that she should be betrayed by one of her friends. Hence proceeded that melancholy which oppressed her, and which she could never afterwards get rid of. Gracienne, one of her women, has since told me, that she would retire from all company to pass whole nights in grief, and in weeping on account of these predictions.

BEING then far advanced in her pregnancy, many persons will be at no loss to guess the cause of this misfortune which attended it. She was already greatly indisposed both in body and mind, when, at the latter end of Lent, she was desirous of making one of the party with the king at Fontainebleau: she staid there but a few days. The king, who was not willing to incur the censure of keeping this lady with him during the Easter holidays, intreated him to leave him to spend them at Fontainebleau, and to return herself to Paris †. Madam de Beaufort received this order with tears, it was still worse when they came to part; Henry, on his side, more passionately fond than ever of this lady, who had already brought him two sons, and a daughter, named Henrietta, did himself equal violence. He conducted her half-way to Paris ‡; and although they proposed only an absence of a few days, yet they dreaded the moment of parting, as if it had been for a much longer time. Those who are inclined to give faith to presages will lay some stress upon this relation. The two lovers several times renewed their parting endearments, and in every thing they said to each other at that moment, some people have pretended to find proofs of those presages of an inevitable fate.

MADAM de Beaufort spoke to the king as if for the last time ||; she recommended to him her children, her house of Monceaux, and her domestics: the king listened to her, but, instead of comforting her, gave way to a sympathizing grief. Again they took leave of each other, and a secret emotion again drew them to each other's arms. Henry

* The weakness of M. de Sully, in believing judicial astrology, discovers itself in a thousand places in his Memoirs, in spite of all his caution.

† According to P. Matthieu, tom. II. liv. ii. p. 316. she came to Paris, in order to have the articles of the purchase of Cha-

teau-neuf in Perche expedited.

‡ At Melun she lay the day before, whence the king conducted her to the boat in which she embarked to come down to the arsenal.

|| D'Aubigné speaks in the same manner of this parting, tom. liv. v. ch. 3.

would

would not so easily have torn himself from her, if the marechal d'Ornano, Roquelaure, and Frontenac, had not taken him away by force. At length they prevailed upon him to return to Fontainebleau; and the last words he said was, to recommend his mistress to the conduct of la Varenne, with orders to provide every thing she wanted, and to conduct her safely to the house of Zamet, to whom he had chosen to confide the care of a person so dear to him.

1599.

I WAS at Paris when the duchess of Beaufort arrived there; and intending to go with my wife a few days after to receive the communion at Rosny, whither I carried the prince and princess of Orange, to whom I was desirous of shewing the new buildings which the king's liberality had enabled me to raise there; I thought I was under a necessity of waiting upon this lady to take my leave of her. She no longer remembered any thing that had passed at Saint-Germain, but gave me a most obliging reception: not daring to explain herself clearly upon that compliance with her projects to which she so ardently wished to bring me, she contented herself with endeavouring to engage me in her interests, by mingling with those civilities which she shewed but to few persons, words that carried a double sense, and hinted to me a boundless grandeur, if I would relax a little of the severity of my counsels to the king with regard to her. I, who was as little moved with the chimera's that filled her head, as with those she thought to inspire me with, pretended not to understand any part of a discourse so intelligible; and answered her in equivocal terms with general protestations of respect, attachment, and devotion; which signify what one will.

AT my return home, I desired my wife to pay the same compliment to the duchess: she was received with equal tenderness: madam de Beaufort intreating her to love her, and to be with her as a friend, entered into confidences, that would have seemed the last instance of the most intimate friendship to those that, like madam de Rosny, were ignorant that the duchess, who had no great share of understanding, was not very delicate in the choice of her confidants: it was her highest pleasure, to entertain any person she first saw with her schemes and expectations; and the more those she conversed with were her inferiors, the less restraint she laid on herself; for then she no longer guarded her expressions, and often assumed the airs of a queen.

1599.

SHE had as little caution with respect to what really happened, as to what she was in expectation would happen; too much simplicity on such occasions gave rise probably to those reports which were spread in the world concerning some irregularities in her conduct when she was very young. These censures, however, appeared to me to be the mere effect of the malice of her enemies; for it could not be imagined that a woman would carry her imprudence and folly so far as to say both good and ill of herself indifferently; and I never thought I had any reason to reproach myself with having, for six years, confined a woman named la Rouffe, who was one of her servants, and her husband, in the Bastile, who, after the death of this lady, continued to load her memory with the utmost infamy: for although all they said had been true, yet the respect that was due to her family, and still more to the tenderness the king had for her and the children she brought him, ought to have silenced their slanders.

MADAM de Rosny could not help being surprized at the duchess's discourse, and was still more so, when this lady making an aukward assemblage of the civilities which are practised between equals, and these airs of a queen, told her she might come to her *coucher* and *lever*, whenever she pleased; and many other speeches of the same kind. My wife, as well as every one else, concluded there would be a great change in the duchess's fortune, and returned home full of these reflections, which she communicated to me. I had not even disclosed to my wife what had passed between the king and me upon this subject, as well as the scene at St. Germain: I promised her to acquaint her with the true state of things, provided she would not tell the princess of Orange what madam de Beaufort had said to her; and we set out together for Rosny.

Two days after, which was the Saturday before Easter, as I was performing my promise to madam de Rosny, and acquainting her with the duchess's design to get herself declared queen, all the practices of her relations and dependents for that purpose, the struggles the king had in his own mind, and the resolution he had at length taken to overcome himself, adding some reflections upon the calamities which a contrary conduct would bring upon the kingdom, I heard the bell of the first gate of the castle without the moat ring; and none of my servants answering, as it was yet scarcely day, the bell was rung with more violence, and a voice several times repeated, *I come from the king.*

Immediately I wakened a footman, and while he went to open the gate, I slipped on a night-gown, and ran down stairs, greatly alarmed at being sent to so early in the morning.

1599.

THE courier said that he had travelled all night to tell me that the king desired I would come instantly to Fontainebleau: his countenance had so deep a concern on it that I asked him if the king was ill? "No," he replied, "but he is in the utmost affliction: inadam the "duchefs is dead." The news appeared to me so improbable that I made him repeat it several times; and when convinced that it was true, I felt my mind divided between my grief for the condition to which her death reduced the king, and my joy for the advantage all France would gain by it, which was increased by my being fully persuaded in my own mind, that the king, by this transitory sorrow, would purchase a release from a thousand anxieties, and much more anguish of heart than what he now actually suffered. I went up again to my wife's chamber full of these reflections, "You will neither go to the duchefs's "coucher nor lever," said I, "for she is dead." I brought the courier up with me, that while I drest, and he breakfasted, he might inform us of all the circumstances of this great event, which was still better related in the letter la Varenne had written from Paris to the king, and which his majesty sent me by the courier, together with a second from la Varenne, directed to myself.

ZAMET* had received his guest with all the assiduity of a courtier who is solicitous to please, and neglected nothing which he thought might contribute to make her pass the time agreeably. On Maundy-Thursdai madam de Beaufort after dinner, where she had eaten of the greatest delicacies, and all prepared to her taste, had an inclination to hear the evening service at St. Anthony the less: she was there seized with fainting fits, which obliged her to be carried back immediately to Zamet's. As soon as she arrived she went into the garden and was immediately attacked with an apoplectic fit, which it was expected would have instantly stifled her. She recovered a little, through the assistance they gave her; and strongly possessed with a no-

* Sebastian Zamet, a rich private gentleman, was an Italian and a native of Lucca: but he got himself naturalized in 1581, together with his two brothers Horace and John Antony. He desired the notary who drew up his daughter's contract

of marriage, to style him lord of seventeen hundred thousand crowns. Henry IV. had pitched on his house for his meals and parties of pleasure: this prince besides loved him because he was a facetious and merry man.

1599.

tion that she was poisoned *, commanded them to carry her from that house to madam de Sourdis her aunt, who lived in the cloister Saint-Germain.

SCARCE had they time to put her in bed when thick succeeding convulsions, so dreadful as amazed all that were present, and in a word all the symptoms of approaching death, left Varenne, who had taken up the pen to write the king word of the accident that had happened, nothing else to say but that the physicians all despaired of his mistress's life, by the nature of her distemper, which required the most violent remedies, and the circumstance of her being far gone with child, which made all applications mortal †. Scarce had he sent away the letter when madam de Beaufort drawing near her last moments, was seized with new convulsions which turned her black, and disfigured her so horribly that la Varenne, not doubting but the king, upon the receipt of his letter, would set out immediately to see his mistress, thought it better to send him word in a second billet that she was dead, than to expose him to a spectacle at once so dreadful and afflicting as that of a woman whom he tenderly loved, expiring in agitation, struggles, and agonies, that left hardly any thing of human in her figure.

LA Varenne, in the letter he sent me by the same courier, informed me that the duchess was not dead, but by what he could judge had not an hour to live ‡; in effect she expired a few moments after, in a general subversion of all the functions of nature capable of inspiring horror and dismay. The king, who upon the receipt of la Varenne's first letter, had not failed to mount his horse immediately, received the

* D'Aubigné gives us to understand this, when he says, that after she had refreshed herself with Zamet, by eating a large citron, or, according to others, a salad, "she immediately felt such an inflammation in her throat, and such violent twitchings in her stomach, that," &c. But neither de Thou, Bassompierre, le Septennaire, nor any other historian, imputes her disorder to poison. Le Grain ascribes it to the crude and cold juice of the citron. Sauval says, that he knew some old men who remembered to have seen the duchess lie in state in the nunnery of Saint-Germain.

† "The physician la Riviere, came in great haste upon this occasion,"

says d'Aubigné, "with others of the king's physicians, and entering but three steps into her chamber, when he saw the extraordinary condition she was in, went away saying to his brother physicians, This is the hand of God." Tom. III. liv. v. c. 3.

‡ Saturday morning, the convulsions had writhed her mouth to the back of her neck. Her body was opened, in which a dead child was found. See concerning this death, M. de Thou, liv. cxxii. Matthieu, *ibid.* Le Grain, liv. vii. Le Septennaire, ann. 1599. Mem. de Bassompierre. De Thou, Matthieu, and Bassompierre, place her death a day sooner.

second when he was got half way to Paris, and listening to nothing but the excess of his passion, was resolved, notwithstanding all that could be said to him, to give himself the consolation of seeing his mistress* once more, dead as he believed her to be. The same persons that had carried him back the first time to Fontainebleau, prevailed upon him by their arguments and intreaties to go back once more, and it was from this place that he dispatched the courier to me.

I DID not lose a moment. I breakfasted at Poissy, and dined at Paris. I made use of the archbishop of Glasgow's coach to carry me as far as Essonne, from whence I took post, and at night got to Fontainebleau.

* According to Bassompierre, who speaks of it as being an eye-witness, Henry did not believe that his mistress was yet dead. He says that la Varenne having come to acquaint the marshal d'Ornano and him, who had accompanied the dukes to Paris, that she was just dead, they both took horse in order to bring the melancholy news to the king and keep him from coming to Paris. "We found" says he, "the king on the other side of la Saussaye, near Vilejuif, coming on post with all expedition. As soon as he saw the marshal, he suspected that he came to bring him the news, which as soon as he heard he made great lamentation for her. At length they prevailed with him to go into the abbey la Saussaye, where they laid him upon a bed: when at last a coach coming from Paris, they put him into it, in order to return to Fontainebleau." Mem. de Bassompierre, tom I. p. 69 & seq. Le Grain adds, that he fainted away in his coach between the arms of the grand couvreur or master of the horse.

Without attempting in any respect to justify the excessive fondness Henry IV. had for this woman, justice however obliges us to observe here, that this attachment was no less founded on the good qualities of her heart and mind than the beauty of her person, and that only the antipathy which is commonly borne towards such as are in the same condition, makes people say all

the ill of her that we see related in these Memoirs and in the other historians. I will conclude this article with what d'Aubigne says, who is a writer that is naturally more inclined to blame than to commend. "It is a wonder," says he, "how this woman, whose great beauty had nothing of the loose turn in it, could have lived rather like a queen than a mistress for so many years, and that with so few enemies. The necessities of state were the only enemies she had to encounter." He had said before, that she used with great moderation her power over the king: and P. Matthieu adds, to the good qualities which he remarks in this lady, that of having often given very good counsel to Henry IV. *ibid.* "She would not suffer any other person near her," says le Grain also, *liv. viii.* "though the sieur de Liancourt was a man of great merit and of a very honourable family: inasmuch that this marriage was dissolved before it was consummated." Some accounts of that time speak of Nicholas d'Amerval, sieur de Liancourt, as a person of a truly distinguished birth and of a very plentiful fortune; but whose mind, say they, was as badly formed as his body. Mademoiselle d'Efrees married him only to get rid of the tyrannical treatment she received from her father, and because the king promised her that he would hinder the consummation of the marriage, and even dissolve it: which he actually did.

1599.

I went immediately to the king, who was walking in a gallery sunk in an excess of grief that made all company insupportable: he told me that, although he expected the sight of me would at first increase his affliction, as in effect it did, yet he was sensible that in the condition, to which the loss he had suffered had reduced him, he had so much need of consolation, that he did not hesitate a moment to send for me to receive an assistance I only could give.

WITH a prince equally sensible of what he owed to religious and political duties, I was not at a loss for resources from whence to derive arguments to calm his sorrow. I recalled to his remembrance some of those passages in the holy scriptures, wherein God as a father and master requires that confidence and perfect resignation, the effect of which is to inspire a christian with a contempt for all sublunary things; to which I added such as might incite to the acknowledgments and adoration of divine providence, as well in deep misfortunes as unexpected success. I made no scruple to represent to Henry, that the accident which now gave him all this affliction, was among the number of those which he would one day look upon as most fortunate. I endeavoured to place him in imagination in that painful, and (if his mistress had lived) unavoidable situation, when, on one side struggling with the force of a tender and violent passion, and on the other with the silent convictions of what honour and duty required of him, he would be under an absolute necessity of coming to some resolution, with regard to an engagement, which he could not break without torture, or preserve without infamy. Heaven, I told him, came to his assistance by a stroke, painful indeed, but which could only open the way to a marriage, upon which depended the tranquility of France, the happiness of his people, the fate of Europe, and his own good, to whom the blessing of a lawful union would always appear too dearly purchased, by the desertion of a woman, who, by a thousand good qualities, was worthy of his affection.

I EASILY perceived that this last argument, enforced in a manner advantageous to his mistress, made an impression upon Henry's heart, by the soothing pleasure it gave him to hear his choice approved of. He confessed to me, that it was some relief to him to find me placing his attachment for the duchess of Beaufort among the number of those that are formed by a real sympathy of minds, and not on mere libertinism; and that he had been apprehensive I would have no other-

ways endeavoured to comfort him, than by rendering him ashamed of his passion for her. The first conversation was very long. I do not remember every thing I said to the king. All I know is that, after having first applied those gentle soothing things that affliction demands, the continuance of which I opposed by arguments drawn from the necessity all princes and persons in any public character are under, of preserving, even in the most reasonable sorrows, that freedom of mind requisite for affairs of state; Henry had not the weakness of resigning himself up to grief through obstinacy*, or of seeking a cure in insensibility. He listened more to the dictates of his reason than his passion, and already appeared much less afflicted to those persons who entered his chamber. At length every one being careful not to renew his grief, which his daily employments gradually diminished, he found himself in that state in which all wise men ought to be who have had great subjects of affliction that is, neither condemning, nor flattering the cause, nor affecting neither to recall or banish the remembrance of it.

1599.

JOYEUSE likewise employed the public attention, having from a soldier and a courtier † become a capuchin, and afterwards from a capuchin become again a soldier and a courtier, he resumed his inclination for the frock, which it was pretended the pope had only during the war granted him a dispensation for quitting; and this time he wore it till his death. The marriage of his daughter ‡, the sole heiress of

* Henry IV. made all the court go into mourning for the death of the dukes of Beaufort. He himself was dressed in black for the first eight days, and afterwards in violet. Mem. de Chiverny.

† Henry de Joyeuse, count de Bouchage, and youngest brother to the duke de Joyeuse, was slain at Coutras. "One day at four in the morning, as he was passing through the streets of Paris near the convent of the capuchins, after he had spent the night in a debauch, he imagined that he heard angels singing the matins in the convent: at which being much affected, he immediately turned capuchin under the name of Frere-Ange. Afterwards he quitted the frock and carried arms against Henry IV. at which time the duke de Maine

"made him governor of Languedoc, a duke, peer, and marshal of France. "At last he made his peace with the king: but one day this prince being with him on a balcony, under which was a great number of people assembled together. "Cousin," says Henry IV. to him, "this multitude seem to me to be very contented and easy at seeing together an apostate and a renegado. 'This saying of the king's made such an impression on Joyeuse, that he entered again into his convent, where he died.'" This anecdote is taken from the notes on the Henriade.

‡ Henrietta Catherine de Joyeuse. There did not survive of this marriage but one daughter, whereby the branch of Bourbon Montpensier became extinct.

the

1599.

the family of Joyeuse, with the duke of Montpensier, was the last action of his public life. The marchioness de Bellisle *, after his example, took the habit of a nun, of the order of Saint Bernard.

* Antonietta d'Orleans-de-Longueville was the widow of Charles de Gondy marquis of Bellisle, and eldest son of the marshal de Retz. Mezeray informs us, that the reason of her turning was the mortification she had received by not being able to revenge the death of her husband; a soldier whom she had employed for this purpose having been taken and hanged, for

she could not obtain his pardon of the king. The marquis de Bellisle had been killed in 1596 at Mount-Saint-Michel, by a gentleman of Bretagne, called Kermartin. L'Etoile speaks of her as a woman who was much admired by all the court, on account of her beauty and understanding, and as an eminent example of devotion and penitence in her convent.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

3 1158 00678 55

pt



D 000 001 020

