

A PRINCE OF
PLEASURE

PHILIP OF FRANCE
AND HIS COURT





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A
PRINCE
OF
PLEASURE
BY
HUGH
STOKES

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

MADAME DE
BRINVILLIERS
AND HER TIMES

1630 - 1676

With a Photogravure
Frontispiece and Six-
teen other Illustrations

Demy 8vo



*Philip of France,
Duke of Orleans*

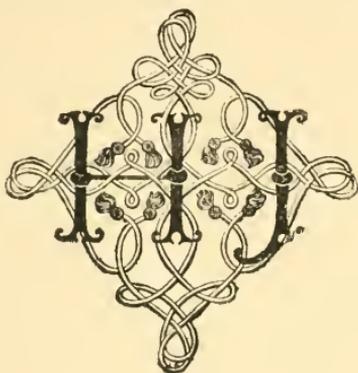
after the pastel by Wallerant Vaillant in the Albertina, Vienna

A PRINCE OF PLEASURE

PHILIP OF FRANCE
AND HIS COURT

1640 - 1701

BY HUGH STOKES
WITH A FRONTISPIECE IN
PHOTOGRAVURE AND
16 OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS



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PREFACE

“THERE are two kinds of history—the lying official history taught in schools, history *ad usum delphini*, and secret history, the shameful history which reveals the true causes of events,” says Balzac through the mouth of that interesting rascal Vautrin. In “A Prince of Pleasure” my endeavour has been to show how personal motives and private hates were allowed to influence the trend of European policy. Philip of Orleans was in most respects a contemptible character, but, in spite of Louis XIV, in spite of himself, he was a man of importance. The men and women who surrounded him had an active share in the government of France, and his career is an integral part of the history of the “Grand Siècle.” He founded a great family, which has not wholly lost its position, and may yet control the destinies of France. If the Legitimists saw their wishes realised, Philip’s children would sit on the thrones of France and Great Britain.

For over two hundred years the House of Orleans has had an almost continuous intercourse with this country. Philip was the husband of an English princess. Philip “Égalité” was a friend of George Prince of Wales (afterwards George IV). As *émigrés* after the Revolution the princes of Orleans settled in the Thames valley. After his troubled reign Louis Philippe fled to the peace of Claremont, and

his body rests in the little chapel at Weybridge. Only within the last few months has the present Duke of Orleans severed the connection by the sale of his Worcestershire estates.

The Bibliography cites the chief documents upon which this volume has been based. Some modern critics hardly value the memoirs of the seventeenth century at their real worth. They are indeed collections of gossip, often requiring considerable patience to search for the illuminating facts scattered throughout their pages. But social history is founded upon personal gossip. Pepys was a gossip, so was Horace Walpole, and, later, Creevey. Madame de Sévigné was an enchanting *causeuse*, whose letters would be even more fascinating if she had not been oppressed by the fear that her correspondence was liable to examination in the post. It cannot be said that French memoirs sparkle in every line. Although the bore is not encouraged on the other side of the Channel, it is impossible to restrain him altogether from writing to his relations or dictating his reminiscences. But even the bore, however wearisome, has interesting material at his command. French writers of this description have generally something to say, and, if their budget runs thin, they draw on that keen wit and happy philosophy which is a national rather than a personal gift. When they tell a story they endeavour to recapture the actual conversation. It is curious to compare an incident as related respectively by Mademoiselle de Montpensier and Ralph Montagu. The Englishman gives the bald facts; the Frenchwoman artistically creates a dramatic picture.

If in this study I have been guilty of an occasional *longueur*, I ask for forgiveness. Facts—even dull

facts—cannot be omitted when they have a bearing on the story as a whole. If some of the intrigues require a clear brain to unravel, the reader must admire the audacious ingenuity of the men and women who wove the tangle, and not enter judgment in any other than a charitable spirit.

H. S.

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 1603. Death of Elizabeth and accession of James I.
 1610. Murder of Henri IV and accession of Louis XIII.
 1615. Marriage of Louis XIII with Anne of Austria.
 1616. Death of Shakespeare.
 1621. Death of Philip III and accession of Philip IV.
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 1635. French Academy founded by Richelieu.
 1642. Death of Richelieu. Death of Marie de' Medici.
 1643. Death of Louis XIII. Accession of Louis XIV.
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 1654. Coronation of Louis XIV.
 1656. Pascal's *Provincial Letters* published.
 1658. Death of Oliver Cromwell.
 1660. Restoration of Charles II. Marriage of Louis XIV.
 1661. Death of Mazarin.
 1662. Death of Pascal.
 1664. Versailles begun.
 1665. Great Plague of London. Death of Philip IV. Accession
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 1666. Great Fire of London.
 1667. *Paradise Lost* published.
 1669. Death of Rembrandt.
 1670. "Treaty of Dover." Death of Henrietta of Orleans.
 1773. Death of Molière.
 1675. Death of Turenne.
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1688. William III enters London.
1691. Death of Louvois.
1694. Death of Queen Mary.
1696. Death of Madame de Sévigné.
1700. Accession of Philip V of Spain.
1701. Death of Philip of Orleans. Death of James II of England.
1702. Death of William III. Accession of Anne.
1704. Death of Bossuet. Battle of Blenheim.
1711. Death of Boileau.
1714. Death of Queen Anne. Accession of George I.
1715. Death of Louis XIV. Accession of Louis XV.

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PHILIP, son of Louis XIII 21 Sept. 1640-8 June 1701	= (2) ELISABETH CHARLOTTE of Bavaria
PHILIP, known as the "Regent" 2 Aug. 1674-23 Dec. 1723	= Mademoiselle DE BLOIS, d. of Louis XIV
LOUIS 4 Aug. 1703-4 Feb. 1752	= AUGUSTA, Princess of Baden
LOUIS PHILIP 12 May 1725-18 Nov. 1785	= LOUISE HENRIETTE DE BOURBON- CONTI
LOUIS PHILIP JOSEPH, known as "Égalité" 13 April 1747-6 Nov. 1793	= LOUISE MARIE ADELAIDE DE BOURBON-PENTHIÈVRE
LOUIS PHILIP, King of the French (1830-1848) 6 Oct. 1773-26 Aug. 1850	= MARIA AMELIA of Naples
FERDINAND PHILIP LOUIS 3 Sept. 1810-17 July 1842	= HELENA of Mecklenburg- Schwerin
LOUIS PHILIP ALBERT, known as the "Comte de Paris" 24 Aug. 1838-8 Sept. 1894	= MARIA ISABELLA DE MONTPENSIER
LOUIS PHILIP ROBERT 6 Feb. 1869- Head of the Royal House of France	= Archduchess MARIA DOROTHEA AMALIA of Austria

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE DUKES OF ORLEANS

A PRINCE OF PLEASURE

I

The House of Orleans : Ancestors of Louis XIV and Philip of Orleans : An inquiry into the personality of princes : The "king-becoming graces" : The Emperors Ferdinand and Maximilian : Charles V : Cosimo and Francesco de' Medici : Philip II of Spain : Anthony of Bourbon : Jeanne d'Albret : Henri IV : Marie de' Medici : Philip III of Spain.

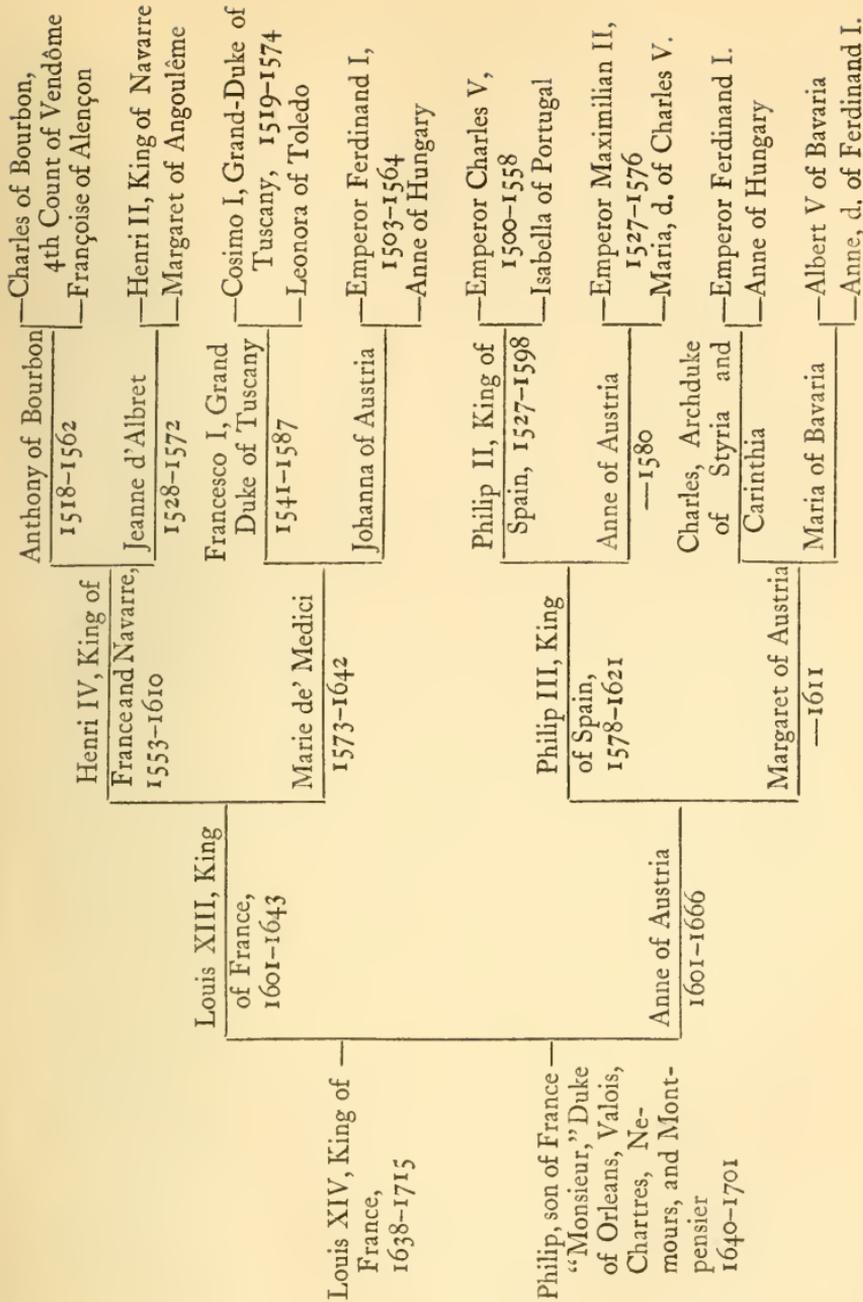
LOUIS XIII died on the 14th May 1643, at the age of forty-two, leaving two children designed by fate to sway the destinies of their country in no uncertain way. Under the rule of the "Dieudonné" France was to assume a predominating influence in the council-chambers of Europe. Viewed from the standpoint of territorial aggrandisement the "Grand Siècle" at its apogee was glorious indeed. But "Le Roi Soleil" left terrible legacies to his family as well as to the State. One problem, personal and domestic, had far-reaching results. Gaston, the second son of Henri IV, had been the focus of revolt during the unhappy reign of Louis XIII. From his earliest years Louis XIV was determined that his brother Philip should have no opportunity to trouble the internal peace of

his kingdom. He consistently endeavoured to prevent him from sharing any of the prestige attached to the crown.

These efforts were only partially successful. The man was crushed. His character was permanently destroyed. He became weak, jealous, and wholly futile. His descendants, however, inherited an animosity towards the elder branch of the royal house which lasted until that line became extinct, and they were able to ascend a throne they could not hold. The Dukes of Orleans belonged by tradition and inclination to the party of opposition and intrigue. The name of the family has become synonymous with treachery and broken faith.

The science of heredity leads the inquirer into many interesting by-paths of history. The two sons of Louis XIII possessed a remarkable family tree, so varied in its ramifications that it can be made to prove anything—or nothing. Four generations give twenty-eight names, there being a double descent from the Emperor Ferdinand and his queen, Anne of Hungary. The list includes all the chivalry and much of the rascaldom of Europe. Only four were not crowned heads, and these, Charles, Duke de Vendôme, and his wife, Françoise d'Alençon, together with the Archduke Charles of Styria and Carinthia and his consort, Maria of Bavaria, exercised an almost regal authority. By inherited disposition the later Bourbons could not be other than autocratic.

To discriminate between acquired and innate characteristics is almost impossible. It is certain that the progenitors of Louis XIV and Philip of Orleans handed down many of their qualities in an



ANCESTORS OF LOUIS XIV AND PHILIP OF ORLEANS

exceedingly curious manner. Shakespeare writes in "Macbeth" :

The king-becoming graces
Are justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude.

Tested by this searching ideal most of the kings in this genealogy fall short, although two great-great-grandfathers of the children—Ferdinand I and Maximilian II—nearly fulfil the poet's requirements. They were both ancestors to be proud of.

Ferdinand, German Emperor from 1556 to 1564 and King of the Romans from 1531, was Spanish by birth. He was tolerant, he endeavoured to reform some of the abuses of the Church, and he vainly imagined that his Catholic and Protestant subjects might live together in peace and unity. The Emperor Maximilian II was of even finer metal. Broad-minded in religion, he wished his subjects to enjoy every freedom, possibly because he wavered continually between the rival claims of Catholicism and Lutheranism. In other matters he was firm and energetic, always just, and—unlike many of his peers—temperate in private life. Intellectually he was above the average, being keenly interested in the arts and sciences. Personally he was loved for his grace and sweetness of disposition. "The most accomplished gentleman of his time," said a brother-king, Henri III of France, and the verdict was never questioned.

Two other great-great-grandfathers must be briefly referred to. They did not monopolise the virtues, but they have left imperishable names in history. The Emperor Charles V and Cosimo

de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, were men of marked individuality.

Charles V was one of the most notable monarchs of modern Christendom. Mazzini compares his age to that of his great-great-grandson Louis XIV. Robertson says that he "possessed, in the most eminent degree, the science which is of greatest importance to a monarch, that of knowing men and of adapting their talents to the various departments which he allotted to them." The words apply with equal truth to Louis XIV. The Emperor's political career does not concern us. How far did he conform to Shakespeare's "king-becoming graces"? He was just and firm, slow to make up his mind, but once resolved very swift to execute his will. Almost fanatically devout he refused Luther's new teachings to be expounded in his presence, preferring to remain in ignorance rather than allow his faith to risk contamination. He was dignified, grave, and reserved. His grandfather was killed by over-eating, and his own excesses at table were the dismay of his physicians.* If phrenology be a true science he should have possessed that thirty-sixth bump which Dr. Gall labelled "amativeness." His teeth were bad, his under-lip unduly large, and his mouth usually open. Malformation of the palate prevented him from speaking with ease. These physical weaknesses appeared in many of his descendants. There may have been a slight dis-

* Throughout the ages kings and princes have remained "very valiant trenchermen." Even in this present century of diets and régimes the great ones of the earth—

 Their various cares in one great point combine

 The business of their lives—that is, to dine.

Contemporary examples could easily be cited.

position towards epilepsy, although this cannot be absolutely proved. But Julius Cæsar and Napoleon Bonaparte were epileptics. During the whole of his life he suffered from chronic gout. Gout was once defined as a mark of genius, whereas its cousin rheumatism is only a little more cleverness than usual. As a youth Charles V loved hunting, and he was particularly fascinated by mechanical contrivances, especially clocks and watches. It may be remarked that the bent of a king's mind is more likely to be towards science than literature or art.

The other great-great-grandfather, Cosimo de' Medici, like Machiavelli's "Prince," "joined daring to talent and prudence, was capable of great cruelty, and yet could practise mercy in due season." As consummately gifted a ruler as Charles V, he also was silent and reserved in disposition. He was a clever chemist with a working knowledge of the use of poisons and the manufacture of drugs and perfumes. He had—or should have had—the thirty-sixth bump. He was a beneficent supporter of art and literature. On the darker side he was jealous and utterly false, and his heart was seldom touched by pity.

Cosimo's "cursed son," great-grandfather of Louis and Philip, lacked his predecessor's statecraft, but intensified the vices he inherited. His chemical researches were profound. He was a scientist by instinct, and he received his ministers in his laboratory. Cruel like his father, he was infinitely more dissolute and debauched. It was his pleasure to encourage artists, authors, and poisoners.* The

* "There is no essential incongruity between crime and culture," wrote Oscar Wilde in his critical study of Thomas Griffiths Wainwright, the artist and poisoner, whose prose Charles Lamb thought "capital."

generation included three other persons of varying capacity whose characters can be traced.

Philip II of Spain was little akin in temperament to his father, Charles V. His health was feeble, he hated sport, and most of his day was spent in his study. Extremely reserved, he was cold, severe, and melancholic. In the government of his kingdom his aim was to know everything and to direct everybody. He had an extraordinary aptitude for work, which was strengthened by a temperate and simple habit of living. Proud of his authority, he had little initiative, and could seldom enter upon any definite course of action without considerable hesitation. He was a pitiless enemy. In religious fanaticism he far surpassed his parent. He does not seem to have been attracted by science, but he was a gifted connoisseur in painting and architecture.

Anthony of Bourbon in marrying a queen founded a dynasty. He was a prince, who, according to a contemporary poet, "lived without glory," and came to an end so inglorious as to be almost farcical. Feeble and irresolute in spirit he was inclined towards Calvinism—until his wife became a Protestant, when he immediately embraced Catholicism. At the Court of Catherine de' Medici he was distracted by the charms of the many sirens amongst her ladies in waiting. He has been described as a bad king, a bad husband, and a bad father. At least he was no coward, and this virtue of courage he shared with his wife, the beautiful, witty, and irreligious Jeanne d'Albret. This brilliant princess was at first the soul of gaiety. But when it was necessary to exert every effort to protect her subjects from their many enemies she changed into a woman of energy and determination.

Her son, Henri IV, became one of the most popular kings France has ever acknowledged. "The greatest, but above all the most essentially French of all the kings of France." Macaulay calls him "the best French sovereign, a king who restored order, terminated a terrible civil war, brought the finances into an excellent condition, made his country respected throughout Europe, and endeared himself to the great body of the people whom he ruled. Yet this man was twice a Huguenot, and twice a Papist. He was, as Davila hints, strongly suspected as having no religion at all in theory; and was certainly not much under religious restraints in his practice."

His second wife, Marie de' Medici, passionate, obstinate, and treacherous, inherited all the sinister gifts of her race. Their son, Louis XIII, married the daughter of Philip III of Spain, a monarch not only irresolute, but shy and timid, lacking intelligence as well as energy, a king who allowed his favourites to govern his vast dominions whilst he devoted his scanty abilities to hunting, religion, and etiquette.

The married life of Louis XIII and Anne of Austria was to have so deep an influence upon the early life and training of Louis the "Dieudonné" and his younger brother, Philip of Anjou, that it needs to be treated in some detail.

II

Childhood of Louis XIII : His character : Anne of Austria :
Daily life of Louis XIII : Murder of the Marshal d'Ancre :
Marie de' Medici : "Honest gallantry" : Marriage of
Henrietta Maria : The Duke of Buckingham : Gaston of
Orleans : Birth of "La Grande Mademoiselle" : Marie de
Hautefort : Louise de La Fayette : Birth of Louis XIV :
Birth of Philip of Anjou : Death of Louis XIII.

THERE are such curious parallels between the early life of Anne of Austria and the unhappy career of her daughter-in-law, Henrietta of England, that the history of the Spanish Infanta can form the only introduction to the sordid romance of the Stuart princess. There is another reason why the slow evolution of her character should be carefully followed. As a girl-wife she rashly attempted to influence the destinies of her adopted country. She failed, and remained for years a discredited and bitter woman. But, as Regent of France, during the minority of Louis XIV, she recovered all her lost power, and, if Mazarin relieved her shoulders of the trying burdens of statecraft, her social influence over the Court and its surroundings lasted almost without a challenge until her death in 1666.

When Henri IV was assassinated by Ravailac in the Rue de la Ferronnerie the Dauphin who succeeded him as Louis XIII was nine years of

age. His boyhood had been far from cheerful, and its continual gloom accentuated the melancholy from which he suffered during the whole of his life. Henri IV loved his large family like the warm-hearted man he was. No distinction was made between the children of Royal birth and their little half-brothers and sisters whose parentage on the spindle side was less incontestable. All were reared in the same nursery under the care of lynx-eyed Madame de Monglat. The Queen, Marie de' Medici, refers with some disdain to the "troupe," which included her own sons and daughters as well as the offspring of Gabrielle d'Estrées. She raised no objection to the intimacy. Her Italian training had taught her to scorn trifles of this nature. On-lookers noted as a subject for gossip that whereas the frail Gabrielle had been a lady of sweet and fascinating temperament her children were bad-tempered and unlovable. On the other hand, the Royal princes and princesses were amiable and pleasant, qualities no courtier could suggest were handed down from their Florentine mother.

Doubts as to the paternity of the Vendômes need not be investigated. Henri IV acknowledged them. But Michelet's assertion that Louis the Dauphin was probably the son of Orsini, and Gaston of Orleans the child of Concini, Marshal d'Ancre, can be disposed of at once. The boys were admittedly unlike the King their father, but they inherited physically and mentally many of the most striking characteristics of their famous ancestors. France is more gallant to its women than it is to its queens, and only the ugly princesses have escaped with good names and untarnished reputations.

Marie de' Medici received the news of her

husband's murder without sorrow. She never pretended to love him, and her children failed to interest her. For the eldest, both as Dauphin and as King, she expressed nothing but contempt. She declared that he was incapable of governing. He lacked judgment, and his intelligence was as feeble as his health. As a stimulative she agreed with Henri and Madame de Monglat in the unremitting application of a whip.

Henri IV boasted to his sons that his success in life was based on the thrashings he had received as a child. He recited family traditions which proved the value of such Spartan training. His mother, Jeanne d'Albret, had used the instrument of education constantly, thus following the precepts of her own father, Henri II of Navarre. Once the little kingdom in the south was to receive diplomatic help by marrying Jeanne to a mighty nobleman of Lorraine. The princess objected. The suitor did not appeal to her sympathies. The King replied that if his daughter did not immediately bow to the royal will she would be thrashed into compulsion by her sire. And the deed would have been executed if it had not been discovered at the last moment that Anthony of Bourbon was a better match because a stronger friend.

So Henri IV personally thrashed his heir without mercy. When the child was barbarous towards a captive sparrow he unmistakably impressed upon his son that a boy who would be king must be kind towards the whole of creation.

"I will not have my son grow up into a cruel man!" cried the monarch as he called for the rod. Punishment invariably followed displays of passion, fits of temper, and obstinate disinclinations to take

medicine. If the King was not at hand Madame de Monglat, generally known in the nursery as "Mamanga," was no inefficient substitute.

With the death of his father the boy lost one of his few real friends, and, although on the throne, he remained under the control of the masterful woman who had assumed the authority of Regent. At the period of his accession Louis XIII is described by an eye-witness as an ill-cared for and neglected child who moodily played solitary and silent games. He was taught Latin and mathematics, Spanish, Italian, and geography. What he actually learned is another matter. He was an indifferent scholar and detested books. He wandered from room to room through the rambling palaces almost without restraint. Yet he was not a silly child. In 1614, when he was thirteen, a minor servant, Bonnet, a water-carrier, was rearing a little pig in the royal kitchen. In itself the fact reveals the homeliness of the household. Bonnet met with an accident and died. The pig fretted for its master, and, refusing food through grief, at length died also. So pathetic a tale needed commemoration, and the King supplied an original verse.

Il y avait en ma cuisine
 Une petite marcassine
 Laquelle est morte de douleur
 D'avoir perdu son gouverneur.

Louis XIII certainly did not inherit the literary gifts of his grandmother, Jeanne d'Albret.

If, like Charles V, his mental powers were slow in germinating he did not lack in those early days a shrewd intelligence.

"Supposing that I promised you a bishopric,

would you shorten my lessons ? ” he naïvely asked his tutor at the age of twelve.

In 1615, at the age of fifteen, he was married to another unhappy child who was only five days his senior. Like pieces of carved ivory they were moved towards each other on a chessboard of intrigue. The ceremony in the cathedral at Bordeaux was one of those solemn farces which occur too frequently in the history of kings. The two children were nuptially blessed by a cardinal, and, for the sake of form, were officially put to bed whilst their nurses sat on each side of the couch. Such alliances do not always stifle the ideal marriage. Unfortunately the young King was not ideal in character, whilst the Spanish Queen was hardly out of the schoolroom. She had yet to learn how to control an indifferent temper. “ Every one agrees,” wrote the Spanish Ambassador to the King of Spain, “ that her youth is the reason of her light-headedness. She never speaks without making jokes like a child. She forgets with an incredible facility, and she is so petulant that one has not time to remedy her faults or prevent them.” The result was matrimonial disaster which for twenty years threatened to overturn the throne of France.

Louis XIII was short, ungainly, and—until disease attacked him—inclined to corpulence. He was not beautiful, although Sully, who had served the royal house so faithfully, professed to admire the boy’s regular features. His nose was too large, his head out of proportion to his body, his chin projected, his lower lip was unpleasantly thickened, and his mouth was usually half-open. Owing to the awkward formation of his palate he was compelled to speak little and slowly to avoid a trying

stammer. He suffered from chronic gout, and it is almost certain that he had at least one epileptic fit. His teeth were decayed, and he was a continual invalid through persistent dyspepsia. Most of these physical defects may be traced in his family history. Many of them he bequeathed to his sons. Philip inherited his undersized stature as well as his brown hair and swarthy skin. In profile Louis XIV challenged comparison with the ancestral Bourbons, and was in more ways than one a true grandson of Henri IV.

Personally Louis XIII was modest to timidity, and he never conquered an enervating childishness. In his seventeenth year some of his amusements were puerile. He could be seen harnessing pet dogs to toy cannon, or dressing boys up as ballet-dancers to make them skip to the music of violin and drum. Laughed at by the Court, his mother openly ejected him from his own Council. He did not invite the friendship of his young wife and remained wholly indifferent to her. The situation was abnormal.

Anne of Austria, daughter of Philip III of Spain, boasted several descents from the House of Hapsburg. Like her husband she was small, quickly receiving the nickname of "the little queen." Contemporary accounts of her charms do not exactly tally, although, if Pourbus was a reasonably truthful portrait-painter, as a girl she was far from ill-looking. Her thick hair was blond and curly. Her skin was very white, and her mouth small and well formed. Particularly were her eyes described as fine. One report notices a glint of green shining in their depths. Madame de Motteville, always an enthusiastic and admiring companion, declares

her mistress to be the greatest beauty of the century. Other tales are not so kind. Her nose is too big, writes one. Her eyes would be more graceful if they were not so large, cries a second critic. Her complexion was doubtful—it is so difficult to separate nature from the adornments of art. Admittedly well made, she might be termed an agreeable princess, but her voice was harsh, inclining either to a shrill falsetto or a cold hard tone which perhaps revealed her soul.

When she came to France she was ignorant and indolent. She never altered. Cardinal de Retz was prejudiced when he described her as selfish, rancorous, and obstinate, but even Madame de Motteville had to admit the last failing. The Duchess de Chevreuse told Cardinal de Retz more than once that the Queen was not Spanish in wit or body, and that she had neither the temperament nor the vivacity of her countrywomen. Her intelligence was nothing to boast of, but, like most daughters of the royal house of Spain, she was excessively proud, arrogant, and disdainful. She belonged to the first nation in the world.* She condescended to marry a king whose magnificence could not be compared to that of her father. In a word she was unsympathetic.

The Bourbons had many faults, but one kingly

* In the early years of the seventeenth century this was admitted by foreigners. In 1617, James I of England remarked to Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador: "Of course I know that, so far as greatness is concerned, the King of Spain is greater than all the rest of us Christian kings put together." Yet, Major Martin Hume tells us, the financial condition of Spain was so bad at the time that Philip III, the master of the New World and all its treasures, had not money to pay for his household servants or to set forth the meals on his own table.

virtue they never lacked. The first duty of a prince is to be affable, without vulgarity and loss of dignity if possible, but always to be affable. It is not only good manners but good policy. Henri IV did not disregard this important factor in the government of a state. He did not forget to play to the gallery. A chance remark about a fowl and a stewing-pot has given him centuries of popular immortality. In many respects Louis XIII was curiously unlike his father. As enemies delighted to point out he favoured his mother's sinister family. But by temperament he was a pleasant man of an engaging disposition. His attitude was gracious and his smile gave confidence. His memory was good and he could recall names and faces without effort, whilst family histories and relationships he seldom forgot. He was obstinate and insisted upon unquestioning obedience. How could a king be otherwise when hardly a human being dared to cross his purpose. "We may give our advice to our master and friends," wrote Madame de Motteville, "but, if they are determined not to follow it, we ought to enter into their inclinations rather than follow our own when we do not see essential evil in them, and when the things themselves are not important."

At heart Louis XIII was sound. "He has a tender conscience," said a courtier. "He detests lies and shows a great repugnance to every kind of vice," wrote Malherbe. He endeavoured in a simple manner to do his duty. When the common people discovered that one of his anxieties was to guard against the oppression of the poor they gave him the not unmerited title of "Louis the Just."

He was also christened "Louis the Chaste."

Serious and reflective, somewhat dull, he found himself married by force to a girl who was light-headed, petulant, and silly. It may be true that for a few weeks after their marriage they loved each other. During those early years it is hard to discover their real feelings. The formula is as old as the earth. When she loved him he did not care for her ; but if her large eyes twinkled in another direction he became violently angry—hardly logical, but very natural. He disliked his Queen to accompany him when he made royal progresses through his kingdom. Once she suddenly joined him on a hunting expedition. He abruptly sent her home to the Louvre. If he did not care for her because the sex itself was unattractive to him, at least he managed to excite her jealousy. In 1617 it was rumoured that he was fascinated by Mademoiselle de Maugiron, a maid of honour in the household. The Queen presented the girl with ten thousand crowns and packed her off to an expectant bridegroom in far-distant Dauphiny. But Louis was not, never had been, in love. If the demoiselle wept at her exile she had reason to smile over her wedding portion.

In January 1619 Christine, the younger daughter of Henri IV and Marie de' Medici, was married to the Prince of Piedmont, and the festivities slightly stirred the heart of her brother. He devoted some of his leisure to his wife, even going so far as to neglect hunting. In February of the following year the little Queen was seriously ill. Nine doctors attended her, and yet she lived. Louis could neither sleep nor eat at the thought of the danger she was in. Luckily she recovered. In 1621 he wrote: “ I love you more than anything in the

world." Then, with France eagerly awaiting its long-desired Dauphin, she went gaily dancing one joyous night across the room known to-day as the Salle Lacazes of the Louvre. She slipped over a stool and fell. Dismay seized the members of the Court, and the King was kept in ignorance of an accident, which had blasted his hopes, until he reached Orleans.

Louis XIII was liable to fits of passionate anger. His wrath was terrible. He accused his wife's favourite, the Duchess de Luynes, of being the cause of this bitter misfortune. Without warning he dismissed every lady-in-waiting. Mademoiselle de Verneuil was sent home to her mother, and the Queen herself was given a letter written in direct and brutal language. She was told to exercise more care in the control of her household. She was requested to remember that the word of the King was as much law to her as to the meanest of his subjects.

The first of many humiliations to which the proud Infanta was subjected, she did not easily forget the incident. She protested against the King's interference with her ladies, and demanded that they should be recalled. As to forbidding her royal presence to Madame de Luynes that was absurdly impossible. The King briefly answered that he would alter nothing. Madame de Luynes asked for pardon.

"I wish to be obeyed," was the short reply.

This was the earliest open quarrel in the household, and it left the Queen seething with indignation. There are many miserable stories in contemporary memoirs of the Louvre at this period. The Queen never visited the King's apartments, but he called upon her regularly according to the set forms of

etiquette. They did not dine together, and his day was mapped out in a manner which barred any participation on her part in his pleasures. He rose early, and was busy over his several hobbies until "déjeuner." Then followed a promenade in the gardens of the Tuileries, mass in the chapel, a ceremonial visit to the Queen-Mother, and a similar procession to the chamber of the reigning Queen. Dinner finished, additional state visits were paid to the two Queens. In the afternoon came recreation. The evening closed with supper and again separate journeys to Marie de' Medici and Anne of Austria. Bed ended a long and trying if not a laborious day.

After the Queen's second deplorable illness the King's indifference developed into a positive aversion. Anne retaliated with the capricious temper of a schoolgirl. To the dismay of the court and the nation, husband and wife were taking different paths. The King had a multitude of private interests. His chief delight was found in hunting, generally the fox or the wolf, sometimes the deer, rarely the wild boar. He was a good shot, and enjoyed bird snaring. Fishing was often indulged in, and boating on the Seine or the lake at Fontainebleau was found a peaceful refuge. He was a fair player at tennis, and, in another direction, an ardent dog-fancier, keeping kennels at the Louvre. Although he disliked reading he established a tiny printing press in the garrets of his palace, being instructed in the art by the cleverest master-printer of Paris, who persuaded him to purchase the finest foreign founts of type. A true dilettante he painted—his pictures have all vanished—and also modelled in clay. Not far from his printing press were a

carpenter's shop and a small forge where he attempted iron-work.

His chief intellectual joy was music. He kept a small orchestra for chamber music as well as a large choir for his chapel. He played most of the string instruments of his day, and composed several motets. Whenever everything else failed to amuse him he sat down to cards, and though he did not care for dancing he liked to arrange ballets. From one employment he turned to another with feverish energy, and this incessant activity revealed every weak spot in a naturally febrile constitution. When hunting he could not restrain himself, and would remain in the saddle for sixteen or seventeen hours. Upon such occasions he seemed insensible to heat, cold, or fatigue. "I love exercise, and it gives me good health," he told his mother. It was only partly true, and his health would have been better if he had practised moderation.

After her marriage the young Queen retired into her apartments at the Louvre and surrounded herself with a retinue of *grandees* who had travelled with her from Spain. Marie de' Medici with the Marshal d'Ancre directed the government, whilst the King and Queen were disregarded and forgotten. When the Marshal appeared in public he was attended by a crowd of several hundred courtiers who remained uncovered in his presence. The King was seldom followed by more than two or three gentlemen, the most prominent being a quiet equerry from the south of France. Charles Albert de Luynes was a man of nearly forty, so retiring and modest in behaviour that he did not arouse the suspicions of the ambitious Marshal and the scheming Queen-Mother.

Suddenly this king who reigned but was not permitted to govern startled Paris with a violent *coup d'état*. The youth keenly resented the impertinences of the Italian adventurer who did not scruple to call the head of the state an "idiot." A conspiracy was plotted with such secrecy that not a whisper travelled to the ears of the victim. De Luynes lacked the necessary courage and ambition. A sterner character, Guichard Déageant, was introduced by Arnauld d'Andilly. Patiently the small band, under the command of Vitry, waited for the moment which would crown their efforts. One Monday morning in April whilst the Marshal was striding through the gates of the Louvre at the head of his followers he was brutally shot down. As the acrid smoke cleared away in the spring air the boyish prince appeared at one of the windows of the palace.

"Thanks, many thanks!" he cried to the murderers. "At this hour I am king."

The assassination of the Marshal d'Ancre was hardly an auspicious beginning to a new era. The mild De Luynes stripped the mangled body of its rich jewels, and was afterwards rewarded with the whole of the dead man's vast property. Without the loss of a moment Marie de' Medici was imprisoned in her rooms. Louis XIII assumed his new authority unhesitatingly. The Queen-Mother—no longer the Queen Regent—sent an envoy, Monsieur de Bressieux, to her son. She demanded an interview.

"There is too much to do. It must wait for another time," was the reply.

She asked Monsieur de Bressieux to repeat her request.

“I have already told you my wishes,” said the King.

This was not satisfactory, and for a third time De Bressieux took the Queen’s message.

“If I see you here again I will send you to a place where you will be easily found when wanted,” was the angry answer. The trembling courtier retired.

Marie de’ Medici was determined not to allow her power to slip from her grasp without a struggle. The Princess di Conti was told to see the King. But the Princess was at her toilette and found that employment sufficient excuse. As she could not remain in her dressing-room the whole day she was compelled finally to consent. Her name was taken into the King’s cabinet.

“If you come on your own behalf I will receive you. If you come on behalf of the Queen my mother I decline to see you.”

Undaunted at this failure the deposed Regent sent another lady-in-waiting, Madame de Guercheville.

“I recognise the Queen as my mother, but I am the King. In the past she has not treated me as a son, but in the meanwhile I will behave towards her as one.”

His criticism was true, but his promise was strangely kept. Twelve archers guarded her door. The windows of her rooms were blocked up, and a little wooden bridge which spanned the Louvre moat, hacked to pieces. Her children and her daughter-in-law were forbidden to visit their mother, and the Spanish ambassador refused access. At last she was exiled to Blois, and her coach left Paris with ignominy and public disgrace.

Louis then concentrated his attention upon the irritations and annoyances of his own inner circle. From his childhood he had been told that Spain was the hereditary enemy of France. With this belief he fervently hated all Spaniards. The Queen, not too well disposed towards her husband personally, slightly unfriendly to the court which surrounded her, and somewhat vindictive by nature, corresponded frequently with her relations in Madrid. Her marriage had been arranged for political considerations, and she had been sent to Paris to act as a secret emissary of Spain. Monteleone, the Spanish ambassador, was always with her, and absurdly bragged of his position as major-domo in the Queen's household. He was roughly reminded that no such position existed, and that his only office was that of ambassador accredited by Spain to the King of France. The activity of this foreign coterie became an increasing and vital danger to French diplomacy. In December 1618 the Queen's Spanish entourage, with the Countess de la Torre at their head, was dismissed and put across the frontier. A deaf ear was turned to the Queen's wild expostulations.

“Do they think that because I was born in Spain that I am Spanish? They deceive themselves. I am French, and wish to be nothing else.”

It was a specious plea, but the facts were against her. She had acted in the interests of her native country, and her new household was appointed without the slightest consideration of her wishes. The Duke de Luynes being now firmly established as the King's favourite, his wife was nominated “chef du conseil, surintendante de la maison et finances d'Anne d'Autriche.” Marie de Rohan,

Duchess de Luynes (afterwards Duchess de Chevreuse), was a girl of eighteen, without fear and without reverence, a laughing, frivolous creature with much wit and sharp intelligence, but little honesty. Madame de Vernet, decidedly not a seriously inclined woman, became "dame d'atour,"* and a third lady-in-waiting was Mademoiselle de Verneuil, the King's half-sister and daughter of Gabrielle d'Estrées, mistress of Henri IV. The Princess de Conti, whose behaviour was notorious, completed a merry but dangerous quartette which exercised over the Queen the worst of bad influences.

Robbed of her Spanish ladies, and carefully shut out from the higher duties of her position, Anne of Austria took the only possible revenge. Conscious of the King's neglect she developed into an accomplished coquette, and conjugated the verb "to flirt" in every tense. At a dull court love is one of the few relaxations. Perhaps it would be safer to use the words the Queen herself selected when—years later—she excused her behaviour to Madame de Motteville. "In my youth," she said, "I did not comprehend that what is called 'honest gallantry' could be wrong when no pledges were given or accepted." She was careful to add that in after life she changed her opinion.

Madame de Sablé expounds the position in the clearest language. "I am persuaded," she wrote, "that men may without criminality feel and demonstrate the tenderest sentiments for the lady of their heart and fancy. I maintain that the desire of pleasing women inspires the grandest and noblest

* The "dame d'atour" was entrusted with the toilet of the Queen, and especially the hair-dressing.

actions. It imparts wit, liberality, and countless other virtues. Women, being the gems and ornaments of the world, are created to become the recipients of such homage. They may therefore accept adoration and service. Indeed they ought to encourage it, but they need only express their gratitude by innocent condescensions.”

This paragraph should be carefully read. Upon it is based the whole theory of conduct governing the relations of one sex towards the other. That the theory often breaks down in practice need not be considered. It remains an ideal, as well as an apology, for feeble human nature.

Anne of Austria delighted to provoke a passion she was personally too cold-hearted to return. There was some cruelty in her malicious dalliance. In 1620 Monsieur de Bellegarde, who was not in the first flush of youth, acted the part of Malvolio. The object of his worship adroitly led him on from folly to folly, until, to quote the pert Maria, he became a “ nay-word . . . a common recreation.” The Duke de Montmorency was dealt with in the same unkind manner. The disheartened lovers had their reward when the English Duke of Buckingham, venturing within range of the large eyes, became another sighing but not discomfited suitor. This historic affair developed into an appalling scandal, and alienated the last shreds of the King’s flickering goodwill towards his wife.

Negotiations had been in progress for some months between the courts of London and Madrid to arrange the marriage of Charles, heir to James I of England, with a daughter of the Spanish king, sister to the Queen of France. The secret visit of Charles and Buckingham to Spain is one of

the many engrossing episodes of that period the details of which are hidden and uncertain. The Spanish marriage was unpopular and happily came to naught. Henry Rich, Lord Holland, was then sent to Paris to see if there was a possibility of betrothing the Prince of Wales to Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henri IV and sister to Louis XIII.

Rich had a reputation for skilful diplomacy which he did not deserve, but his renown as a gallant had already reached the boudoirs of the Louvre. It was charmingly admitted by those best competent to judge that he was a successful and expert philanderer. The first lady to become the target of his fascinations was Marie de Rohan, formerly Duchess de Luynes, and now, by remarriage after a brief interval of widowhood, Duchess de Chevreuse. Years before there had been a vague rumour that the King himself had been touched by her attractions. The Spanish ambassador in one of his letters of scandal and gossip told his master that "the worst suspicions had arisen in the excited fancy of the Infanta Queen, and in the malicious tattlings of her women." Anne of Austria quickly discovered that her husband's temperament was of ice. She did not quarrel with her lively companion who was soon restored to favour.

Henry Rich gained, for himself the approbation of a critical court, and, for the future King of England, the hand of a French princess. In the following year (May 1625) the Duke of Buckingham arrived in Paris to escort Henrietta Maria to her new home. The capital had never entertained a more brilliant envoy. The Duke was attended by hundreds of English gentlemen. Their dress and accoutrements created a profound sensation, being



ANNE OF AUSTRIA,
QUEEN OF FRANCE
*After an enamel by Petitot
in the Jones Collection*



HENRIETTA MARIA,
QUEEN OF ENGLAND
*After a miniature ascribed to
J. Hoskins*

of the most gorgeous materials and heavily jewelled. Buckingham was young, extremely handsome, and exceedingly audacious. Madame de Motteville primly blushes in her old age as she recounts the gay doings. Fortunately for us her modesty did not prevent her from accomplishing the historian's task. She wrote the truth in one brief sentence. "He had the impertinence to attack the heart of the Queen," she says delicately. That was bad, but worse remains. "There is reason to think that his court was not found importunate."

At the close of the betrothal festivities in Paris the court accompanied the Duke and Henrietta Maria on the road to Calais. Owing to ill-health Louis XIII left them and retired to Compiègne, which he left almost immediately for Fontainebleau. At Amiens Anne of Austria and Marie de' Medici parted from the English crowd with a final sequence of gaieties. On an evening before the leave-taking the Queen, the Duke of Buckingham, and several members of their suites strolled into the gardens of the Archbishop's palace. Was it by intention that the Queen and the Duke became separated from the others? The facts are hard to unravel. Buckingham and the Queen disappeared from sight in the gloom of an avenue of trees and shrubs. Anne of Austria was playing with fire and unexpectedly the flame burst out. Bluntly and passionately the Duke declared his affection. Frightened at his impetuous mood she screamed for her equerry. He rushed forward to find her fainting in the arms of her lover.

The next morning farewells were exchanged. Buckingham dropped on his knees, and, in ecstatic transport, raised the hem of the Queen's robe to

his lips. She trembled at his rashness, but her heart was touched. When the cavalcade arrived at Boulogne it was clear that the passage of the Channel would have to be delayed owing to the roughness of the sea. Without hesitation Buckingham left the princess, who was in his care, and galloped back to Amiens. He demanded to see the Queen. She was still in bed, and her maids refused him admittance. He pushed them aside, marched into the room, and fell at the foot of the bed. Again and again, in unrestrained frenzy, he kissed the sheets on the bed. The attendants were aghast. The old Countess de Lannoï refused to leave her seat by the side of the Queen.

“This is not the custom in France!” she expostulated.

“I am not a Frenchman,” answered the Duke.

“I am not bound by the laws of the country.”

He burst into an unchecked flow of incoherent words. He cried aloud “all the most tender things in the world. She only replied by complaining of the boldness of his visit, and, without being too angry, she ordered him in severe tones to get up and leave her.” When he at last returned to Boulogne and his duty it is difficult to say whether she was sorry or pleased.

Gossip and scandal embroidered a story which required little embellishment. Malignant tongues garnished every incident and then carried the tale to the King’s ear. When the Queen arrived at Fontainebleau she entered her husband’s presence with a foreboding of evil. Marie de’ Medici, who had been alternately her enemy and her friend, attempted to convince Louis of his wife’s perfect innocence. This probably intensified the harm, for

the King had always (and with reason) been suspicious of his mother's wiles. He refused to consider the Queen's behaviour as a harmless indiscretion. "The King displayed the keenest jealousy at all these events. He believed the worst interpretations put upon them by Her Majesty's enemies." So wrote La Porte, one of the most faithful servants Anne of Austria ever had.

Louis dismissed every member of the Queen's personal suite, and exiled Putange the equerry, whose duty it was never to let the Queen out of his sight. For an unknown reason Ribera, the Spanish physician, was chased from the country, and Madame de Chevreuse was not unjustly ordered to leave France. Richelieu, growing in importance, had already noticed that she was devoted to Lord Rich, the bosom friend of Buckingham. It was rumoured that the divorce of the Queen was under consideration.

Anne of Austria had been pushed into a semi-innocent intrigue by the restless Madame de Chevreuse, who afterwards admitted that she had forced the girl to think continually of the handsome Englishman by perpetually repeating his name. Anne's character was smutched by her own indiscretion. Madame de Sablé witnesses that in her youth the Infanta detested gallantry. Madame de Sénécé, another devoted companion, writes that the Queen was irreproachable. Against this evidence we have the assertions of the Cardinal de Retz, which can only fairly be dismissed as baseless slander. Madame de Motteville touches the trouble when she says that the Queen's great misfortune was that the King did not love her, and she was thus forced into the intimacy of women who were as irresponsible

and reckless as they were young and light-hearted. But even Madame de Motteville's notes of the episode at Amiens do not remove the awkward impression of earlier contemporary accounts, and although she exerts herself to the utmost in the Queen's defence we are left in doubt as to the innocence of the promenade. Her heart was surely touched by the Englishman. She wept bitterly when she said good-bye to the Duke. In her old age she told Madame de Motteville that she was at that moment disgusted with the King her husband, and Buckingham had endeavoured to excite her still further against him.

The breach between Louis and Anne now became permanent. With no direct heir to the crown France was likely to become a bone of contention amongst a dozen warring ambitions. The Papal Nuncio reported in curious detail to the Holy Father the exceptional situation. The Spanish Ambassador told Philip of Spain that his daughter was queen only in name. Statesmen, courtiers, foreign envoys, and a crowd of officious priests endeavoured with the utmost pressure to bring the two together. Their efforts were unavailing. When the Duke de Luynes was alive, and his wife first lady-in-waiting, Richelieu complained that the two favourites intentionally kept husband and wife apart in order to gain their own selfish ends. Madame de Motteville agreed with the cardinal. But now De Luynes was dead, and Madame de Chevreuse in exile at Brussels. The fault was with the King—and the Queen.

By natural reaction the son of a man who cared for all women was not interested in any daughter of Eve. Louis XIII took life more solemnly than

his father, although he lacked his father's gifts of resolution and action. As a child he prepared a list of those of his predecessors on the throne who were most to be admired. Against each name he added the virtue for which the particular monarch was famous. The boy wished to emulate the piety of Saint Louis, the valour of Charlemagne, the temperance of Charles V, and the love of truth which distinguished Pharamond. A French critic calls attention to the non-existence of Pharamond, a legendary chieftain whose reign it would be difficult for a modern historian to date with accuracy. There is no need to be cynical, for there must have been some original good in a prince who even tried to be worthy of his position. The ascetic virtues of Louis XIII drove his confessor to despair, and threatened to wreck the peace of France.

He was not altogether austere, although he was inclined towards a melancholy sentiment. When he was hunting he seemed to appreciate the joy of life. On these excursions he would contentedly put up at the meanest inns and hovels, would make his own bed, and would help his gentlemen to prepare a rough meal. He could fry an omelet and truss a fowl, not the least valuable of the minor accomplishments. He liked simple living in exactly the same way that he preferred sober and inexpensive clothes. He was willing to laugh at a good joke, but he refused to listen to a broad or equivocal jest. In many respects he attained his simple ideals, and he explained his attitude explicitly in a private letter to Richelieu. "I will try to live as well as I can in this world, so that I may ultimately gain Paradise, which is the only aim one ought to have in life."

The character and temperament of "Louis the Chaste" possibly descended from some remote ancestor in Béarn. Although his Spanish and Italian forefathers mingled a certain piety with their other more prominent and more unpleasant qualities the devoutness of Louis XIII is in many ways striking. He was not a selfish man, but he refused to squander money unnecessarily, and his personal expenditure was kept within the most rigid limits. Without describing him as avaricious it must be recalled that he kept a sharp eye on his kitchen garden, and that his early green peas fetched a good price in the markets of Paris. He failed as a man and as a king because he lacked warmth of affection for his fellow creatures. Everlasting suspicion of the men and women who surrounded him poisoned his soul. His dislike for his Queen was partly attributable to constitutional indifference towards the whole sex, partly the result of settled distrust.

He had good reasons for doubting the honesty of the courtiers who fawned upon him. Even his mother, Marie de' Medici, had openly plotted against her son. He remembered past history, and the attitude of Catherine de' Medici towards her son Charles IX. More dangerous in his distorted opinion was his wife, whom he believed—despite all protestations—false to her marriage oath as well as to her adopted country. He did not care for his sister, the Queen of England, and his brother Gaston was a constant menace to his crown.

Gaston was not a pleasant character. Like the King he suffered from chronic ill-health, and was never robust. But unlike Louis he had been a pretty child, with blue eyes and black hair, and a slightly ruddy complexion. He had the same

underhanging lip and gaping mouth which marked the House of Bourbon so distinctively. Some observers say that he was gentle and amiable, others repeated with greater truth that he was vain, self-conscious and affected, delighting to poke sarcastic and unkind fun at his inferiors. As he developed into manhood he failed to improve. He insisted upon receiving every mark of respect due to his rank, but, night after night, when the gates of the Louvre were closed, he slipped out from one of the secret exits and caroused until the small hours in the most dissolute and degraded quarters of Paris. In his dress he was untidy and slovenly. Tallemant des Réaux draws a portrait of this prince running about with his hat over his ears, his hands in his pockets, whistling his shrillest, in every respect a most unengaging youth. More important was his constant change of purpose and irresolution. He could never make up his mind, and was frightened at the slightest danger. He delighted to irritate his brother by incessant contradiction, and Louis ruled him without mercy. He was not well-educated, and it was the policy of the King to allow him to remain ignorant. When he wished to learn horsemanship—surely one of the first accomplishments of a prince—Louis refused out of jealousy to give permission for the requisite riding-lessons. There was reason in forbidding him to construct model forts in the gardens of the Tuileries, or to perfect himself in military knowledge. The art and science of war might be found dangerous in a man who was next heir to the throne. The personal relationships of Louis XIII and Gaston were repeated with curious exactitude in the history of Louis XIV and Philip of Orleans. The bad-feeling which

destroyed the family happiness of the children of Anne of Austria was largely due to the rivalry and jealousy of her husband and her brother-in-law.

The life of Louis XIII was of uncertain duration, and his enemies were not blind to the fact. He had no direct heir, and seemed unlikely to father a Dauphin. Marie de' Medici, on bad terms with her elder son, wished to see the younger married, and she selected for his wife Mademoiselle de Montpensier, the richest heiress in the kingdom. This action awoke every intriguing spirit, and Louis himself became uneasy at the close political alliance between his mother and his brother. Arnauld d'Andilly wrote that "the King is not without some little jealousy at the particular inclination the Queen-Mother has for Monsieur." Condé, heir to the crown after Gaston, wished the youth to marry his own daughter, or not to marry at all. The Count de Soissons himself desired to marry Mademoiselle de Montpensier and her broad lands. Anne of Austria disliked the idea of any marriage in the royal circle which might lessen her own uncertain authority.

The Duchess de Chevreuse evolved a more intricate scheme. The King was becoming so weak that he could not possibly last for any length of time. Astrologers predicted that his frail life was drawing to a rapid close. The Queen would then be a widow, but if she married Gaston she would still remain the queen. Madame de Chevreuse was one of Richelieu's bitterest opponents, and here their policies clashed. The minister, who detested Monsieur, was in favour of his suggested marriage, and supported the ideas of Marie de' Medici. Gaston's governor, and head of his household,

D'Ornans, who had much influence over the boy, tried to stand in the way of the arrangement. It has been suggested that he also hoped to gain the hand of the princess. Plot and counter-plot were not confined to the precincts of the Louvre. The ambassadors were so actively engaged that Holland, England, Spain, and Savoy favoured a conspiracy to depose Louis and place his brother on the throne.

Richelieu exposed these underground workings, and revealed to the King the danger he was in. Gaston saved his skin by allowing his most prominent accomplice, Henri de Talleyrand, Count de Chalais, to go to the scaffold. He was also compelled to consent to an immediate marriage with Mademoiselle de Montpensier in accordance with the views of Richelieu. This effectually ended any thought that Anne of Austria (with Spain and its allies behind her) might retain a hold upon the throne for more than one life. Chalais was condemned to death on the 18th August 1626, and Monsieur was married to Marie de Bourbon at midnight on the 20th. Chalais heard the discharge of cannon which announced the nuptials in the gloom of his dungeon. The prisoner was only twenty-seven, of the proudest blood in France, but he had tried to fight a man destitute of pity. Every effort was made to save him, but Cardinal and King were resolute and rejected all appeals. Then the executioner of Rennes, who was to carry out the sentence, disappeared. It was hoped that this might delay the fatal hour. Unhappy expedient. Two prisoners at Nantes were offered their liberty if they undertook the ghastly task. The amateurs bungled through a dreadful performance. But Chalais was

beheaded—after thirty-six blows of the hatchet—and the King avenged.

Anne of Austria was never forgiven. She asserted her innocence, and declared that in no respect had she been an accomplice.

“She wished for my death, and coveted another husband during my life-time,” cried the King. This rankled more than any other misdeed. Frankly he accused her of desiring to marry Gaston.

“I should have gained little by the change,” she answered bitterly. If we are to believe the *Memoirs of Mademoiselle*, daughter of Monsieur by his first marriage, the arrangement was indeed contemplated by the Queen, and only finally set aside when Gaston married his second wife, Margaret of Lorraine, in 1632.

The protestations were not accepted, and she was treated without consideration practically as a State prisoner. She was permitted to receive visitors only when the King was present. If she wished to grant a private audience she had to gain the double consent of Richelieu and Marie de' Medici. Her disgrace was made public when the King sat in the Assembly of his Peers. The Queen-Mother was enthroned by the side of her son. The Queen-Regnant was absent. This was the final triumph of that evil genius, Marie de' Medici.

For a proud woman the position of Anne of Austria was bitter. Gaston's bride openly comported herself as the future queen, and insisted so strongly upon her rank that she became hated by the entire court. Fate made small to-do with her pride and arrogance, which came tumbling to the ground in a terrible fashion. Ten months after her marriage, in 1627, she died in giving birth to a

daughter. The child was to be known in future days as "La Grande Mademoiselle," and her long career was destined to be a succession of mistakes and disappointments. From her birth she was the richest woman in France. "The world imagined that the wealth my mother left me was compensation enough for her loss," wrote this gifted but unfortunate woman. "But I know what an advantage would have been her control over my education, and I have always keenly regretted her loss."

This sudden death again complicated the situation whilst Gaston remained a widower. In 1631 Marie de' Medici was installed at the Luxembourg, Anne of Austria at the Louvre, Monsieur, her brother-in-law, at the Hôtel d'Orléans, and Richelieu at the Palais-Cardinal. Each house intrigued against its neighbour.

"A prince ought carefully to prevent his kingdom from being governed by women and favourites," wrote the minister to his master. When the Luxembourg was successfully emptied and Marie de' Medici sent in exile to Brussels, the cardinal held unchallenged power, and Louis became but a figure-head in the Government. Whether, in the earlier days of his ambitious struggle, Richelieu did not forget to pay his addresses to the young Queen and desire to attract her goodwill, is doubtful. Now, however, his attitude towards her was one of cynical politeness. When he introduced into her presence a young diplomatist, who had come from Italy, the Cardinal was even mocking.

"Madame!" said he. "I present to you the Sieur Giulio Mazarin. Your Majesty will doubtless approve of this wise person. An accredited agent of His Holiness, you will notice that he has a

strong resemblance to the late Duke of Buckingham.”

The character of the despised and neglected Queen slowly changed.

. . . . All the fair examples of renown
Out of distress and misery are grown.

The couplet is very appropriate to the case of Anne of Austria.

After five years of exile Madame de Chevreuse was permitted to return from Brussels. She was five years older, but otherwise as light-headed, as romantic, as irresponsible as before. To her dismay she found that during her absence the Queen had become serious and devout. In the gay days when Marie de Rohan inspired the youthful circle Anne had not scrupled to enjoy the broadest relaxations. Scandalous books, such as “*Le Cabinet Satyrique*” (which had only not been suppressed by the Parliament because it contained nothing contrary to the faith) were to be found on her table. The Spanish ambassador had once reported to her father in Madrid that the little Queen must be told to mend some of her flighty ways. With age came wisdom. “*Le Cabinet Satyrique*” had been replaced by books of piety. She amused herself with cards, and liked the theatre. With regard to the stage her scruples of conscience were submitted to the judgment of the theologians of the Sorbonne.

Madame de Motteville describes the daily existence of her mistress. She spent several hours in spiritual exercises, praying twice in the morning before hearing Mass. After dinner she retired to her oratory and read an ascetic author. After supper another hour was spent in pious meditation.

“Travel, illness, sadness, pleasure, and business have never been allowed to interrupt the hours devoted to meditation and prayers,” writes her most intimate friend. Madame de Motteville’s affectionate observation was seldom at rest. Her mistress was vain. “Her hands were perfect, and she gazed at them with a secret complaisance.” The phrase has a simple and attractive innocence.

As far as the Queen was concerned the history of these miserable years is a recital of journeys from one dull château to another—the Louvre, Saint Germain-en-Laye, Chantilly, Fontainebleau. An additional distress for the childless wife was the vivacious chatter of her niece, Gaston’s daughter. The King now openly detested his brother, and the Duke spent most of his time away from the court. The Queen had received more than one proof that Monsieur was worthless as a friend. Yet both Louis and Anne guarded the interests of his daughter the little heiress and lavished much affection on her.

“Her love for me,” wrote Mademoiselle in her Memoirs, “was perhaps the result of that which she had for my father. I called the King ‘petit père’ and the Queen ‘petite mamam.’” The girl arrived at Chantilly within a few hours of that fatal interrogation (24th August 1637) when Anne was compelled to admit that she had been in criminal correspondence with the enemies of France. “I found the Queen ill in bed. The affront she had received was enough to make her so,” wrote Mademoiselle, who always upheld the doctrine that royal blood had a divine right to act as it pleased and was not to be called to account by inferior mortals. The woman and the girl had many common points of sympathy, and in that black hour

Anne of Austria poured out all her griefs to this child of ten. It was the moment of her supreme humiliation, and she recognised that she now stood for less than nothing in her husband's life.

To understand her grief it is necessary to look back upon the events of the previous years. In 1630 Madame de la Flotte had been appointed by Richelieu governess over the royal maids of honour. Amongst them was installed her grand-daughter, Marie de Hautefort, whose intimacy with the melancholy king lasted some considerable while, for it was encouraged by Marie de' Medici as adding to the distress of her wretched daughter-in-law.

Again we must seek in the pages of Madame de Motteville a description of this platonic friendship. "Mademoiselle de Hautefort told me that the decorum of the King was such that he seldom talked to her on any subjects but about his dogs, his birds, and his hunting. I have seen her, with all her wisdom and virtue, relate with derision the fright the King was in when he remained with her alone. At such periods he scarcely dared approach near enough to talk to her." A nickname was soon discovered for the girl, and she was not inappropriately called "Sainte Hautefort."

The situation was awkward, even for a saint. Tallemant des Réaux, who judged men and things from no very spiritual point of view, was probably correct when he said that the lady suffered the King's attentions with some impatience. She was extremely handsome, and desired to marry. The attitude of Louis frightened away admirers, and rendered her future insecure. The King's temper was becoming less equable, and if in their long conversations he agreed with her for eight days

he was almost sure to quarrel with her for the subsequent eight. The friendship was also complicated by politics. She was devotedly attached to the Queen, who never felt the slightest jealousy on the score of her curious fascination over the King. Richelieu, however, resented her growing influence and attempted to destroy it. As an enemy the Cardinal had reason to fear her, for she was on good terms with Gaston and his child, the "Grande Mademoiselle," thus forming a chain which linked together the complete cabal of his opponents.

Richelieu seldom failed, and, upon an argument of undue interference with the State, he was able to persuade the weak monarch to send Mademoiselle de Hautefort into exile. In bowing to the wishes of his minister Louis again revealed the inherent frigidity of his temperament, for Mademoiselle de Hautefort's actions had been wholly for good. In after years her attitude was difficult to comprehend. The eldest son of Louis XIV met in 1674 a lady then known as the Duchess de Schomberg. In a severer age she had been famous as Mademoiselle de Hautefort.

"And that is the woman my grandfather was in love with!" mused this Son of France. Then he abruptly demanded: "How many children had she?"

Madame de Sévigné, who tells the story, says that the Dauphin was informed that in the days of his grandfather manners and morals differed in many respects from those of the easier "Grand Siècle."

Louise de La Fayette, who was the same age as Marie de Hautefort, entered the court also in her fourteenth year. Her father was a nobleman of Auvergne, her mother a daughter of the almost

royal house of Bourbon-Busset. Marie was blonde, Louise a brunette. At the period the blondes were exclusively deemed beautiful, so, until 1634, Louise remained unnoticed. Then Richelieu, in attempting to divert the King's inclination from Madame de Hautefort praised the virtues of Louise de La Fayette. Louis was told that in private conversation Marie de Hautefort made fun of his peculiarities. Such a story no weak man would willingly disregard. He turned to the other maid of honour, and to his mind, found her if not so strikingly beautiful possessed of a more agreeable disposition.

The Cardinal imagined that La Fayette in return for his services would act as a spy on the King, would repeat to him all the private thoughts of Louis. He did not succeed in his plan. The confidante refused to relate the confidences.

"She had more courage than all the men at Court," wrote Madame de Motteville. "They had the dishonesty to repeat to Richelieu everything the King said to them against him."

The girl thus made an enemy not only of the dreaded minister but also of the Queen. She was too independent and too loyal to the King, and Anne of Austria—although her authority was at a minimum—viewed their growing attachment with marked disfavour. La Fayette was guilty of the crime attributed to Hautefort. She frankly revealed her affection for Louis XIII, and she privately advised the King to throw over the Cardinal and gain complete liberty of action. For two years Louis became more and more enthralled by the fascination of her friendship. She was the only woman he ever loved. For the first time in his life he discarded his lofty principles of morality and pro-

posed to create her a duchess and give her apartments in the tiny château, chiefly used as a hunting-box, at Versailles.

Mademoiselle de La Fayette was not less virtuously inclined than Louis. The thought frightened her. Richelieu was also springing a mine on the two lovers. By his instruction the royal confessor attacked Louis from the standpoint of Christian example. La Fayette went to the Queen and asked permission to enter the Convent of the Visitation as a novice. When the news reached the King that she had left the palace he fell back on his bed in an agony of tears. At last he cried :

“ She is very dear to me, but if God calls her I will not be the obstacle.”

With Louise a nun it was agreed that the friendship would cease. But for months Louis visited her in the parlour of the convent. Richelieu vainly endeavoured to discover the substance of their interminable interviews, and he managed to intercept and read most of the correspondence which frequently passed between the household of Sainte-Marie and the palace. That she advised the King upon questions of policy is clear. Probably she told the man she loved that his first duty was reconciliation with his wife, for their circumstances were deplorable. According to the Count de Brienne, the Queen was so utterly abandoned by the King and by the court, that she had not sufficient servants to wait upon her needs. If the punishment was severe her sin had been great. She had been convicted (in 1637) of the most dangerous conspiracy against the peace of France. At the altar of the chapel in Chantilly she had solemnly sworn her innocence at the instant when her accusers held

written proof of her guilt. In judging the character of Anne of Austria this episode cannot be overlooked. Her only apology is that surrounded by a vicious circle of conspirators she fought for her own hand, and was compelled to use every ignoble weapon. She did not succeed. With such methods there is no half-way between the triumph of successful intrigue and the shame of discredited failure.

At the end of a conversation with Louise de La Fayette in December 1637 the King prepared to return to Saint-Germain where he was in residence. The weather was bad, it was snowing heavily, and his gentlemen in attendance persuaded him to make the shorter journey across Paris and remain at the Louvre. After some hesitation he consented, and to the surprise of the Queen suddenly appeared in her rooms. She concealed her astonishment and made him welcome. With her he remained, for there were no other rooms fit for habitation in the palace, it being the custom to dismantle the royal chambers during his absence. Thus, by chance says popular legend, possibly more likely by the wise advice of Louise de La Fayette, peace and unity were restored to the household after nearly twenty years of dissension.

It was soon whispered that France was to be blessed with a direct heir to its throne. A Carmelite received a miraculous revelation which left no doubt upon the subject. The King's party openly showed their joy. Gaston and his friends were unable to hide their vexation. Their only consolation was a conviction that the child would prove a girl, in which case Gaston's succession to the crown would remain secure. The King continued campaigning with his troops until a

violent fever drove him back to Saint Germain, where, with Gaston and the other members of his family, he impatiently awaited an event which was to affect vitally the history of the country.

Twenty-three years after the marriage of Louis and Anne at Bordeaux, on the 5th September 1638, their long-expected heir was born at Saint Germain-en-Laye. This extraordinary husband who returned to his hearth in so casual a fashion now appeared content to continue there.

With feeble magnanimity he professed to forgive his wife, and remained with her for the few years his course was still to run. But he never really pardoned her, and thoroughly believed in her duplicity and unfaithfulness. Richelieu guarded against any change in the King's attitude, and sedulously fostered this haunting fear of Anne's weakness. The disposition of the King and Cardinal was not forgotten half a century later when the legitimacy of Louis XIV was challenged by the partisans of his younger brother—with little reason, for the paternity of Louis XIV is unquestionable.

The clouds gradually lifted. "The Court was very agreeable then," chronicles Mademoiselle de Montpensier. When the King went hunting he was surrounded by a brilliant crowd, the "Grande Mademoiselle" herself, Madame de Hautefort,* who had been restored to favour, Mesdemoiselles de Barbezière and Saint-Louis of the Queen's household, Mademoiselle d'Escars, sister to Madame de Hautefort, and Mademoiselle de Beaumont, famous for her rough and frank manners, not caring what she said or to whom she said it. These ladies were

* At first "Mademoiselle," she was later addressed as "Madame."

richly dressed, wearing hats garnished with flowing plumes, and mounted on richly caparisoned horses. The hunt was so arranged that it should pass some great château where a lavish collation was waiting for the Court. Mademoiselle usually made the homeward journey in her coach in company with Madame de Hautefort. If the King was in a happy humour he would join them. He spoke freely, and even invited the ladies to criticise the actions of Richelieu.

On arriving at the palace supper was served. Mademoiselle waited upon the Queen, whilst the ladies carried the plates. Three nights a week the day was ended with a concert by the King's musicians, and many of the compositions were by the royal composer. Even the words were of his invention. When he was infatuated by Madame de Hautefort she formed the subject of all his verse. Mademoiselle de Montpensier's sharp eyes noticed that the King was always intent upon the charms of that lady, although he was in perpetual fear that he would reveal to the laughing Court an inclination which was only too evident. When the platonic lovers disagreed the atmosphere changed for the worse. If Louis visited the Queen's apartments he remained silent, and no one dared to open a conversation. He sulked in a corner, he yawned, he slept. He spent hours writing a detailed account of what he had said to the offended lady and her replies. After his death, amongst his personal belongings were innumerable sheets of these curious records of interviews with De Hautefort and La Fayette, which evidenced his assiduity and their wisdom and virtue. His nervous timidity increased as he grew older. If Mademoiselle received some

playmates of her own tender age "the King was much embarrassed. He lost countenance whenever he saw some one to whom he was unaccustomed—like a simple gentleman who had come from the country to the Court." Mademoiselle de Montpensier adds: "This is a bad quality in a great king, particularly in France, where it is necessary often to be seen by one's subjects. Affection is more quickly gained in welcome intercourse and familiarity than by the austere gravity which distinguishes princes of the House of Austria."

Two years later almost to a day, September 21, 1640, at the same palace came into the world the child christened Philip and created Duke of Anjou, the founder of a family which has materially affected the history of Europe. As Monsieur, the younger brother of Louis XIV, and first Duke of Orleans of a new creation, Philip's life was not uneventful, and forms the chief object of this memoir. The "Grande Mademoiselle" mentions his birth very briefly in her autobiography. She had been staying since June at Bois-le-Vicomte, and was expecting the news for she was only three lives from the throne. "I learnt of this birth by the noise of the cannon in Paris before any one came to tell me," she writes simply. She was thirteen years old, and the Salic law barred her from the crown, although this might possibly have been disregarded in so unsettled an age. She probably anticipated that this new cousin, as second son of the King, would succeed to her father's title.

The behaviour of Louis XIII towards his first-born was hardly encouraging. It was observed that he appeared to dislike the babe, and at its birth only after much persuasion was he induced

to salute the mother. Anne of Austria told Madame de Motteville that her husband displayed more joy at the birth of the second child, for, after fearing to die childless he never expected to become the father of two sons. The Count de Brienne mentions the same fact, and supplies a different explanation. At the birth of the Dauphin Louis XIII was unable to show the usual feelings of a father. They were too novel and required time for development. After two years he was able to experience the paternal sensation.

With the birth of Philip of Anjou Richelieu altered his policy towards the Queen. He made more than one advance to gain her favour and confidence. She, remembering her past sufferings, "replied very civilly, and at the same time without desiring to depend in any way upon his advice." Her life was not happy, and her steps were set with traps. On the one side stood the merciless cardinal, on the other the weak and suspicious King. She was paying in full measure for her imprudences, and her treacheries of the past. Her two children were placed under the control of Madame de Lanzac, one of Richelieu's numerous creatures. Anne protested against the appointment without result. Members of her household were eager to carry out any order given by the implacable minister in the red robe. According to the Count de Brienne she was more than once menaced by the threat that her children would be taken wholly from her. This would have been actually carried into force if Montigny, the captain of the guards, who enjoyed the esteem of the King, had not been also on secret terms of friendship with the Queen. When Louis suggested that the boys should be sent to the

château of Vincennes for safety Montigny replied that they would be as safe in the purer air and surroundings of Saint Germain-en-Laye. The King could hardly disagree, and consented to allow them to be educated in the presence of their mother.

The danger which threatened the two children came from the direction of Gaston, the King's brother. Before leaving on a visit to Roussillon in February 1642 Louis left the most detailed orders respecting the care of the two princes at Saint Germain. In the event of Monsieur coming from Paris to see the Queen, Madame de Lansec was to arrange that the officers of the regiment of guards should be within call. If Monsieur was accompanied by more than three gentlemen he was to be refused admission to the presence of the children. The faithful Montigny was given the broken half of a gold crown. The princes were placed in his personal custody and he was told never to leave them. If he received an order to transfer them to another palace he was to refuse to obey it. He was on no account to hand them over to any other official. Even if an order came to him under the sign-manual of the King he was forbidden to execute it unless it was accompanied by the other half of the broken coin. Anne of Austria was kept in ignorance of these arrangements, and had she not gained the goodwill of Montigny would have been forcibly separated from the children. The King commanded her to take up her residence, whilst he was away from the Court, at Fontainebleau. In the meantime the Dauphin and D'Anjou were to be sent to Vincennes. The Queen guessed the plot, and refused to make the journey.

She was passionately fond of flowers and spent most of her leisure in the gardens of the palace of Saint Germain overlooking the green woods which stretch towards Saint Denis. It was a garden of jessamine, violets, and lilies. Roses made her faint. They reminded her of the dominion of the Moors in Spain, for essence of rose was the perfume of the serail at the Alhambra. Another reason for her antipathy was the love Marie de' Medici had for scattering roses in her rooms.

Her mind must have been ill at ease. The future was impossible to unravel. Marie de' Medici had died in the utmost distress, some say in the poverty of a garret, in Cologne on the 3rd July 1642. She had been a bad mother, but Louis was made more melancholy at the news. The conspiracy of Cinq-Mars and De Thou had ended with their execution on the 12th September in the same year. Richelieu during the autumn was much in the company of the King, but the Cardinal was fighting an insidious enemy he could not hope to conquer. His constitution was rapidly breaking up. On the 4th December he died, "regretted by very few," and assuredly not mourned over by Anne of Austria.

Louis XIII, now permanently settled at Saint Germain, took into his cabinet Mazarin, de Chavigny, and des Noyers. Many of Richelieu's state prisoners were liberated from the Bastille, and numerous exiles were permitted to return to the court. A change in the monarchy itself was imminent, and all the self-seekers of the land descended upon the court to watch the varying winds and study their own advantage. Des Noyers quarrelled with de Chavigny and made way for a stronger man, Le Tellier. Mazarin intrigued for the reversion to Richelieu's

chair. Anne of Austria, although unaware of the King's testament, was carefully perfecting her plans, and sorting the men and women who surrounded her into friends and those, who, to quote her own words, "had not acted in her interests." Louis himself desired a Regency, but would not allow his wife to act in that capacity, and could not trust his brother Gaston or his cousin Condé. Ultimately it was settled that Anne should assume the position with strictly limited powers. Gaston was to be made Lieutenant of the Kingdom, and Condé and Mazarin were to be nominated as deputies in reserve. From day to day the King's malady varied. In April it was thought that he might yet recover. Every intrigue was trammelled by uncertainty, and no man dared decisive action.

An odd anecdote is reported by Madame de Motteville from the mouth of the Queen. One day the King appeared in front of the little Dauphin in his nightcap. This frightened the child so much that he burst into screams. Louis was irritated, and exclaimed with passion that the Queen was teaching the child to hate his father.

When the prince was baptized the King sent for him, and asked with a smile :

"What is your name, my child ?"

"My name is Louis the Fourteenth," was the quick reply.

"Not yet, my child, not yet," answered Louis the Thirteenth, as he went and shut himself up in solitude in his room.

The chance remark of the Dauphin had struck his superstitious soul with a pang of dread and foreboding. He suffered acutely from rheumatism, insomnia, fever, and gout. There were signs of a

galloping consumption, and general bodily decay. He prepared for death with calmness and resolution. From the windows of his sick chamber he could see across the forest the Abbey of Saint Denis, mausoleum of the Kings of France. He pointed out the road over which his body would make its last earthly journey, and he drew attention to some rough and ill-kept portions in the depths of the wood where the hearse might stick in the ruts.

Always an artist, he composed a fresh setting for the *De Profundis* to be chanted over his tomb. More practical, and with a resolute spirit he had not often shown during his earlier life, he drew up the scheme of government which was to be employed during the minority of his successor.

Years earlier the wraith of the murdered Montmorency had passed before his eyes in the corridors of Chantilly. A few hours before his death he had a vision of the Battle of Rocroy, and prophesied its glorious issue for the arms of France. During these early spring days his bed became a field of conflict over which the royal physicians argued and quarrelled. He became rapidly worse, and it was doubtful whether he would live to see the forty-second anniversary of his accession.

On the 14th May 1601, amidst the horror of the assassination of Henri IV, Louis XIII succeeded to the throne. On the 14th May 1643, at a quarter to three in the afternoon, his head dropped lifeless on its pillow. The word swept like a keen wind through the dark passages of the gloomy palace, and across the sun-lit forest to the gates of Paris, that at last—after all these months of torture and anxiety—the King was dead and France had to acknowledge a child as its ruler.

III

Regency of Anne of Austria : Education of the royal children : Philip's ignorance and illiteracy : Different characters of the brothers : Their quarrels : Philip's recreations and habits : His proposed marriage to " La Grande Mademoiselle " : Mademoiselle de Gourdon : Odd behaviour at a ball : His household : Daniel de Cosnac's elevation to a bishopric : His odd reason for becoming Philip's almoner.

" **T**HE King is dead!" Within a few hours the King is cold and forgotten by all, save the surgeons who are morbidly investigating the causes of his Majesty's lamentable decease.

" Long live the King!" There is every human probability that the new monarch will see many summers, considering that at the moment he has not passed through five. God bless the little man! He will be more important when he grows a trifle older. Let us form up with the drums in the courtyards of the palace, or, better still, join the crowd under the trees on the terrace, and prepare to escort the royal child to Paris.

Guy Patin, the doctor, says there were over ten thousand persons in the cavalcade which journeyed from Saint Germain to the Louvre that morning after the King's death. Battalions of guards, Swiss mercenaries, and musketeers, led the way. Then came a body of household troops, about one thousand in number, followed by several hundred gentlemen.

In a huge chariot the Queen, clad in black, with a crape veil attached to her coif, held her eldest son on her knee. Philip of Anjou slept peacefully in the lap of his governess, Madame de Lansac. By the side of the coach rode the Duke de Beaufort. Another regiment of infantry trudged in the rear, and after them came a confused mob of servants and country folk.

The child repeatedly waved his hat to his new subjects, and there was no funereal solemnity about the procession. After the terrible hours of tyranny and oppression which she had experienced, Anne of Austria must have breathed in relief at the eagerly awaited freedom. At last her day had arrived.

One of her first actions was to recall to Paris all the friends and servants who had been exiled through the suspicion and jealousy of Louis XIII and Richelieu. Of these the most important was a young widow of twenty-two. Françoise Bertaut, Madame de Motteville, became the closest personal companion of Anne of Austria, not simply because her mother was a Spaniard and she a facile speaker in that tongue, but also for her charming personality and many estimable qualities. Madame de Motteville's memoirs are a rich treasury for the historian who seeks to reconstruct the life of the period. She worshipped her mistress, and enjoyed—with a few intervals—her entire confidence. At the same time she was not altogether a blind critic. She observed much and said little. During the troubles of the Fronde more than once she became separated from the Court in which she never held official rank. The horrors of the prolonged war seriously affected her health, and she did not reappear in Paris until 1653, when her brother was appointed a reader to

Louis XIV. During these years she was busily engaged upon her diary of contemporary events.

The Queen-Mother made considerable alterations in her suite. Against her will Richelieu had nominated Madame de Brissac as a lady-in-waiting, and Madame de Lansac as governess of the royal children. Both were asked to retire, their appointments having been made in opposition to the Queen's wishes. The Marquise de Saint-Georges, who had been acting as governess to Mademoiselle de Montpensier, was suggested in the place of Madame de Lansac. But as Gaston of Orleans, father of the "Grande Mademoiselle," refused to agree to the transfer, the King and Philip were placed under the care of Madame de Sénece who had been exiled by Richelieu.

The history of the Regency of Anne of Austria is also the history of the Wars of the Fronde, a "war of children with a child's nickname," said Michelet. It is not so easy to accept his statement that it was a war of burlesque. In carrying the foreign policy of Richelieu to a triumphant result Mazarin neglected to retain a firm grip upon home affairs. The Queen had gladly allowed the "Parlement" of Paris to override the testament of Louis XIII with regard to the Regency. Now, with a newly acquired importance it ventured to interfere in the actual business of the kingdom. The nobility, freed from the iron rule of Richelieu, sought to regain their former power. The common people were infected with a spirit of revolt which was passing through every country of Europe. Charles I of England had been tried by his subjects, found guilty, and beheaded for treason towards the state. The shock of his execution made every throne

tremble. Kings had a duty towards their subjects as well as subjects an allegiance to their sovereigns. Switzerland established a democratic government, and, after a war of eighty years, the United Provinces successfully renounced the supremacy of Spain. France found itself under the hand of an Italian, shackled with heavy and irritating taxation, the sport of numerous adventurers eager to fill their pockets with the money of the commonwealth.

All the conspirators who had troubled the peace of Richelieu now joined forces to plot against his successor. Faction intrigued against faction, and the citizens of Paris were ever-ready for turbulent action. The two great generals of the period, Condé and Turenne, alternately changed sides when they were not acting in unison. A ring of energetic but headstrong women attempted to dominate France. It was, writes Michelet in one of his striking phrases, "the lively game of schoolboys in an interval between the lessons of two severe and stern masters"—Richelieu and Louis XIV. Had he referred to schoolgirls rather than schoolboys his remark would have been even truer. At times the royal cause was so precarious that Anne of Austria and her children were little better than homeless fugitives. The war expired in exhaustion. In 1653 the boyish King was asked to return to Paris, and the rebellion flickered out. But Louis XIV never forgot the fickle behaviour of the citizens of his capital and rarely lived in their midst. When Versailles was ready for occupation his visits to Paris were few, and at long intervals, whilst the tradition he established became an unfortunate precedent for his successors.

The history of those earlier years concerns the

two royal children equally. Whenever we get a glimpse of the youthful Louis XIV we find the little Duke of Anjou by the side of the throne. And although his position was secondary his presence was not unremarked. His cousin, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, writes with rapture about him. She loved to play with “the prettiest child in the world.” The brothers had much affection for their mother, and, when etiquette did not forbid—as it did when they were dining and sleeping—they spent most of their time with the Queen. In his old age Louis XIV wrote his memoirs for the instruction of his eldest son, and he referred to these days of his infancy with considerable pleasure. “The habit which I had formed to live in the same apartment with her, the assiduity with which I saw her many times each day, was not only a law which I imposed upon myself by reason of state, but a mark of the pleasure I took in her company.” The valet La Porte wrote that the King had always a strong love for the Queen, “much more than children of his class are accustomed to have for their mothers.” This affection was shared by his brother Philip.

Anne of Austria devoted much of her leisure to her nuns in the community she had founded at the Val-de-Grâce. Madame de Motteville gives a charming sketch of the Queen nursing a sick sister, whilst the little King, assisting at Vespers, “runs to and fro, blowing out the candles and doing everything a child loves to do in play.” Philip does not seem to have been present on this occasion, but he was soon engaged in the perpetual round of royal duties. Chief of these was presence at a succession of religious ceremonies. On Christmas Day 1649, he assists at his brother’s First Communion. The

church of Saint Eustache, being the parish church of the Louvre, is crowded. Louis and Philip find themselves amidst a dozen bishops, and when the King takes the communion the cloth is held on his right and left by the tiny Anjou and the burly Marshal de Villeroy—an anxious moment for a nervous small boy. On Holy Thursday when the King kisses the feet of twelve poor men and serves them with food and money Anjou assists with the dishes. The gazettes chronicle a solemn procession to Notre Dame. Behind the Queen walks a grave child with a lighted candle. It is “le petit Monsieur.” At Dijon he attends the public recitation at the University of the theses for the doctorate of theology, and is probably profoundly bored. He has however to fulfil the duties of a prince, sits out innumerable long sermons, and on feast-days journeys with his brother across Paris from one church to another in pious pilgrimage.

In the days of her unhappiness the Queen had often spoken to Madame de Motteville of her desire for children, and the manner in which she would have them properly educated. Now, with the responsibility of two sons, she was much embarrassed when the question of their tuition arose. Madame de Motteville had her own theories. Latin was not the most necessary knowledge for young princes. They must study politics as well as history. They must be taught how to govern, how to live in peace with their neighbours, how to make themselves feared by their enemies. The Queen-Mother, convinced that Mazarin was the cleverest man in Europe, asked him to undertake the education of the King and his brother. She was always inclined to ease and laziness, and the arrangement



ANNE OF AUSTRIA
WITH HER SONS, LOUIS XIV AND PHILIP OF ANJOU
After the picture, attributed to Philip de Champaigne, at Versailles

suit her well. So the schoolroom, though nominally under the control of Anne of Austria was actually directed by Mazarin, who was designated "Surintendant de la conduite du Roy et de Monsieur son frère."

What were the relations existing between the Queen and her minister? The question must remain one of those historical mysteries which can never be definitely answered. There is much evidence to support the assertion that she was captivated by the Italian Richelieu had brought to her notice. Mazarin was a handsome man. He had served in the armies of the Pope before entering the paths of diplomacy. The Queen had lived through years of the bitterest misery, but, at the death of Louis XIII, she still preserved much of her youthful fascination. Now she had become complete mistress of her life, thanks to the unremitting application of a man who was content to carry on the affairs of the kingdom so long as he was allowed to repay himself from its coffers at his own valuation. Mazarin complained of the heaviness of his task. "I am killing myself," he wrote to Servien, 14th August 1648, "by working day and night, without cessation, for the glory of this crown, and for the happiness of each particular Frenchman. They attack me because I am a foreigner. I wish to God that all the French had the same passion as I have for the welfare of the state." If he had much to do he was amply repaid. Anne of Austria was a woman of sound common sense. But she was idle to an extreme degree, and incapable of sustained energy. Mazarin relieved her of every anxiety. As Queen-Regent and Minister they had necessarily to hold prolonged interviews. Her interest in him

was deeper than that of a monarch in a faithful subject. As early as August 1643, Mazarin wrote in his private notebook: "The Bishop of Beauvais persuaded Madame de Séncé to speak to Her Majesty, and to tell her that she should not see me so often in the interest of her reputation."

Madame de Séncé, first of the ladies-in-waiting and at that moment governess to the two children, was the most devoted of the Queen's attendants. She was not only famed for her wit and intelligence but also for the rarer qualities of piety and virtue. Her attachment to the Queen had been more than once tested and found true. The simple statement that she had been selected by the Bishop to carry so unpleasant a message is ominous. That she accepted the commission is even more telling. Amongst all the accredited memoirs of the period there is no actual statement that Anne of Austria was in love with Mazarin. On the other hand there is nothing which can be quoted to refute the supposition. One careful historian, Jules Loiseleur, asserts that the "Man in the Iron Mask," that prisoner whose identity is so hard to arrive at, was the son of Mazarin and Anne. With the slender materials at his command Loiseleur fixes the date of the birth in 1643. More solid evidence is to be found in the secret correspondence between the Queen and the Cardinal, with its curious affectations and hidden meanings, its elaborate cypher, its involved system of private names and numbers, its continual expressions of affection and mutual interest. Public gossip did not doubt the relationship, and Madame de Motteville, who was cognisant of every detail of the Queen's private life, probably knew more than she cared to commit to paper.

One fact requires no proof. The reins of state were gradually handed over by the Queen until Mazarin held them without check. Every gift he asked for was granted unhesitatingly. The treasures of France were poured into his lap, and, when in 1646, he was created superintendent of the education of the royal children, he accepted a sinecure which carried a salary of 60,000 livres.

In many respects Anne of Austria was not a wise parent, and here her minister was prepared to sacrifice the future welfare of the princes to his political schemes. The Abbé Hardouin de Péréfixe de Beaumont, Bishop of Rodez and afterwards Archbishop of Paris, was made tutor. Educated by Richelieu, a priest of probity and honour, he was little gifted as a pedagogue with the slightest interest in the "belles-lettres." An "austere pedant" (to quote a contemporary), François de la Mothe Vayer, became the personal preceptor of Monsieur. Louis was taught to translate the commentaries of Cæsar, to dance, to draw, and to ride. Philip's education must have taken the same narrow lines.

These ecclesiastics carried out their duties in no creditable fashion. Their pupils developed into two of the most ignorant men in the kingdom. The Abbé de Choisy writes that Anne of Austria troubled so little about the education of her children that the younger one was completely neglected by his tutors. In February 1647, when the Marquis de Cœuvres married Mademoiselle de Théminges the little Duke of Anjou did not sign the marriage register as he was unable to scrawl his name. Yet he was nearly seven years old, and not a fool. He never wholly conquered this lack of training, and in later life was compelled

to ask his second wife to decipher his own letters. "Madame," he would remark to the keen-witted German princess. "Here is some writing to which you are better accustomed than I am. Please read it to me." In her frank correspondence she remarks that the old jest always brought laughter. But as a child Philip was not stupid, and the point must be emphasised, for it has great historical importance. "He had wit as soon as he knew how to speak," writes Madame de Motteville. His tutor found him much quicker than his brother. Almost without exception the princes of the House of Orleans have been conspicuously able and mentally alert—whenever they wished to exert themselves. This cannot be said of the elder branch, of which Louis XIV was the most gifted member. After comparing the racial characteristics of the two families founded by the sons of Louis XIII it is easy to understand why the dukes of Orleans were invariably in an attitude of defiant opposition to the crown.

Louis was slow over his books, and his tutors did not urge him forward. It has been often suggested that Mazarin stunted his intellectual growth in order to retain an undivided control over the affairs of France. More probably the Cardinal found the boy somewhat dull, as well as unwilling to grapple with the heavy burden of the state. At the age of seven the child was taken from the charge of the women who formed the household of the Queen-Mother, and given an establishment of his own. In the memoirs of La Porte, the first valet of the chamber, there are passages, pathetic in their simplicity, which relate the little King's surprise. He could not sleep at night because there was no

one at hand to murmur fairy tales in his ear as he dropped into slumber. Honest La Porte could not supply the imaginative fantasies of the missing lady-in-waiting. He was unacquainted with the wonderland of the fays. But his practical common sense came to the rescue, and night by night he recited to the young King stories from the history of France. Unfortunately Mazarin overheard the moralisms deduced by the plain-spoken valet. He considered that the proceedings were a gross usurpation of the duties confided to the royal tutor. La Porte passed into a disgrace which ultimately ended in his dismissal by the Queen-Mother.

From the earliest days of the new reign it was evident that the two brothers were strikingly dissimilar in personality. The King was of a taciturn disposition, good at heart, if we are to believe the evidence of La Porte, but able to keep his desires and passions under an almost unnatural restraint. Madame de Motteville noticed with astonishment that in his play he seldom laughed or revealed his pleasure. From the first he assumed the rôle of a great monarch, and although he had an affection for his brother (exactly how deep it is impossible to say) he never allowed him to take any liberties with the royal dignity. Droll anecdotes are related by contemporary writers of the petty quarrels of the children. La Porte mentions an extraordinary scene which happened during the Fronde. "From Montereau," he says, "we came to Corbeil, where the King wished Monsieur to sleep in the same room, which was however so tiny that there was only space for a single person to move about. In the morning, when they awoke, the King without thinking, spat on the bed of Monsieur.

He at once spat on the King, who, a trifle angered, spat back in his face." Monsieur jumped on the King's bed and retaliated by an action for which his youth was no apology. The King's manners were not better, for in his turn he imitated his brother's unmentionable action. In a minute the boys were in full battle. "During the fight," says La Porte, "I did what I could to stop the King, but as they would not leave off I called Monsieur de Villeroy (the governor of the household) who ended it. Monsieur was more angry than the King, but the King was more difficult to appease than Monsieur."

Years later, in 1658, when Louis was twenty and Philip eighteen, two young Dutch noblemen who were completing their education in Paris, tell a similar tale. "There has been a great quarrel at the Louvre between Monsieur, who eats meat on fast days, and the King. Eating some boiled meat, he presented a spoonful to the King, who upbraided him for eating meat and pretending to fast at the same time. The King, annoyed at the rudeness of his brother, who was treating him like a child, roughly pushed him. Monsieur then angrily gave him a blow on the nose with the spoon. The King, without anger, got up, and said, "Little boy, were it not for the respect I owe to the Queen your mother, I would teach you the respect you owe to me." He then had Monsieur arrested and confined to his room. The affair was arranged after much trouble by Mazarin and the Queen-Mother. Early next morning Monsieur apologised, and asked the King's pardon. Philip was in the wrong, but such incidents must have left much irritation. He was seldom allowed to forget that although a brother he

was at the same time a subject. Madame de Motteville writes that in all the infantile disagreements the Queen insisted upon the prompt obedience of Philip to his King. She loved her younger son, but his first duty in life was to respect authority.

From babyhood the brothers took part in state ceremonies. Samuel Pepys, writing on the 3rd February 1661, says that at a dinner he heard a story of "how my lord of Northwich, at a public audience before the King of France, made the Duke of Anjou cry, by making ugly faces as he was stepping to the King, but undiscovered." Lord Braybrooke, in a note, explains the entry. George, Lord Goring (afterwards created Earl of Norwich) was sent by Charles I as Ambassador Extraordinary to France in 1644, to witness the oath of Louis XIV to the observance of the treaties concluded with England by his father Louis XIII and his grandfather Henri IV. When the King took the oath at Ruel he was not yet six years of age, and Philip, then Duke of Anjou, who was so upset at the grimaces of this truly extraordinary ambassador, was a babe of four.

In 1646 Madame de Motteville presents a delightful picture of a summer at Fontainebleau. All the men under sixty were with the army in Flanders. The Queen and her ladies, together with the two children, found their chief recreation on the banks of the Seine. They bathed several hours a day, and when they were tired of the river they wandered in company through the luxuriant glades of the forest.

During the civil wars the existence of the children was one of agitation and hardship. In 1649, when the court was at Saint Germain, money was so

short that many had to sleep on straw, and all the crown jewels were in pawn. The young King lacked necessities. Louis could not but know that the troubles were largely due to the intrigue and bad faith of his uncle Gaston of Orleans, and probably soon determined that his own brother should not disturb the peace of his kingdom in a similar fashion. In 1647 when Louis had an attack of smallpox which threatened to place his brother on the throne, Gaston had every plan ready to seize the crown. His health was drunk as the new king, and preparations were made to abduct Philip during the night. The Queen was warned; the guards remained under arms night and day; and Louis recovered. Mazarin was thinking of Gaston when he reprimanded La Mothe Vayer.

“What do you mean by attempting to make a clever man of the King’s brother?” he cried. “If he knows more than the King he will not yield implicit obedience.”

Thus Philip dropped into a subservient position. As a child he was intelligent and affectionate. During boyhood he had not altogether lost the better part of his nature. When Louis was desperately ill at Calais in 1658, and given up for lost, Monsieur wept so bitterly that he was unable to speak. Here was no joy at the prospect of sudden accession to the throne. His love for the Queen-Mother was also very real. Madame de Motteville, assiduous chronicler of all the doings of the household, tells us that in 1647 the Duke of Anjou was recovering from a severe attack of dysentery. He was then seven years old. During his convalescence his room became crowded with people connected with the court. He asked the Queen to send them

away, and to remain alone with him. She replied that it was impossible, for some were visitors, and qualified by their rank to remain.

“But, *bon Dieu*, Madame,” answered the child. “Why do you allow yourself to be mocked by that? Are you not the mistress? What use is your crown if it does not serve your will? You turn me out quickly if it pleases you, and I am your son. Why should it not be right to serve them the same?”

Unhappily this gentler, sweeter disposition slowly changed into one which had no pleasant quality to recommend it. Philip developed into a vicious idler. He had high rank in the state, but no responsible duties. Undoubtedly the brothers became exceedingly jealous of each other. There was considerable difference of opinion as to their respective personal charm. Louis was supposed to be the handsomer, but their cousin the “Grande Mademoiselle” thought Philip the prettier. The King was tall, of fine proportions, and even as a boy dignified and commanding. He adored sport, music, and elaborate spectacle. Above all he loved to exercise the authority of his position.

Philip on the contrary was small and almost a dwarf. Louis was light in complexion, Philip was dark. Madame de Motteville says that as a youth he was well made, and his features were perfect. His black eyes were large and full of life, beaming with sweetness and gravity. His mouth resembled that of his mother. His dark hair, which curled naturally, set off his rich colour. Madame de Motteville had watched him from the cradle, and she could not repress her admiration. “If the years do not diminish his beauty he will be able to dispute the prize with the most beautiful women.”

But the years, and his unhappy manner of life, did diminish his beauty, and his face was hardly so well proportioned as his old friend would have us believe. It was too long, the nose too big—although Madame de Motteville considered it “aquiline”—the mouth too small, whilst the teeth were irregular.

The confidante of Anne of Austria, who evidently had a special affection for the lad, says that he possessed the virtues of liberality and humanity. Less prejudiced evidence proves both brothers proud, pretentious, and self-willed. But if the King was reserved, more from affectation than from shyness, Philip assumed a gay affability. This attitude annoyed his brother for it gave the cadet a certain amount of popularity with the lower classes.

✕ Monsieur was a prince without moral stability. It is true that his attendance at religious services was exemplary. As a contemporary journalist wrote in the *Gazette* of 1653, the royal brothers during the jubilee of that year presented “the most august spectacle of devotion.” But this spiritual exhibition was aptly explained by a personal confession of Madame de Motteville. “Whenever men speak of God and all the hidden mysteries I am astounded at their boldness, and I am quite happy at not being obliged to know more than my *Pater*, my *Credo*, and the Commandments.”

In many respects Monsieur inherited the weaknesses of his Italian ancestors more markedly than his brother, and this inclination was unfortunately developed by the curious amusement of his mother. Anne of Austria delighted to see her son masquerading amongst her ladies dressed up in the clothes of a girl. The habit strengthened an innate predis-

position towards effeminacy. The laughing women in the Palais Royal asserted that Nature had made a mistake in giving him the stronger sex. In the memoirs of the Abbé de Choisy, whose mother had the same odd idea with her son, there is a complete picture of the rearing of the prince. "I was dressed as a girl," writes Choisy, "whenever the little Monsieur came to our rooms, and that was two or three times a week. I had my ears pierced, wore diamonds, placed beauty spots on my face, and all the other little affectations of dress to which one gets accustomed so easily and which are so difficult to throw off. Monsieur loved all these things, and showed towards me much friendship. As soon as he arrived, in the company of Cardinal Mazarin's nieces and some of the Queen's waiting women, they put him in front of the toilet and dressed him. He had a corset to form his waist (this corset was embroidered) and they took off his coat in order that he might put on mantles and petticoats. All this was done, so they said, by order of the cardinal, who wished to make him effeminate, for fear that he might make as much trouble for the King as Gaston had made for Louis XIII. When Monsieur was dressed and bejewelled we played at cards, and at seven o'clock refreshments were brought." And the little de Choisy, dressed as a girl, had the honour of serving the little prince also pretending to be what he was not.

Madame de Motteville sighs in her memoirs, and says that it was a great pity he did not throw off "these vain amusements" as he grew older. Monsieur found his recreation amongst the women and girls of the royal household. He liked to assist in clothing them, and he became an expert hair-

dresser. He was as clever as a costumier in adjusting their garments. Later, when money became plentiful, his joy was to buy jewels which he would lend or give to those who were his favourites.

His behaviour was apt to pass all the bounds of decorum. Dr. Guy Patin, in a letter dated 19th June 1657, refers to the troubles which disturbed the peace of the royal family. "There has been some noise at court," he says to his correspondent, "between the Queen and the Duke of Anjou. She has threatened to have him whipped, and even ordered it. But neither the governor, who is the Marshal du Plessis-Praslin, nor the deputy governor, has dared to undertake it. The Duke has been acquainted with this, and he told the Queen that they have done well not to accept the commission, for he was no longer of an age to be whipped, and whoever would undertake it might rest assured that they would feel his sword across their bodies. The Queen was much troubled, and wept, saying that she did not wish to remain at the court but would return to Paris. Mazarin has tried to make peace." Then Patin tells his correspondent the reason for the Queen's great anger. Her maids of honour had made formal complaint that when they met the Duke of Anjou in the corridors of the palace his behaviour to them was far from seemly, and more than they would endure. Although Philip was nearly seventeen years of age he richly deserved the flogging the Queen-Mother had commanded.

The result of this rearing was that in manhood he detested all sports, although he was never a coward. His second wife describes his personality in terms which cannot be improved. "He loved

only gaming, formal receptions, good eating, and dress, in a word all the things that women love. . . . His figure was ignoble, his habits shameful. He loved the theatre, fine clothes, masquerades, rich food. . . . He danced well, but in the style of a woman. He could not dance like a man, because (to add to his short stature) he wore high-heeled shoes. Except in time of war he could not be persuaded to mount a horse." His passion for clothes and ceremony was notorious. He was enraptured at the death of his uncle, which afforded him his first opportunity to walk in a royal funeral procession clad in robes of violet.

Unlike his father and brother, hunting had no call for him. One taste alone the brothers possessed in common. They were both absorbed in schemes of building and architecture. Louis was attracted by music, but in this respect Philip was interested in no sound but that of bell-ringing. "He took so much pleasure in the sound of bells that he used to come express to Paris at the feast of All Saints to listen to the bells rung for the Vigil of the Dead. He did not care for any other kind of music. He used often to laugh at himself, confessing that bell-ringing delighted him beyond expression. Paris pleased him more than any other place, because there he could have the assistance of a secretary, and could also live more comfortably than at Versailles."

Mazarin lived long enough to see that his policy with regard to the younger prince was completely successful. The existence of Monsieur was concentrated in his wardrobe or his table. Louis himself was not displeased. From such a brother he had no fear of opposition, and it was impossible

not to contrast the miserable weakness of Philip with the stronger character of the King. One man had been spoilt in order to add to the glory of the other. From every point of view Monsieur became an object of ridicule. Louis XIV was conspicuous for his gallantry, Philip on the contrary inherited the disposition of his father. "The miracle of enflaming the heart of this prince was not reserved to any woman," said Madame de La Fayette, whilst his second wife, who judged him so well, wrote, "I do not believe that my husband was ever in love during the whole course of his life."

Monsieur's unambitious love-affairs were never treated seriously, either by himself, by the ladies involved, or by the heedless court. Sooner or later he would be requested by his brother to settle down with a bride whose chief merit would be the accession of new territory to France or the conclusion of an advantageous diplomatic treaty. Philip was ready to sacrifice himself. There were many benefits to be gained. At Compiègne he spoke to the King about the necessity of regularising his position and income.

"I will marry you to my cousin," replied Louis. "She is very rich. She will make your fortune."

This cousin was Mademoiselle de Montpensier, generally known as the "Grande Mademoiselle," daughter of Gaston of Orleans, the King's uncle. The immense wealth she had inherited from her mother made her the target of all fortune-hunting princes. She was not opposed to the idea of marrying her cousin, although she would have preferred to marry the King. She had already refused the penniless Charles of England, whose hopes of regaining the throne of his ancestors were



PHILIP OF ORLEANS AS A YOUNG MAN
After an early French engraving

very remote. At the time the conversation was reported, in 1656, she was twenty-nine whilst Philip was only seventeen. But then, as her old friend Préfontaine observed : " With people of your high degree one pays no attention to age."

A year later, whilst the King was campaigning in the east of France, Mademoiselle arrived at Sedan on a visit to Anne of Austria and her cousins. The marriage was not directly referred to, but it was constantly in the thoughts of every member of the family. The Queen-Mother professed to find a striking likeness between her niece and her younger son.

At lunch she remarked :

" Mademoiselle eats just like Monsieur. She reminds me so much of him." It was exactly the unimportant and unessential resemblance which was likely to impress a woman like the Queen. Of course the ladies-in-waiting were astonished at the similarity of feature, Madame de Beauvais particularly.

Louis and Philip with the army were besieging the town of Montmédy which capitulated on the 7th August. The following day the King galloped into Sedan, so wet and covered in mud that his mother who was watching his arrival from the window turned to her visitor and said :

" You will not be able to see him until he has changed his clothes."

But he entered the room as she was speaking, and his cousin notes in her memoirs that she found him quite good-looking.

" Here is a young lady I wish to present to you," cried Anne of Austria. The position was slightly awkward, for not long previously Mademoiselle had

been in open revolt against the royal authority, and had acted energetically at the battle in the Saint Antoine quarter of Paris which proved the turning-point of the civil war. The Queen did not forget this. "She is troubled at having been so naughty in the past. She promises to be wiser in the future."

Louis laughed with good-humour. The whole conversation is set out in the memoirs.

"Where is your brother?" asked the Queen.

"He is coming on in my coach," replied Louis. "He did not wish to come on horseback as he cannot bear to show himself untidy. You will find him dressed in all his finery."

This weakness of Philip was already a continual joke. During the afternoon Monsieur arrived in the coach, clothed in a grey habit with many coloured ribbons. He pretended to have much joy at the sight of his cousin. Mazarin followed, and made peace with the princess he had helped to defeat. Then the family sat down to supper to the music of violins, and after the meal they improvised a ball.

The gay party was not broken up for several days. Philip was very attentive to his cousin, and in order to produce a good effect wore a new suit each day. He took her into his room to show her his collection of precious stones, which scandalised the old-fashioned Count de Béthune, although Mademoiselle was attended by three of her ladies. Every night after supper the dancing was repeated.

Mademoiselle was a lady of many responsibilities, and these frivolities could not continue indefinitely. She decided to return to her estates. On the 12th August, the morning of her departure, Monsieur came to bid farewell. He called "between seven

and eight, which is much for him, for he never rises any day until eleven o'clock." He remained in conversation with his cousin until Mazarin entered.

At the close of the same year Mademoiselle returned to Paris where the court was already established. She took up her residence at the palace of the Luxembourg, and a bad cold prevented her from paying her duty at the Louvre. Monsieur was quickly in attendance, and explained how anxiously he had been awaiting her coming. He recounted all the current gossip, produced some Portuguese oranges as a present, and was full of gossip about the lotteries. In every respect he proved an attentive and pleasant youth. A few days elapsed, and a second visit was paid. Mademoiselle was not displeased at the impression she had created.

"A young prince, handsome, well-made, and brother to the King—he appeared to me to be a good match," she writes frankly.

In simple words the memoirs of Mademoiselle de Montpensier create a clear picture of life in Paris during the bachelor existence of Louis XIV. She accompanied the Queen-Mother to religious festivals at the churches, to comedies at the Hôtel de Bourgogne and in the Louvre, and to masked balls at the mansions of the great nobility. During this period Louis had a passing infatuation for Mademoiselle de La Motte-Argencourt which Mazarin seems to have ended without mercy. At the carnival, when all Paris rushed in masquerade through the streets, Monsieur escorted Mademoiselle amidst the boisterous crowds at the fair of Saint Germain. On these occasions the King wandered in disguise, and Philip indulged in his idiosyncrasy

of female dress. In February Mademoiselle gave a ball in honour of the King, and he was asked to invite the guests. Amongst the ladies he named was Madame de l'Hôpital, who had commenced life as a needlewoman in Grenoble, and now took her position in the highest ranks of French society. Her pearls were reported to be larger than those belonging to the Queen.

The tale is one of incessant gaiety and pleasure. The King, Monsieur, and Mademoiselle were rarely at rest. They were so much together that a quarrel was inevitable. It broke out at a masked ball given by the Queen-Mother, at which the eccentric Christina of Sweden was present, as well as the widowed Queen of England and her daughter Henrietta.

Mademoiselle de Gourdon, a maid of honour to Anne of Austria, was a woman of Scottish descent—her name was really Gordon—with a malicious disposition. She had already attracted the attention of Monsieur, and was destined to exercise a fatal influence over him during the whole of his life. Her history was romantic. Henrietta Gordon-Huntley was the daughter of Lewis, third Marquess of Huntley, who had been ruined in the cause of Charles I of England.

The family took refuge in France where the children were educated. Her brother, who succeeded his father in 1653 at the age of ten, joined the army and served under Turenne.* The

* He returned to England and was created Duke of Gordon in 1684. His son proclaimed the Chevalier St. George as king at Gordon Castle in 1715, and joined the Stuart standard at Perth with 2000 men. His sister never left France, where she died in 1701, three months before the death of Philip. She was bitterly disliked by both his wives, but they were not strong enough to eject her from

daughter was to enter a convent, but Anne of Austria took pity on her and placed her in the household of the Princess de Condé. Later she took her into her own service. Although she was not beautiful—smallpox had marked her face—Monsieur was evidently much fascinated by her, and she never seems to have lost the goodwill of the Queen-Mother, for, on the marriage of Monsieur to Henrietta of England she became “*dame d’atour*” to the new Duchess. Saint-Simon says that in 1652 she took refuge in a convent at Compiègne, and Monsieur went there to bring her back to Paris as Louis went to Saint-Cloud to recapture La Vallière. If this took place it must have been several years later, for in 1652 Monsieur was only twelve, and Mademoiselle de Gourdon not much older. In 1658, Mademoiselle remarks, the girl was a person of inconsiderable importance, and she greatly displeased the heiress of Montpensier. Possibly a latent jealousy was the simple cause.

“Your Gourdon is a dolt,” said Mademoiselle to Philip. The prince resented the remark, and word followed word until they openly recriminated in the ballroom. The next day they refused to speak, and at the opening of the carnival Mademoiselle went under the King’s protection, and Monsieur walked with his mother’s ladies. Only after the intervention of the Queen did reconciliation follow.

This Lent was also marked by a violent quarrel between the King and his brother, when Louis poured a plate of meat over the locks of Monsieur and Philip retaliated by throwing a dish at his monarch’s sacred head. Mademoiselle prudently their households, where she remained a spy upon their actions and a centre for cabal and opposition to their wishes.

kept away from the Louvre whilst Anne of Austria and Mazarin were endeavouring to make peace. Directly Monsieur saw his cousin he cried : " Say nothing to me. They will think that I am talking of what has just occurred." Afterwards he related the entire story " with much sorrow and resentment at the manner in which the King had treated him."

" La Grande Mademoiselle " had already been told by a gossip who predicted the future that she would never marry Monsieur. A rumour came to her ears that the Queen-Mother was far from pleased at her intimacy with Monsieur. Always a woman of intense energy and impulse she at once went to Mazarin. The conversation opened with subjects of less importance. The Cardinal was recovering from an attack of the gout. Mademoiselle was interested in his health. Without preparation the old statesman suddenly demanded :

" How are you getting on with Monsieur ? "

" As well as it is possible with a man so childish."

" The Queen and I are in despair at the way in which he amuses himself," explained Mazarin. " He takes his recreation in making dresses with Mademoiselle de Gourdon. He dreams of nothing but clothing himself as a girl. He never undertakes the exercises which are proper and usual for a man of his age. He affects an effeminacy which is not right."

Mademoiselle went to the point. " Since he is allowed to act so I believed that it has never been intended that he should have any other existence."

" On the contrary," replied the Cardinal. " We passionately wish that he should show some desire to join the army."

" That is exactly what I tell him to do every day."

“Such advice is the greatest pleasure you can give the Queen.”

“But I am told that she is angry with me because I am so often with Monsieur ? If that is true I beg of you to tell me. For it would be quite easy to end our acquaintance now, so that it may not seem that I have been forbidden to meet him.”

“Don’t believe what you have been told. The Queen is delighted that you are with him. You give him nothing but good advice.”

“As yet I have given him no advice. But if I do advise him you may be sure that it will not be anything against the wishes of the Queen, or of you.”

Mazarin defended his attitude.

“What advantage should I gain if Monsieur became a dishonest man ?” he asked. “It would only be harder for me to deal with him. And if he is any good I am sure he will do me the honour to repay me with his affection.”

Mademoiselle repeated the conversation to Philip, and they made no change in their meetings. Undoubtedly the prince was interested by the elder cousin, but for some reason the temper of the Queen-Mother changed. When the court left Paris it was rather unkindly hinted that Mademoiselle’s attendance was not desired. Again the princess interviewed Mazarin to learn the truth.

“Does the Queen think that I wish to marry Monsieur clandestinely ?” she cried with tears of anger. She received no direct answer from the Cardinal.

Her memoirs follow the movements of the royal family very closely. A campaign was in progress, and the King was busily engaged. Monsieur

however did not care for riding exercise and neglected his duty. "Whilst the King was with the army Monsieur, instead of being at his side, remained with the Queen like a child, although he was seventeen years old. . . . He walked with her ladies, and went down to the sea (they were on the Normandy coast) where he loved to get wet and to splash the others." He amused himself in buying ribbons and cloth from England. These idle hours were ended by the return of the King from the siege of Dunkirk in a dangerous fever. All hope was given up by the doctors. Mademoiselle expresses the general feeling with regard to Monsieur's accession to the throne.

"I liked him much, but he was too childish to govern, or even to know what was right. He had much wit, but he lacked solidity. He had neither wisdom nor experience. His habits and his friends were not only injurious for him but bad for the state." And she adds: "This made me redouble my anxiety for the King's life. I was not interested, for I knew well that Monsieur would never marry me."

During this illness Monsieur had shown to scant advantage, and his behaviour was evidently remembered by the King in after years. Louis was regarded as being on his death-bed, and intriguing women like Madame de Fienne and Anne of Gonzaga, Princess Palatine, flattered Philip's unworthy soul with the grossest obeisance. He became the centre of a new party. His favourite, the Count de Guiche, older by three years, "good-looking, witty, and cynical," was confined to his room by a wound received at Dunkirk. The Marquis de Villequier, son of the Marshal d'Aumont, was busy on Monsieur's behalf, and these machina-

tions were much resented by Anne of Austria and the sick King.

From this period, about 1658 or even earlier, Mademoiselle decided that Monsieur was not the man to make her happy. His ways were despicable. He had no character and no morals. She continued her intercourse with the Court and chronicles a brilliant scene at Fontainebleau in September 1658.

Monsieur announced his intention of giving a lunch at the Hermitage of Franchard, that exquisite spot hidden in the midst of the forest, overlooking the swelling hills of foliage and the far distance of the country towards Orleans. Most of the ladies rode to the place of meeting in their richest dresses. Madame de Soissons, niece to Mazarin, went in the cavalcade of coaches. At the Hermitage an orchestra of twenty-four violins filled the quiet glades with the soul-inspiring harmony of the strings. Monsieur and many of the ladies played amidst the trees and over the rocks. Others sat in the garden of the Hermitage. On each side stretched the blue film of a glorious landscape, every detail softened by the rising haze of the autumnal heat. After supper the procession returned to Fontainebleau escorted by servants holding flambeaux. By mischance a portion of the wood was set on fire, and it was only by good luck that the whole forest did not become a seething furnace. The court however was not frightened, and the day was still to be further enjoyed. In the palace a play was staged, and afterwards the Italian comedians mingled with the nobility. Boats rowed round the lake, their lamps reflected in the trembling water, the music of the violins they carried re-echoed by the walls of the château. This gaiety continued

for weeks. Dancing was carried on into the early hours of the morning. The world was young, and mirth reigned supreme.

Anne of Austria vainly endeavoured to rule this wild crowd. The two brothers were rarely on amicable terms, and the King lost no opportunity of poking sarcastic fun at his brother.

“If you had been King you would have been very embarrassed,” he said once to Philip. “Madame de Choisy and Madame de Fienne would never have agreed, and you would not have known which side to take.” Monsieur was supposed to be interested in these ladies. He replied in a tone which appeared to be very sincere that he had never wished for the King’s death, and that he had too much affection for his brother to desire to lose him.

“I believe it all the same,” answered Louis, continuing to laugh at his brother’s intimacy with the Count de Guiche. Monsieur blushed and remained silent. Then the Queen-Mother interrupted. She upbraided her son for his friendship with the disreputable Count de Guiche, and also for his admiration of the notorious Madame d’Olonne.

“It’s pleasant to see you visit every day the house of a woman who complains of you unceasingly, a woman without honour or conscience. They will make you a nice person in the end.”

Monsieur protested that he would never see Madame d’Olonne again, and so the family argument ended.

Shortly after, Mademoiselle met Monsieur at the Louvre. The boy had much gossip to tell his cousin. He had been to a masked ball dressed as a girl, and a certain Monsieur de Quervilly, not

recognising his true sex, had whispered soft words into his ear which had much diverted him. Before the Lent of 1659 a masquerade ball was given by Madame de la Meilleraye at the Arsenal, so crowded that the royal family had to go into adjoining rooms, and, with additional musicians, make up fresh sets of dances.

The Abbé de Choisy (in a letter to the Marquise de Lambert) tells the story of another ball at the Palais Royal. Monsieur opened the dance with a very pretty woman, Mademoiselle de Brancas, who afterwards became the Princess d'Harcourt. At the close of the dance he disappeared in his private rooms. There he was dressed in skirts and bodice, and then returned to the ballroom in a mask. Everybody recognised him. He did not wish the disguise to remain a secret. The Chevalier de Lorraine—always his evil genius—led him forward, and together they danced a minuet. He was then escorted to a seat in the midst of the ladies. They asked him to unmask. At first he refused affectedly, for in reality he desired to be seen. After a while he took off the mask, and sat in state playing the coquette, sticking patches on his cheeks, then taking them off and placing them on his chin, and performing a number of other rather far-fetched pleasantries, amidst the buzzing conversation and half-suppressed titters of a shocked assembly. At the end of his letter the abbé moralised.

“When men believe themselves to be beautiful they are far more infatuated by their charms than any of the women.”

Philip had now gathered round him an establishment which contained several men who were to exercise a strong influence upon his future. His

secretary, Monsieur de Varangeville, was "a Norman with some intelligence, but extremely passionate, proud in prosperity and cringing in misfortune, conceited, and lacking integrity." His confessor, Père Zoccoli, was a jesuit, with much good intention and with an evident affection for his master, but, according to Cosnac, "a trifle too complaisant." From Monsieur's point of view he was therefore an ideal spiritual director. The head valet was MÉRILLE, "a man of honour, open-hearted, desiring the glory of the prince and ardently wishing him to follow other paths than those he had so long lingered in." The governor of the household was the Marshal du Plessis, a rough soldier who had gained distinction in the field but had no aptitude for political life or the polished usages of a polite society. Envious, always endeavouring to seek his own advantage, so jealous that he could allow no merit to any person in the world, he was devoted to his own mean and degraded pleasures, and would stoop to trickery undignified for a man of such high station.

Boisfranc, the treasurer, could not boast of his birth. His origin was quite obscure. Originally from Auvergne, he had started life as a clerk in the provinces. Before entering Monsieur's service he had been an assistant to Monsieur de Bertillac, treasurer to the Queen-Mother, and his employer had lent him the forty thousand livres necessary to buy the important post he held in the new establishment. Until the death of Anne of Austria he alone shared with her the full confidence of Monsieur. He gained such an ascendancy over the Duke that he had but to threaten his master with resignation in order to gain his own ends. In everything Philip deferred to his judgment. Although he had left

Auvergne without a penny, as treasurer he was supposed to be worth two millions.

“I leave you to judge,” writes his enemy Daniel de Cosnac, “whether he could have done that without confusing the goods of his master with those of his own.”

Boisfranc belonged to the interesting group of financial agents which wielded so much real power during the reign of Louis XIV. Menneville, Saint Laurent, and Pennautier are similar instances.

But the most attractive personality was that of the Grand Almoner, or chaplain, who has left some important memoirs in which he explains his actions without any cloak of modesty or reserve. Daniel de Cosnac was born in 1630, the third son of a noble of Limousin. His mother was a Talleyrand, sister-in-law to the unfortunate Count de Chalais who had expiated his crime on the scaffold at Rennes. There had already been a cardinal in the family—nearly three centuries earlier—and the boy was at once destined for the Church. When his studies terminated at the College of Navarre he received an appointment in the household of the Prince de Conti, then thickly engaged in the troubles of the Fronde.

Cosnac was no ordinary priest. He never allowed himself to forget that his family was equal in blood to the highest in the land. He was proud, hard, and free-spoken. He was also very ambitious, and he soon discovered that to be of consequence in the world it is necessary to be feared. He was independent like every other Gascon, but he was ready to flatter any man or woman who might be able to aid him in his path forward. He was witty and could spring a cutting epigram if necessary. But he could

hold his tongue if the occasion was not propitious. He observed more than once that the first of all virtues was discretion, and he only failed when he ceased to practise what he preached.

His first bishopric, that of Valence, to which was attached the countship of Valence and Die, was conferred on him in 1653 when he was twenty-three years of age. In his autobiography he does not attempt to hide how strenuously he intrigued to gain this fat prize. The story is worth relating for it exposes in detail the concealed negotiations which were everlastingly undermining the court.

For months Cosnac had been urging his patron to push his interests, and the Prince de Conti had promised to do his best with Mazarin. Unofficially the Cardinal promised that the first vacant bishopric should be given to the young abbé. Cosnac awaited an opportunity of interviewing the minister. Being present at the coronation of Louis XIV at Rheims on the 8th June 1654 he was able to select a favourable moment. On the following day after attending the installation of the King and Monsieur as Knights of the Saint Esprit he met the Cardinal outside the cathedral. Mazarin was so amiable that the Gascon was surprised. The minister insisted upon presenting him to the Queen-Mother, who condescended to play cards with him during the evening. He lost all his spare cash, but he left the Queen's apartments convinced that his fortune was made.

Early next morning, at six o'clock to be exact, he was awakened by a courier from Paris. A friend in the capital had received news of the death of the Bishop of Valence. This event had taken place on the 5th June. The Prince de Conti was in Spain, but the absence of his patron and ally did not



DANIEL DE COSNAC
Bishop of Valence and Die
After an engraving of the period



LOUIS XIV AS A
YOUNG MAN
*After a miniature in
the Jones Collection*



CHARLES II IN ARMOUR
*After a miniature by
J. Petitot*



CARDINAL MAZARIN
*After an enamel by
J. Petitot*



CARDINAL RICHELIEU
*After a miniature by
J. Petitot in the Jones
Collection*

disconcert the abbé. He dressed and went to the Princess de Conti, apologised for disturbing her sleep, but said that there was not a moment to be lost. He implored her to see Mazarin before the Cardinal was able to say that he had already disposed of the vacant benefice.

Considering the early hour the Princess must be signalised in history as a most gracious lady. She dressed promptly and went to Mazarin.

"Madame!" cried he, without astonishment and without preliminary. "I know what brings you here."

Their conversation lasted two hours. Cosnac in the meanwhile was impatiently biting his nails in the Princess's apartments, waiting every moment to be summoned to the Cardinal. He appeared to be forgotten, and this seemed a bad augury.

The hour of dinner arrived, and when the abbé sat down at the Condé table he found that his mistress had returned. During the meal not a word was uttered. At last he could restrain his forebodings no longer.

"I understand what your silence means, madame. Yet tell me, have I anything to hope or fear in the future?"

The Princess remained calm. Her face, according to the autobiographer, was neither sad nor gay.

"The Cardinal positively assures me that you will be made a bishop. That is all I know."

"But am I to be Bishop of Valence, Madame?"

"I can't answer for that, but you will be a bishop."

Cosnac was troubled. The decision did not appear too satisfactory. In the afternoon a priest who had been recently nominated to the bishopric of Fréjus called on the Princess, and they discussed

Cosnac's chances. The bishop-elect was in the intimacy of the Cardinal and it was probable that he would repeat what he heard. So Cosnac tells us that he forgot nothing, and, in speaking of himself, exaggerated the services he had rendered to the state. In front of the listening visitor he recited the promise made to the Prince de Conti by Mazarin that he should receive the next vacant bishopric. Incidentally he suggested that the Prince would take it as a personal affront if this solemn obligation was not respected. "As for myself," he continued, "if the bishopric is refused I shall leave the Court and return to my master as an incapable."

Perhaps the Abbé Ondedei passed all this impetuous chatter on to Mazarin. At any rate he saw the Cardinal the same night, and in the morning Cosnac was sent for.

"You have got to thank the King," said the minister bluntly. "He has given you the Bishopric of Saint-Flour."

"Monseigneur," replied Cosnac, hiding his disappointment and anger. "I thank the King and Your Eminence at once, and I must ask the pardon of His Majesty for the fashion in which I do it. For I don't want Saint-Flour. Your Eminence promised the Prince de Conti that I should receive the first vacant see. It is Valence which is empty, not Saint-Flour."

The Cardinal was surprised at being argued with in this bold manner. He showed his irritation. He told the presumptuous abbé that Saint Flour was worth more than twenty thousand livres a year, and that the bishop in possession wished to retire as the climate did not agree with him.

Cosnac replied that the money question did not

interest him. He was quite disinterested. But the honour of the Prince de Conti had to be considered, and that for himself he could not possibly take up his residence at Saint-Flour. His constitution was exactly the same as that of the retiring ecclesiastic.

Mazarin continued his original argument at length. Cosnac remained unmoved and inflexible.

“Ah, well,” he said shortly. “If you wish it I will speak to the King. But take care. This may ruin your business entirely.”

Daniel de Cosnac was a born diplomatist, and he does not mind telling us all the little tricks of a time-server. He assumed a grateful and contented air.

“Monseigneur, as you do me the grace of promising that you will ask the King to give me the Bishopric of Valence I am as certain of it as if I held the Bull of appointment from Rome in my hands. The manner in which Your Eminence devotes every hour to the state does not leave a doubt that you can only be accorded everything you ask for. To grant a man of your importance the gift of appointment to a bishopric is not a grace, but simply a trifle.”

Writing in later years, Cosnac, as he recalls this interview, adds that Mazarin thoroughly enjoyed the grossest flattery. He closed the audience which had commenced so stormily and his temper changed. He smiled with cordiality.

“I will speak to the King. Come to me to-morrow morning.”

As Cosnac suspected, the Cardinal had already been asked for the See of Valence. The Abbé Fouquet, brother to Nicolas Fouquet the financier, had requested it for the Bishop of Saint-Flour, and Mazarin had reasons to oblige him. He had

explained the position to the Princess de Conti, who did not repeat the conversation to Cosnac. But although Cosnac was pleased at the result of his interview the matter had not been definitely settled, and it is characteristic of the man that he allowed nothing to fail through lack of arrangement and foresight. He therefore asked the Princess to visit the Queen, and, when the Cardinal arrived, according to his custom in the evening, she was to remind him not to forget to make his request of the King. The Princess remained with Anne of Austria all the afternoon and late into the evening, until a message arrived that the minister was so overwhelmed with business that he would be unable to join the royal circle.

Again the young abbé imagined that his appointment had fallen through, but he did not fail to wait on the Cardinal the next morning.

"I have spoken to the King," said Mazarin. This was untrue. Cosnac knew that he had not seen Louis since the previous conversation. "At my prayer His Majesty has granted you the bishopric of Valence. But for reasons of my own I must forbid you to announce it for the moment."

Then he told Cosnac that it would be well for him to preach in the King's chapel before the issue of the brevet, so that it might appear that the nomination was the result of merit rather than for services rendered.

The abbé knew his world, and the doubtful value of a verbal promise. He offered to preach ten days later upon the Feast of St. John, but his satisfaction was mingled with uneasiness. A dozen men were anxiously pressing their claims for Valence. Two or three boasted that they had gained the private ear of

the Cardinal. He was forbidden to make the good news public, which in itself was suspicious. He talked the subject over with the Princess de Conti, and they put into action a most peculiar and audacious plan. She had several blank sheets of paper which her husband had signed, so that if necessary she could make use of his name while he was away with the army. They concocted a letter which the abbé carefully wrote on the blank sheet above the signature of the Prince. That evening a footman arrived from Paris to know if he should carry any messages to the Prince in the south. He was carefully instructed, and the letter was completed. The Prince de Conti, in passing through Valence, had heard of the death of the Bishop. This explained why the letter was dated from that town, and why it reminded the Cardinal of his promise to the Prince that the first vacant see should be given to Cosnac. The Prince concluded the forged letter by an assurance of his pleasure at the fact that Cosnac was to be Bishop of Valence.

The abbé conducted the footman, "very muddy and very tired," into the presence of the Cardinal, who opened and read the letter.

"The Prince need not have sent an express for such a reason," said Mazarin, without dreaming of the trick. "I am too delighted to do whatever I can for him. I will send an answer to him."

He wrote a reply and gave it to the servant, who carried it to the Princess. She opened it. Mazarin had written a few lines stating that the King had made Cosnac the new Bishop of Valence, and that he would not have neglected meeting the wishes of the Prince de Conti in such a business.

“Then for the first time I felt secure,” wrote the abbé. “And I was tranquil as to my fortune.”

The incident throws considerable light upon the character of Daniel de Cosnac, as well as on the methods necessary to use for ecclesiastical promotion. It is also important because the new Bishop, from his consecration in 1654 until his death in 1708, was a well-known man in public life.

His next step was against his own inclination. In 1658 he became Grand Almoner to Monsieur. When the post became vacant—like all others, it was to be had by purchase—it was understood that the Abbé Fouquet would buy it for his own enjoyment. Mazarin and Anne of Austria were already jealous of the increasing aggrandisement of the abbé's brother. They feared that indirectly Nicolas Fouquet the financier might gain some power over the heir to the throne.

At first Cosnac refused to buy the charge. In his own words, he did not want to waste his best years in the somewhat disreputable circle of Monsieur, who, he was keen enough to notice, was a prince of weak character and unable to advance the interests of his servants. An absurd trifle caused him to alter his mind. Monsieur, then aged fifteen, in eating some soup and meat, quarrelled with his brother. The King rubbed Philip's face in the dish. This annoyed the young Duke so keenly that he threw the remainder of the meal at Louis' head.

“The action, although inconsiderable, appeared to me to come from a good heart which was unable to suffer an indignity. It produced more effect upon me than the advice of all my friends as well as the assistance demanded by the Cardinal.”

The explanation is extraordinary but undoubtedly

sincere. In history the greatest events often hinge upon the most ridiculous as well as the slightest trifles. Daniel de Cosnac changed the whole course of his career because Philip of Orleans threw a plate of soup over his brother the King.

IV

Marriage of Louis XIV : Proposed marriage of Philip :
Henrietta Anne of England : Her youth and education :
Restoration of Charles II : Philip created Duke of Orleans :
His jealousy of the Duke of Buckingham : Death of Mazarin :
Marriage of Philip and Henrietta.

LOUIS XIV married the Infanta Maria Theresa of Spain in 1660. The marriage was purely one of policy, and the King was nearly betrothed to the daughter of the Duke of Savoy before Mazarin was able to negotiate satisfactorily the Spanish alliance. When Madame de Lyonne—who was not very tall—returned from Spain the King was anxious to have a correct description of his future bride.

“She is an extremely beautiful princess,” said Madame de Lyonne. “And she is exactly my height.”

Louis returned to his mother, surprised and disgusted.

“Do you wish me to marry a dwarf?” he demanded with the utmost ill-temper.

The maladroit traveller was sternly reprimanded by the Queen-Mother for her carelessness. As a fact she had endeavoured to flatter her future mistress, for Maria Theresa was shorter than Madame de Lyonne.

Mazarin and Don Luis de Haro, first Minister of Spain, held their interviews on the island in the

stream of Bidassoa, which divides France from Spain. Whilst the marriage contract, which was also a treaty of peace between the two warring nations, was being drawn up, Anne of Austria met her brother, the King of Spain, after a parting of a lifetime. Yet a third interview was in progress. Louis went incognito to see the Infanta. He did not enter the room, but gazed at her from the doorway. His impressions are not recorded. Mazarin approached the princess and asked in Spanish :

“What do you think of that chevalier ?”

And she, with her eyes fixed very composedly upon the door, answered in the same tongue :

“He seems to me exceedingly pretty.”

This flattering opinion she never altered. She fell in love with the Sun-king immediately she saw him, as promptly as any heroine in one of *Made-moiselle de Scudéry's* sentimental novels.

Bride and bridegroom were cousins-german, the young princess being a grand-daughter of Henri IV. Like many persons of weak character she was inordinately proud of her family descent.

“Did you never desire to be loved before your marriage ?” asked a daring and inquisitive lady one day.

“Never !” was the reply. “How could I have loved any one in Spain ? There were no kings at my father's court.”

Having successfully achieved this royal marriage, Mazarin proceeded to find a wife for the King's brother. There was little need for him to look far. Another grand-daughter of Henri IV, the Princess Henrietta Anne, daughter of Charles I of England, was recognised as the most accomplished woman at the Court. At first she was destined for the King

himself. A report reached Cromwell's ears that there was gossip in Paris of "a marriage between the King of France and Charles Stuart's sister." But the young King is said not to have been pre-possessed in the girl's favour, although the chronicler of this statement, the "Grande Mademoiselle," is scarcely an unprejudiced witness, for she dreamt of sitting in the queen's throne herself.

Had the English Restoration taken place a year earlier "Charles Stuart's sister" would probably have been selected as the future Queen of France, and the story of Europe might have developed on different lines. The Queen-Mother, Anne of Austria, however, desired an alliance with her native land, and Charles II was still a wanderer with a very questionable chance of coming to his own. The Spanish marriage was arranged before he sailed from Scheveningen to Dover.

The life of Henrietta of England is one of the tragic romances of history. Her mother, Queen Henrietta Maria, parted from Charles I on the eve of the battle of Newbury in 1644. Husband and wife never saw each other again. The Queen journeyed south and reached Exeter, suffering from rheumatic fever. She was in so feeble a condition that it was doubted whether she would reach that city alive. Charles sent his physician to Exeter, whilst Anne of Austria despatched her own nurse with a present of money and clothes. On the 16th June 1644 the French envoy reported that the Queen "has given birth to a lively little Princess, but is herself in a state of extreme weakness and suffering."

Exeter was surrounded by rebels who brutally refused the poor lady a safe conduct to Bath. With

sudden energy she committed her child to the care of Anne Villiers, Lady Dalkeith, and escaped to France. The result was pathetic. Charles fought his way across country to Exeter, and successfully entered the town. But he had not been told of the flight of the queen, and he arrived in Exeter to find his child alone. For a year the little princess lived in the city, which was again besieged, and finally compelled to capitulate in April 1646.

One of the conditions of the capitulation was that the royal babe should be allowed to remain under the control of her guardian until the King's pleasure could be ascertained. Charles wanted his daughter to be taken to Richmond. The Parliament would not consent, insisting that Princess Henrietta should join her brothers and sisters at St. James's Palace, with the far more important proviso that Lady Dalkeith should deliver up her charge to Lady Northumberland.

Lady Dalkeith protested. Then, believing that the child would be taken from her by force, she disguised herself as a tramp, dressed the girl in some boyish rags, gave her the name of Peter, and took the high road to Dover. Before the news of the flight reached London the princess was safe at Calais, and a few days later in the arms of her mother at Saint Germain. Waller celebrated the exploit in portentous verse.

Born in the storms of war, this royal fair,
 Produced like lightening in tempestuous air,
 Though now she flies her native isle, less kind,
 Less safe for her, than either sea or wind,
 Shall, when the blossom of her beauty's shown,
 See her great brother on the British throne,
 Where peace shall smile, and no dispute arise,
 But which rules most, his sceptre or her eyes.

Until Henrietta Maria's arrival in France in 1644 Anne of Austria had not seen her since the joyous days of 1625 when they travelled together to Amiens in the charge of the Duke of Buckingham. The widowed queens renewed their old friendship amidst vastly altered circumstances. The world had become a serious place for both of them, full of unhappy responsibilities and bitter sorrows. Together they mingled their tears. Their intimacy remained unbroken until the death of Anne of Austria in 1666.

Henrietta Maria had lost much of her earlier beauty, wrote Madame de Motteville. Her eyes were still fine, her complexion admirable, her nose well formed, but the hardships she had passed through left their traces of suffering. She was so amiable and agreeable that every one loved her. She was small and thin, and her mouth—which was never her supreme charm—seemed to be larger through the wasting of her features. She used to remark that women lost their beauty after the age of twenty-two, a statement which was true in her case. But she possessed a far finer quality than a merely skin-deep fascination. She was a daughter of Henri IV, and she inherited all her father's wit, intelligence, and charm. In her everyday manner she was a perfect "gentle woman." She was pleasant in society, and without pride. She possessed the light-hearted temperament of her nation. In the midst of her tears this poor princess would be able to smile. The character of Queen Henrietta Maria of England is in many ways a noble one, despite its bigotry in matters of religion. Hard experience softened rather than embittered her, and her daughter inherited all her mother's most gracious virtues.

For a few years, with an allowance from the French exchequer, the Queen and her daughter lived in ease, although every coin that could be economised was sent to help the cause in England. In 1648 life became harder. The royal family of France was itself reduced to penury. Anne of Austria admitted that "she knew not where to obtain a dinner or a gown." The Queen of England and her daughter actually starved in the palace of the Louvre whilst the battles of the Fronde were being fought under their eyes in the streets of Paris. They could not return to England, for the Parliament refused them liberty to land. Cardinal de Retz visited them early in January 1649. "Posterity will hardly believe," he writes, "that a Queen of England and a grand-daughter of Henri IV lacked firewood in the month of January in the Louvre." It was so cold that the Princess had to remain in bed, but the Cardinal pleaded their case with such eloquence before the Parliament of Paris that 40,000 livres were at once voted for the use of the Queen. On the 18th February, so slow did news travel, came a courier from England. King Charles was dead. The Royal Martyr had been beheaded in front of Whitehall Palace on the previous 30th January. The news created a profound sensation, and the widowed queen's long fight had ended in defeat.

The education of the Princess Henrietta was superintended by her mother, and conducted on the lines of the utmost simplicity. Reared in poverty the Stuart child breathed the open humanity of an ordinary individual and yet preserved in her heart the pride of her royal race. Much of her quiet youth was spent in the peaceful convent of

the Visitandines of Sainte Marie at Chaillot which had been partly founded by her mother. This house had for its superior a lady with a deep knowledge of the past history of the Court. The Mère Angélique was in secular life Louise Angélique de La Fayette, whose platonic friendship for Louis XIII during the period 1635 to 1637 had closed with her retirement from the palace. She was now a true friend of the Queen-Mother of England.

It is impossible to omit reference to an aspect of contemporary gossip which bears some relation to the youth of the Princess. "Her mother," writes Michelet, "lived on very bad terms with the handsome Englishman whom some say she married. He beat her, and even pillaged the little money she had. Such was the morality the little one had under her eyes."

Michelet was a vivid historian, but often he accepted as facts incidents for which no corroboration can be found. There is more evidence to support the idea of a private marriage between Anne of Austria and Mazarin than there is for the marriage of Henrietta Maria and Henry Jermyn. There is nothing to bolster up Michelet's supposition save the vaguest gossip. Henry Jermyn was an old personal attendant of the Queen. He had been her vice-chamberlain in 1628, and had accompanied her to France in her flight after the birth of the Princess Henrietta, becoming, according to Charles II "more a Frenchman than an Englishman." He was fond of gambling, money, and good comfort, and it was a subject of complaint by the other exiled English royalists that whilst they were starving penniless in the slums of Paris Jermyn always managed to live on the fat of the land. He

was a man unguided by conscience or scruples, yet a most valuable servant, and it is easy to understand why one of Queen Henrietta's first acts after the Restoration was to ask her son to create him Earl of St. Albans. Pepys believed the current scandal. On the 22nd November 1662 he wrote: "This day Mr. Moore told me that for certain the Queen-Mother is married to my Lord St. Albans." Sir John Resby who visited the Queen evidently had suspicions. But the evidence is too weak to support Michelet's confident assertions.

For many years the position of the Queen and her daughter was ambiguous and sufficiently trying. Until Charles II came to his own they were poor relations living on the charity given to them by their French friends. Anne of Austria endeavoured to shield them in every possible manner. She carefully watched that her niece should not be neglected. But the Princess suffered many cruel snubs and vexations. She appeared at Court for the first time in 1654, when she was invited to a fête given by Mazarin in honour of the marriage of his niece Anne Martinozzi to the Prince de Conti. A few months after she participated in a ballet in which the other rôles were undertaken by the King, Philip, and her brother James, Duke of York. In June she attended the coronation at Rheims.

At this stage Madame de Motteville gives in her memoirs a tiny picture, marked with the fidelity to minute detail of a Dutch genre painter, which reveals the inner happenings of the royal family. Anne of Austria had arranged a quiet dance for the benefit of the Princess Henrietta, who was bidding farewell to her childhood and giving more than one

indication to those who knew her that she would rapidly develop into an accomplished woman. The Queen-Mother decided that the invitations should be confined to those of the highest rank. The King, who was enthralled by the Italian graces of the nieces of Mazarin, wished to open the ball with Madame de Mercœur. Anne of Austria, considering this to be a gross affront to the royal guests, rose brusquely from her chair and commanded her son to lead out the Princess of England. Queen Henrietta Maria had no wish to excite the animosity of Louis, and, observing the anger of the Queen-Mother, went after her, saying in a low tone that the King ought not to be contradicted, and that her daughter was a trifle lame and unable to dance.

Anne of Austria replied authoritatively that if the Princess did not dance, the King could not dance. In order to end the argument the Queen Henrietta allowed her daughter to dance, but another version says that neither King nor Princess danced that evening.

Later the same night the King was seriously taken to task by his mother. He briefly replied :

“ I do not like little girls.”

It is true, writes Madame de Motteville, that the Princess was eleven whilst Louis was seventeen and looked twenty. Anne of Austria admitted that she had been over-quick in temper with a good son, but she was indignant at seeing him lack the civility and respect due to his cousin the Princess of England.

Less easily controlled were other members of the family. The “ Grande Mademoiselle ” never forgot that she too was a grand-daughter of Henri IV, and, perhaps of more consequence, the richest heiress

in France. Although she became a good friend to Henrietta towards the close of the Princess's life, it is evident that at this period she could only consider her a most dangerous rival. Until the King's Spanish marriage it was suggested in many directions that he should find his wife either in Mademoiselle or in Henrietta of England. Now Monsieur had to be married, and again the two cousins were avowed competitors for his hand.

In 1658 Mademoiselle formally claimed precedence of Henrietta at all court functions. Anne of Austria and Mazarin refused to consider her contention, as the English Princess was the daughter of a king. Philip, who hated the Cardinal, and who happened to be on close terms with Mademoiselle, warmly supported the action of Gaston's daughter.

"She is perfectly right to insist upon her precedence," he cried, and his words reveal a small and mean disposition. "Things have come to a fine pass if we are to allow people who depend on us for bread to go before us. For my part, I think they had better take themselves elsewhere."

The ill-tempered remark casts some light upon the character of the speaker. Naturally it caused astonishment, and Anne of Austria reproved her son indignantly. It is evident that at the time Philip had little affection for the girl he was so soon to marry.

In one sense he was right. The English royal family were beggars and dependents. Charles had failed to gain support from the statesmen who directed the foreign policy of France and Spain. As a consequence he was leading an aimless and precarious life in Holland and Flanders, a pensioner on the bounty of his sister the Princess

of Orange. He paid his suit to the "Grande Mademoiselle," and that strong-minded lady rejected him with scorn, a clear indication that his chance of occupying the throne of his fathers was sufficiently discounted. Mazarin refused to entertain any suggestion that the royal wanderer should marry his niece Hortense Mancini. "The honour of such an alliance is too great," said the satirical Italian. Charles was reduced to such extremity that he was compelled to dismiss his servants, and pawn his plate. He was actually in need of clothes.

Under these conditions it seemed hopeless to anticipate a brilliant future for his sister. Mazarin and the Queen-Mother arranged the Spanish marriage, and, whilst he—together with the King and his brother—journeyed south to meet the Infanta, Henrietta remained with her mother in Paris. Sir John Reresby, a travelling Englishman, joined the quiet little circle which alternately lodged in the Palais Royal and the convent at Chaillot. "The young princess, then aged about fifteen, used me with all the civil freedom that might be, made me dance with her, played on the harpsichord to me in Her Highness's chamber, suffered me to attend on her when she walked in the garden with the rest of her retinue, and sometimes to toss her in a swing made of a cable which she sat upon, tied between two trees, and in fine suffered me to be present at most of her innocent diversions." Madame de Brégis described the girl as having "an air as noble as her birth. Her hair is of a bright chestnut hue, and her complexion rivals that of the gayest flowers. The snowy whiteness of her skin betrays the lilies from which she sprang. Her

eyes are blue and brilliant, her lips ruddy, her throat beautiful, her arms and hands well made. . . . She dances with incomparable grace, she sings like an angel, and the spinet is never so well played as by her fair hands."

Suddenly everything changed as if touched by the wand of a magician. In May 1660 Charles II landed at Dover, and was on his way to London. From beggary Henrietta passed to riches in one stride.

Her brother's first action was to send her a valuable gift—a side-saddle covered in green velvet and trimmed with gold lace. Amidst her tears of joy Queen Henrietta Maria commanded a "Te Deum" to be chanted by her nuns in the convent at Chaillot, whilst bonfires were lit outside the Palais Royal in Paris. "I think I shall have all Paris to congratulate me," she wrote naïvely to her son in London. Sir John Reresby, in his memoirs, says that the reception-rooms of the Palais Royal, formerly deserted, were now crowded by the fawning Parisians. Louis XIV had returned with Anne of Austria and the new Queen to Fontainebleau, but the rival court in the Palais Royal, presided over by the daughter and grand-daughter of Henri IV, was far more lively and interesting than that ruled over by the two Spanish ladies. "Our Queen's good humour and wit, and the great beauty of the young princess, her daughter, made it more attractive than the solemn Spanish etiquette observed in the other," wrote Reresby with patriotic pride. The Queen-Mothers of France and of England were devoted friends. They had passed through severe afflictions, and their present difficulties in the rearing and management of headstrong children

were not dissimilar. But the jealousy Maria Theresa displayed towards her cousin Henrietta of England, the unreasoning dislike a dull-witted and plain woman would not unnaturally have against a brilliant and fascinating girl, dates from this period.

For some years Anne of Austria had been secretly dreaming of an alliance between her second son and her niece. Whilst Charles remained discredited and uncrowned Mazarin refused to listen to the idea. It has been said that Monsieur was deeply in love with his cousin. Mrs. Ady in her valuable biography of the Princess lays much stress upon the assertion. Unfortunately the facts all point another way. Monsieur was not the man to love any one but himself, and it is impossible to shut our eyes to some extremely unpleasant aspects of his character. Undoubtedly it is true that he wished to get married, for until his household was settled he could hardly occupy his true position at Court.

“Come, cheer up!” said Louis to him, as they travelled together to Spain to make the acquaintance of the Infanta Maria Theresa. “You will marry the Princess of England, for no one else will have her. Monsieur de Savoy and Monsieur de Florence have both declined the honour, so that I am sure you will marry her in the end.” And Guy Patin, the physician, notes in his correspondence a report that the young Duke of Anjou is going to marry the sister of Charles of England, a proposal which is arousing considerable discussion and jealousy.

x
In February 1660 Gaston of Orleans, the King's uncle, died, and his immense estates reverted to the crown. Louis at once invested his brother with the duchies of Orleans, Valois, and Chartres,

together with the domains of Villers-Cotterets and Montargis, but not Blois and Chambord. Saint Cloud was purchased from Hervard, the controller of finance, and given to Philip as a country residence close to the capital. The title of Orleans was not of good omen, for the history of the previous holders of the dukedom was far from cheerful. Already there was a proverb in circulation that an Orleans would betray all those who raised him to power. The first duke of Orleans was Louis, second son of Charles V of France, who was born in 1371 and received his title from his brother Charles VI in 1392. During the madness of the King he became regent of France, but his relations with the Queen created notorious scandal. At length, on one dark November in 1407, he was assassinated in the streets of Paris. His son, Charles of Orleans, was more famous as a poet than as a soldier. Taken prisoner at the Battle of Agincourt he spent twenty-five years of captivity in England. His eldest son succeeded to the throne as Louis XII. The first dynasty of Orleans ended, and the dukedom merged in the crown.

The title was revived for Gaston, brother of Louis XIII and third son of Henri IV. He was created Duke of Orleans and of Chartres, and Count of Blois. Four times he was banished from France, and at the failure of each successive plot against the crown he unhesitatingly sacrificed his associates to save his skin. With the approach of age his disposition did not alter. According to Madame de Motteville during the almost fatal illness of the child Louis XIV, which was likely to bring him within a single life of the throne, he did not decently restrain his satisfaction at the trend of events.

When he was created duke the old title was hardly sweet, when he died it was thoroughly tainted. Philip of Anjou and his successors added to, rather than diminished, the evil traditions which surrounded the name.

King Charles II reached Dover on the 26th May 1660, and a few weeks sufficed to prove that his throne would be reasonably secure. He had formed an unchangeable determination never to go on his travels again. Besides, the English were tired of Cromwellian rule and yearned for a king.

Mazarin had repeatedly urged that England was the natural ally of France, and now was the time to put his ideas into practical shape. The preliminaries of the marriage between Philip of Orleans and Henrietta of England were pushed forward with suspicious rapidity. On the 12th August Monsieur gave a great ball in his new palace at Saint-Cloud and opened the entertainment by dancing with the English princess. Eight days later Queen Henrietta Maria wrote to her daughter, the Princess of Orange, that everything had been arranged, and that Charles had given his consent to the marriage of his sister. She wrote at the same time to her son, "Your sister is by no means averse to the idea, and as for Monsieur, he is very much in love, and extremely impatient for your answer."

That Monsieur was "tout-à-fait amoureux" (to quote the exact words) was an amiable fiction of the match-making mother. Madame de La Fayette expressly states that when the Princess returned to Paris from London early in 1661 Monsieur showed her every attention that could be expected from a future husband, "lacking only love: but the miracle of inflaming the heart of

this prince was not reserved for any woman in the world." The alliance was in every way agreeable and important diplomatically, as it was possible that England would soon hold the balance of power. The all-powerful Cardinal gave his benediction in the form of a brilliant festival to honour the betrothal. The only discontented person was the unfortunate "Grande Mademoiselle." She had been brought up in the assurance that she would marry her cousin the King. In contemptuously refusing Charles the wanderer she had committed an error of judgment. Although she was twelve years older than Monsieur she had relied upon a marriage which would practically enable her to continue in the enjoyment of her father's vast estates. Now the girl she had so bitterly snubbed was to sit in the seat that should have been her own. Charles II was still a bachelor, but he refused to consider a hint that Mademoiselle was willing to reconsider her earlier decision. As this disconsolate daughter of France herself remarked: "I have acted like a fool, and have only myself to thank."*

On the 5th September 1660 Pepys notes in his diary "great news nowadays of the Duke of Anjou's desire to marry the Princess Henrietta." In November the Queen-Mother and her daughter came to London, and Pepys, like a true cockney always ready for the sights, did not miss seeing them. "The Queen a very little plain old woman, and nothing more in her presence in any respect

* Both the Queens-Dowager agreed as to the suitability of the "Grande Mademoiselle" as a daughter-in-law. Before Henrietta Maria went to London after the Restoration, she said to Mademoiselle de Montpensier: "I will never pardon you for not having married my son. You would have been the happiest person in the world. I hope you will repent of it." She certainly did.

nor garb than any ordinary woman. . . . The Princess Henrietta is very pretty, but much below my expectation, and her dressing of herself with her hair frized short up to her ears did make her seem so much the less to me. But my wife standing near her with two or three black patches on, and well dressed, did seem to me much handsomer than she."

"La Belle Henriette" was well received. The House of Commons voted her a gift of £10,000, and sent the cash to her on the afternoon of the day they passed the vote. She wrote to the Speaker a charming letter of thanks, saying that she was conscious her knowledge of the English language was defective, but that she would make amends by keeping an English heart.

The negotiations over the marriage dowry were protracted, degenerating into an unseemly haggle. Louis wanted Charles to agree to a restoration of the fort of Dunkirk. Charles refused, but promised 40,000 jacobuses and a contribution of £20,000 towards the expenses of the marriage. Louis and Philip jointly agreed to settle an income of 40,000 livres upon the Princess together with the château of Montargis. In the meanwhile the Duke of Buckingham, son of a Duke of Buckingham who had already created scandal in the royal family, entertained the French ambassador and fell in love with the "belle Henriette." He was the richest man in England, "the finest gentleman of person and wit I think I ever saw," says Sir John Resesby. Many years later Dean Lockier told Pope that "when he came into the presence chamber it was impossible for you not to follow him with your eye as he went along, he moved so gracefully."

It was rash of the Queen to allow him to make the acquaintance of her daughter. She was seventeen, he not quite thirty-two. Eight years previously he had been the source of argument in the same circle, for in 1652 he aspired to the hand of Henrietta's widowed sister, the Princess of Orange. The Queen Henrietta Maria held the doctrine that royal blood could only mate with royal blood, and announced that she would rather tear her child in pieces with her own hands than allow the princess to degrade herself by such a match. One of her acutest griefs was the marriage of the Duke of York to Clarendon's daughter, Anne Hyde.

The festivities of the re-united English court and royal family were abruptly ended at Christmas by the painfully sudden death of the Princess of Orange through a virulent attack of small-pox.* This was not allowed to postpone the forthcoming marriage. At the urgent request of Philip of Orleans, and against their own inclinations, for the weather was bad, the Queen and her daughter left London for Paris on the first day of the new year. King Charles and the Duke of Buckingham accompanied them, and, when the King left the cavalcade at the end of the first day's journey to the coast, Buckingham entreated permission to escort them the whole of the way although he had made no

* The death of the Princess of Orange was attributed to small-pox, but Guy Patin, in a letter dated January 1661, puts another aspect on the affair. "The Princess of Orange, aged twenty-eight years, has died in London, not of small-pox, but of a brew Daquin gave her, not at the right time, for some particular design that he had and she also. It is a secret that can only be whispered, and that Monsieur Falconet will be able to explain to you, *quando quidem tuto non potest chartæ committi.*" The reference seems to have escaped previous historians. The history of Daquin can be followed on a later page.

preparations for a long journey. That Charles gave him leave can only be attributed to "Old Rowley's" easy good-nature.

Buckingham had transferred his affection from the recently deceased Princess of Orange to the girl who was soon to become Duchess of Orleans. History was repeating itself. According to Madame de La Fayette, who wrote her memoir at the dictation of the Duchess, the Duke was as passionately in love with Henrietta as his father had been with Anne of Austria. At Portsmouth they embarked, but the tempest was so wild that they were forced to return to the harbour. Henrietta was unwell, and her illness was found to be measles. At the crisis of her fever Buckingham acted like a man demented. Upon her recovery they sailed for Havre, landing in France at the end of January. Buckingham was still of erratic behaviour. At Havre he quarrelled so angrily with the English admiral for paying attention to the Princess that the Queen-Mother of England, troubled at his continued disorder, commanded him to travel to Paris in advance whilst Henrietta remained at Havre to complete her convalescence.

Louis XIV and Maria Theresa met them at Pontoise, and Monsieur escorted his fiancée to the Palais Royal. The Duke soon reappeared and mixed in fashionable circles. The most intimate friend of Monsieur at the moment was Armand de Gramont, Count de Guiche, of whom more will be heard. In 1661 the Count was chiefly interested in Anne-Marie de La Trémoille, who had married in 1659 the Prince de Chalais. Whether she encouraged him is doubtful, writes Madame de La Fayette. But she was amiable without being beautiful, and

the Count followed her until his infatuation became the subject of general gossip.

The Duke of Buckingham doubted if her attractions could long enslave a man who would soon have to spend much time in the company of Philip's wife. The Princess one evening pointed out Madame de Chalais, and asked him, in English, if he did not find her very pleasant.

"No," he replied. "She is not good enough for him. He seems to me to be the cleverest man in the court, and I can only hope that every one else will not be of my thinking."

The princess did not answer. She treated the remark as a result of the admiration the Duke openly displayed towards her. And it does not seem that she was other than gratified at the flattery of his adoration.

The King was busy in another direction. He prepared a ballet appropriate to the occasion, entitled *L'Impatience des Amoureux*, which was produced with much success. Then, whilst all the parties were waiting for the necessary dispensation from Rome permitting the marriage of first cousins, Cardinal Mazarin died at the château of Vincennes.

His death on the 9th March was not unexpected, for he had long suffered from gout. Daniel de Cosnac gives a brief but vivid recital of the death scene. When he entered the room extreme unction was being administered to the Cardinal. The chamber was crowded, every one reverently kneeling. After the prayers the Bishop of Valence vigorously pushed his way through the throng.

"Monsieur de Valence, I ask your pardon," repeated Mazarin twice. Cosnac kissed his hand,

and believed that the Cardinal was about to give him some additional benefaction. Unhappily Colbert entered at the head of his household, and this put an end to all private conversation. The newcomers threw themselves on their knees and asked forgiveness from the dying statesman. The Bishop had to move aside. His opportunity had been lost, and, though Mazarin lived two more days, Cosnac did not see him again.

“He died like a great man, tranquilly settling his affairs, writing letters to various parts of France and Italy, distributing valuable jewels amongst the gentlemen of the court, sending other gifts to Rome, showing no base fear, neither affecting any extreme courage . . . dying like a true philosopher to whom death was indifferent, and who regarded the act of dissolution as would a spectator.” Despite his disappointment Cosnac was able to write without bitterness.

To the youthful and gay court the death of “Fox Mazarin” (to quote Victor Hugo) came as a relief. His power had been a restraint, and Louis was eager to assume the royal authority without opposition. At the first council he held alone, on the 12th March, his brother assisted—an arrangement which was not continued. There was no grief over the demise of the real head of the state, but considerable speculation as to the amount of his wealth. Although before his death he had given much away the total sum was enormous. The King received eighteen large diamonds, and Monsieur was delighted with several big emeralds. Even Anne of Austria did not appear perturbed at the loss of her old friend and companion, and this must be taken into consideration whenever the

story of her secret marriage is upheld. A conversation recounting Mazarin's last moments was being held in her presence. She became tired of the subject.

"Let no more be said about it," was her cold command.

The words were repeated as an example of her unfeeling and selfish nature.

The dead man had often acted the part of peacemaker in the royal household, and before his body had been laid in its tomb a violent quarrel was disturbing the family. Philip of Orleans suddenly became violently jealous. He fiercely resented the attentions of the Duke of Buckingham to his betrothed. Instead of having his wishes conveyed direct to the offending nobleman he lodged a complaint with his future mother-in-law. Henrietta Maria refused to consider it. Her attitude can be explained in two ways. She was either lacking in common sense, for the vagaries of the Duke were the subject of general scandal, or she knew the disposition of her daughter and was able to trust her. She explained to the angry prince that her daughter tolerated the English peer because he was one of her brother's closest friends. As for his admiration, it was ridiculous. The Princess laughed at it, and Monsieur should do the same.

Philip refused to accept this reasonable advice, and carried the grievance to his mother. The feelings of the Queen-Mother of France must have been mixed. The son of the man, who, thirty-five years earlier, had made love to her at Amiens and helped to wreck her married life, was paying court to the girl who would shortly become her

daughter-in-law. Madame de La Fayette said that the Queen had much indulgence for Buckingham. She was unable to forget his father, who seemed to live again in the son. Yet she took a more serious view than her friend Henrietta Maria. There was a vein of prudishness in her character which became stronger as she grew older. She wrote to Charles II, and the favourite was recalled to London.

She was anxious to see the marriage take place, for Monsieur was in a disturbed and irritable condition. But the arrangements for the ceremony were difficult to complete. The Abbé Montagu, almoner to Queen Henrietta Maria, a hot-headed and fanatical English priest, asserted with some justice that as the marriage was to take place in the palace of the Queen of England it could only be celebrated by him. Daniel de Cosnac, never a man to yield a right, insisted that the sacrament could only be administered to the bridegroom by his own almoner and chaplain, who was moreover a bishop of the Church. The squabble became acrimonious, and neither priest would yield an inch.

Although Anne of Austria was on the most friendly terms with the Bishop of Valence, and always ready to win his money at cards, on this occasion she supported the claims of the English chaplain. On the other hand, Monsieur, who considered his personal dignity to be the most precious thing on earth, would hear of no other celebrant than the chief ecclesiastic of his own household. One of the last acts of Mazarin before his death was to act as co-arbitrator with the King in this most vital point. They ordered that the Bishop should officiate at the marriage, but that

every civility and courtesy should be tendered to Montagu.

According to the "Recueil des Gazettes," on the 30th March Monsieur attended his parish church, Saint Germain l'Auxerrois, in the morning, and received the communion from Daniel de Cosnac. The Princess attended the same office and received the communion at her parish church, Saint Eustache. In the evening the contract of marriage was signed in the Palais-Cardinal (or Palais-Royal) in the presence of the royal family and the most distinguished members of the court. On the next day, 1st April 1661, the religious ceremony was solemnised in the chapel attached to the apartments of the Queen of England, who, in the evening, gave an official banquet. "Everything was carried out with a sumptuousness and joy easy to imagine," writes a contemporary journalist.

La Fontaine in flowing verse indited an epithalamium full of happy wishes.

O couple aussi beau qu'heureux,
Vous serez toujours aimables ;
Soyez toujours amoureux.

The career of the newly married pair was a sorry commentary upon these flowing lines. A few days after the marriage Monsieur and Madame entered into the possession of their new home in the palace of the Louvre. The girl wept bitterly when she said good-bye to her mother. Perhaps she had a premonition of coming evil.

V

Henrietta of Orleans : The Palais Royal and its *salon* :
 Delights of Fontainebleau : Olympe Mancini : The rise of
 La Vallière : Philip's jealousy : Madame de La Fayette :
 Philip's ignoble friends : The Count de Guiche : The
 Marquis de Vardes : The plot of the forged letter : Hen-
 rietta is entangled : Death of De Guiche : Disgrace of
 Vardes.

“**S**HE is of a middle and graceful stature,” wrote an enthusiastic contemporary. “Her complexion, without the help of art, is white and red, surpassing all that can be imitated. The features of her face are regular and delicate beyond parallel. Her mouth is little and plump, encompassed with vermilion lips. Her teeth well-set, and of the colour of pearl. The beauty of her eyes is not to be expressed. They are blue, sparkling, and languishing. To match these, her hair is of a light ash colour, the fairest in the world. Her neck, hands, and arms, are of a whiteness surpassing all others. As young as she is, she hath a vast and penetrating wit. . . .”

This is the language of hyperbole. But it was not far from the truth. The young Duchess of Orleans had a fascinating individuality as well as an enchanting face. The Abbé de Choisy enumerated her charms with the same almost overpowering eulogy. He called her eyes black instead of blue, and was not wholly incorrect. Anatole France explains that

blue eyes—especially the most exquisite, those of sapphire—appear black when the pupils are dilated. The Abbé added that they were lively and full of contagious fire. “Men could not look at them fixedly without feeling the effect. She herself seemed touched at the desire of those who looked into her eyes. Never was there so moving a princess.” Madame de Motteville did not contradict the general verdict. According to that lady her complexion was extremely white, a mingled tint of roses and jessamine. Her thin and frail physique betrayed a consumptive predisposition. Louis XIV rallied his brother upon his eagerness to marry “the bones of the Holy Innocents.” She had a trifling deformity of the shoulders. Both Mademoiselle de Montpensier and La Fare refer to it. They call her hump-backed, but in reality she was simply round-shouldered. The defect was so slight that her husband never noticed it until after their marriage. Her waist was particularly well formed.

Madame de Motteville said with a negative enthusiasm that her nose was not ugly. Cosnac wrote that it was perfect in form. Her eyes were small, and her face too long to be perfectly proportioned. She was a beautiful blonde with blue eyes, and the enchantment of her presence is not to be found in her portraits. Part of her magic power was in her voice, and when she spoke to her friends she asked for—and received—their hearts.

She was seventeen when she married Monsieur, and, in a few months, the brightest spirits of France were at her feet. Maria Theresa, always dull and lethargic, practically abdicated. “The Queen loves retirement rather more than a Queen of France,

who owes herself to the public, should love it," wrote Madame de Motteville. "La Belle Henriette," the next lady in the kingdom, seized the vacant place. She had not only what Anatole France calls an intrepid coquetry but a keen wit and an active intelligence. She was no butterfly princess, and when she gave her affection the gift was made in all faithfulness and sincerity. In those early years, so admirably described by Sainte-Beuve as the springtide of Louis XIV's reign, all France was young and gay with joy and hope. Henrietta of Orleans was the freshest flower.

Her supremacy was not wholly unchallenged. Poor Maria Theresa, too feeble to engage in open battle, or even to entertain a lasting ill-will, complained from time to time of her rival. During one of her numerous illnesses Madame came to visit her, "adorned with a thousand yellow ribbons, with a headdress as if she were off to a ball." The Queen querulously remarked that a slighter coiffure and a more modest dress would have shown greater respect. Philip did not enjoy this new luminary, so quickly eclipsing his own pre-eminence, and his uneven temper became rapidly worse. All his life he had been compelled to make way for a brother who was also a Sovereign. Now he was disregarded for a wife who surpassed him in charm as well as in intellect.

Monsieur's court at the Palais Royal was soon famous as the most brilliant in Paris, and it pleased him to think that his crowded receptions were an annoyance to the King. The quick-witted Bishop of Valence soon discovered who was the chief attraction. "Philip was enchanted when he saw in the Palais Royal a great assembly of fashionable

society," wrote Cosnac. "He said that they came for love of him. They really came to see Madame. He never forgot to speak to each visitor, and it was remarked that he was noticeably more or less gay according to the greater or smaller number present. At first these assemblies annoyed Louis. Then he mocked at them. But Monsieur remained happy, and every time he spent an evening in his Paris residence he said to his intimates: 'Well! Haven't I a number of people to-day!' preening himself upon his evidently growing importance in the state."

Philip was mistaken. His duchess was the magnet. "There is a sweetness and a gentleness about her which none can resist. When she speaks to you, she seems to ask at once for your heart, no matter how trifling are the words she has to say. Young as she is, her mind is vigorous and cultivated, her sentiments are grand and noble, and the result of so many fine qualities is that she seems an angel rather than a mortal creature."

Angelic comparisons were fashionable in the seventeenth century, but these praises were not wholly exaggeration. "Never was there a princess so fascinating, and so ready to please all who approached her," said the Abbé de Choisy. "Her whole person seemed full of charm. You felt interested in her. You loved her without being able to help yourself."

That was the danger. She passed through the Court like a torch, and her admirers could not worship at the shrine without catching fire. To understand their position towards her we must remember that for years the quick-witted men and women who crowded the salons of French society

had been freely discussing the old problem of friendship and love. The Hôtel de Rambouillet never decided where one ended and the other commenced. Mademoiselle de Scudéry analysed love and mapped out an ideal Empire of Tenderness. But the boundaries were ill defined, and it is not surprising that many of her disciples lost their way in the labyrinths of platonic sympathy and crossed the frontier into more delectable lands.

They met to talk. "Conversation," said Mademoiselle de Scudéry, "is the bond of society, the greatest pleasure of well-bred people, and the best means of introducing, not only politeness into the world, but a purer morality." At first they discussed literature and listened to recitations. "Doubtless it is a very beautiful poem," said Madame de Longueville after hearing Chapelain's "Pucelle," "but it is also very tiresome." Then they turned to the far more engrossing subject of themselves.* They dissected their feelings. They wrote "characters." They constructed epigrams, until even La Rochefoucauld complained that his mind was fatigued, and he could not turn to his pillow for rest.

When a stupid man talks about himself he is worth a philosopher's attention. When any woman

* In England the "well-bred" used to be instructed by their tutors and governesses never in any way to refer to themselves. In conversation their own personality was to be non-existent. Thus there was no real conversation in England, and the English heroically bored themselves for centuries on the score of good manners. To-day this attitude has given way to happier conditions. A man who talks about his feelings is voted a prig and sent to the rightabout. But if he is able to talk entertainingly about his abdomen, and can give graphic explanations of the earlier symptoms of appendicitis, eager hostesses will write his name on their tablets.

talks about herself even the stupid man should be wise enough to listen. A "salon" to be perfect must contain an equal mixture of the sexes. If men could always rely upon ready sympathy from their fellow men there would be no crying need for the existence of women. If women could always exact admiration from their sisters the race of men might well become extinct. Mademoiselle de Scudéry admitted that women by themselves are dull. No actress can do great things before an audience of actresses, whilst one man would be sufficient to spur her to the heights—of acting.

"Whoever should write all that was said by fifteen or twenty women together would make the worst book in the world, even if some of them were women of intelligence. But if a man should enter, a single one, and not even a man of distinction, the same conversation would suddenly become more spirituelle and more agreeable. The conversation of men is doubtless less sprightly when there are no women present; but ordinarily, although it may be more serious, it is still rational, and they can do without us more easily than we can do without them."

La Rochefoucauld gives us a view from the opposite camp. "Where their intellect is cultivated I prefer the society of women to that of men. One finds amongst them a gentleness one does not meet with among ourselves. And it seems to me, beyond this, that they express themselves with more neatness and give a more agreeable turn to the things they talk about."

These ideas swayed the circle over which Henrietta of Orleans presided. Her palace became a temple

of friendship. "There is a taste in pure friendship which those who are born mediocre do not reach," said La Bruyère. They tried to explore the seas of platonic affection, and to chart its thousand rocks. Necessarily there was much wreckage.

Madame de La Fayette, in describing Madame's early married life, tells us that she spent her afternoons in the midst of her ladies. "They had the honour to follow her on her drives. Returning, the party supped with Monsieur. After supper all the men of the court arrived, and the evening was passed in the pleasure of cards, comedies, violins; in short, they amused themselves with every imaginable diversion, and without the slightest mixture of grievances."

In April 1661 the court was at Fontainebleau. It is impossible to improve upon Madame de Motteville's vivid chronicle. "I had never seen the court more beautiful than it seemed to me then." The palace and its park became a fairyland. Upon the lake floated the royal barge richly carved and gilded. For the fresh air the King took his meals on the water, attended by his Queen, the Queen-Mother, and Monsieur and Madame, and served in state under the canopies of the barge by his "grand-mâitre" the Prince de Condé and the Duke de Beaufort. Each day was spent in hunting through the forest, each night occupied by balls and theatrical representations. For two months this life was continued without a break. It was a golden age. Human nature does not allow the ideal to continue long without disaster. Before the year closed the peace of the whole circle had been completely shattered.

One of the earliest attachments of the King had



MADAME D'OLONNE AS
DIANA
*After an enamel by Petitot,
formerly in the Strawberry
Hill Collection*



OLYMPE MANCINI,
COUNTESS OF SOISSONS
*After a miniature in the
Jones Collection*



"LA GRANDE MADEMOISELLE."
MADEMOISELLE DE MONTPENSIER
*After an enamel by Petitot in the Jones
Collection*



FRANÇOISE ATHÉNAÏS DE MORTEMART,
MADAME DE MONTESPAN
*After an enamel by Petitot in the Jones
Collection*

been to Olympe Mancini, the niece of Mazarin. If Anne of Austria had not barred the way he might probably have married her. But the Queen-Mother, educated in the severe school of Spanish etiquette, refused to countenance a match so detrimental to the royal dignity. It is not clear that the Cardinal himself wished to see his niece on the throne of France, and a Spanish marriage better suited his schemes of statesmanship. Without loss of time Olympe was married in 1658 to Prince Eugene Maurice of Savoy who took the title of Count de Soissons.

Louis speedily forgot the charms of Olympe in the graces of her younger sister Marie, and there is no doubt that she was most tenderly interested in the young monarch. Again Anne of Austria and Mazarin successfully exerted every force against the King's inclination. Marie Mancini was sent from France to marry the Prince Colonna.

"Ah, sire! You are King. You weep—and I go," was the unavailing protest of the girl at her final interview.

The King married on the 9th June 1660, and Maria Theresa soon realised that he found little pleasure in her society. She was a more virtuous woman than many who formed her court. But she was unintelligent and not beautiful.

Despite her lack of wit she speedily understood that her husband's temperament was fickle. An anecdote which actually dates a year later reveals her state of mind. The royal family had assembled round the bedside of Anne of Austria, and the conversation dealt with the attractive but rather dangerous topic of woman's inherent jealousy.

“Madame, would you be jealous if Monsieur gave you cause?” asked Maria Theresa. The question was posed in innocence, but it must have provoked hidden laughter. For Monsieur was notoriously blind to the fascinations of the sex.

The Duchess’s reply was curt.

“No!” she said monosyllabically.

“In truth,” murmured the Queen, “it is useless to be so. The sensitiveness of a woman only hardens the heart of a husband, and affection seems to displease him.”

This struck home, and the King endeavoured to turn the conversation into another quarter. By his side was one of the ladies-in-waiting, Madame de Bethune—“a virtuous woman but rather devoid of sense,” a combination so often met with in the seventeenth century that it almost leads us to believe that wickedness then had a monopoly of brains.

“Have you ever been jealous of your husband?” Louis asked her.

“No, sire,” answered Madame de Bethune simply. “My husband has always been faithful to me.”

The Queen rose from her seat and said in a gentle voice that Madame de Bethune was the silliest person in the room.

“For my part,” she continued, “I am not able to say as much as she.”

During the early summer of 1661 at Fontainebleau Maria Theresa had every cause of complaint. Olympe de Soissons retained her position at court after her marriage, and became the evil genius of the court. At first she tried to regain her old power over the King, either directly or indirectly.

She became the bosom companion of the Duchess of Orleans, and that young girl could not have found a worse friend. In the early months of the year Louis spent his leisure with the countess, then he neglected her for Henrietta his sister-in-law. "The King was amiable, young, gallant, and magnificent," writes Cosnac. "Madame was neglected by her husband. Perhaps she desired to be loved by the King?"

To unravel the intrigue that followed is difficult. Maria Theresa was unable to leave her room, but she was fully informed of the progress of what was at least an active flirtation between a prince of twenty-two and a princess of seventeen. Not only were they together during the day, but they extended their sentimental promenades far into the night. They wandered in the wooded groves which surround Fontainebleau until two and three o'clock in the morning. Often Monsieur and other members of the Court formed part of the company. Gradually they dropped out, until Louis and Henrietta pursued their nocturnal rambles alone.

It was suggested to Madame that these midnight excursions were bad for her health. "But youth does not allow itself to be easily controlled by reason, and takes good counsel as a reprimand." The walks in the moonlight did not cease, the Queen's violent jealousy became an affair of state, and Anne of Austria had to consider how best to prevent a scandal. She instructed her faithful friend Madame de Motteville to warn Madame that it would be advisable to moderate her pleasures. Madame took the advice in good part, writes the lady in her chronicles, but did not change her habits. The

alarm then extended to Henrietta Maria, the Queen-Mother of England, who entered the field. Unfortunately both Anne of Austria and Henrietta of England had been—rightly or wrongly—the subjects of gossip during their youth, which detracted from the strength of their admonishments. When Louis was told of the interference of Madame de Motteville he disgraced that lady by forbidding her access to the Queen.

Of the feelings of the Princess there can be no doubt. The King was her first capture, and she had not forgotten the days when both Louis and Philip had despised their poor relation. “She enjoyed the pleasure of having attracted the King towards her,” writes Madame de La Fayette—and the words were probably dictated by the Duchess herself. Madame de Motteville is even more explicit. “She remembered that at the time she might have married him the King thought nothing of her. When totally different sentiments for her appeared to spring up in the soul of the King a feeling of vengeance filled her with joy.”

And this impish wish to have her own back is perhaps the worst that can be said of Henrietta’s hold upon her brother-in-law. On both sides counter attractions were being pushed forward. Sainte-Beuve puts the situation in a nutshell. “The King was more touched than a brother-in-law should be; Madame more affected perhaps than a sister-in-law should be. La Vallière dawning and coming at the right moment broke the spell. The Count de Guiche at the same instant made as much way with Madame as La Vallière was making with the King.”

The Countess de Soissons, faithful to her instincts, had fanned into an acrimonious quarrel a dispute regarding the precedence and duties of the ladies in the Queen's household. Her chief opponent was the Duchess de Navailles. Maria Theresa supported the duchess; Madame championed the cause of her friend the countess. The men were speedily drawn into the argument, and the Count de Soissons challenged the Duke de Navailles, who refused to meet his adversary. The King exiled the Count from Fontainebleau, and the bad feeling was at once intensified. The Queen had the support of the Queen-Mother as well as Queen Henrietta of England. Their surveillance of the Duchess of Orleans was unremitting. When Anne of Austria, in the midst of these anxieties, decided to visit the Duchess of Chevreuse at Dampierre, she commanded Madame to accompany her. But, on her return to Fontainebleau, the evening visits to the forest with the King recommenced. Maria Theresa silently raged in her sick room, and the two mothers racked their brains for a plan which would end the trouble and bring quietude to the household.

For now Monsieur had become an aggrieved party, and was as jealous of his brother as Maria Theresa was of her sister-in-law. He lodged a formal complaint with the two widowed queens. Before the dowagers could take active measures the situation completely changed, and Louise de La Vallière and the Count de Guiche appeared on the stage in leading rôles. The girl was lady-in-waiting to the Duchess. She may have been pushed forward by the Countess de Soissons. There are two explanations offered for her entrance on

the scene. The King's open friendship for Mademoiselle de La Vallière was a cloak to hide his passion for his brother's wife, says Michelet. This is hardly believable. Madame was never a vicious woman. On the other hand it is suggested that the Duchess herself endeavoured to hide her maid's intrigue with Louis. This is equally difficult to comprehend. Henrietta of Orleans refused to soil her hands with the dirty weapons of Olympe Mancini. Her character was in many respects too noble, her principles sentimentally exalted. She had all the quixotic ideals of the "White King." She was a Stuart Princess, and this one fact explains much in her troubled career. Her coquetry with her brother-in-law was a piece of light-hearted feminine vengeance, a vindication of her rights as a woman, a publication to the world that she was no longer a child but the most accomplished woman in France. It never descended to the depths of a nameless passion.

Take the evidence of her friends and associates. Her circle was well defined, if mixed in character. Amongst her intimates were the Duchess de Châtillon, the Duchess de Créqui, Mademoiselle de Montémart (who as Madame de Montespan was to succeed La Vallière in the affections of the King), Madame de Monaco, daughter of the Marshal de Gramont and sister of the Count de Guiche, and Madame de La Fayette.

No objection can be proposed to the good motives which governed the life of Marie Madeleine Pioche de la Vergne, Marquise de La Fayette, who has left a valuable history of her mistress. In 1655, at the age of twenty-two, she married the Count de La Fayette, brother to Mademoiselle Louise who

exercised so powerful an influence over Louis XIII. Now, under the name of "Mère Angélique," that pious lady was superior of the convent at Chaillot in which the Queen-Mother of England and her daughter spent so much of their leisure. Although the Princess was ten years younger than the Countess their acquaintance ripened into a warm affection which endured until Henrietta's death. Under the roof of the Visitandines, founded by Queen Henrietta Maria and directed by the saintly Angélique, was concocted plot after plot to place Charles of England on his father's throne, with the ultimate aim of counting England once more amongst the Catholic nations of Europe.

Madame de La Fayette found little joy in her marriage, so she turned to her desk like many another lonely woman and wrote a novel. "La Princesse de Montpensier," composed in 1660, was probably read page by page by Henrietta during its creation. Madame de La Fayette introduced her friend to the coterie of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, of which she was a moving spirit. The girl could not receive much moral harm from a woman who counted as her favourite authors Horace, Virgil, and Montaigne, and boasted amongst her closest acquaintances Mademoiselle de Scudéry, Madame de Sévigné, the great Condé, the equally famous Turenne, Madame de Sablé, La Rochefoucauld, and the poets La Fontaine and Boileau. She is well described in a brilliant passage by Anatole France, who speaks of the change of morals which distinguishes the age of Louis XIV from that of his predecessor. Madame de La Fayette was prudish and pious, and she denied the authorship of "La Princesse." Anatole France gives the reasons. "By her epoch and by her

friendships Madame de La Fayette belonged to the brilliant society of the Fronde. Ever since she had been Mademoiselle de La Vergne, and showed Ménage how much more Latin she knew than he, the Hôtel de Rambouillet had set the fashion for a society very eager for fame, and no less critical in matters of feeling than in those of the intellect. At that time it was customary for women to combine pure morals with intellectual brilliancy. To be learned was to be virtuous. And wisdom in the ancient sense, as it was then understood, implied rhetoric, astronomy, and chastity. That is the way Mademoiselle de La Vergne understood it, and she was very anxious to be thought learned. After her marriage, which brought her no happiness, she became intimate with the *précieuses*, who dealt in subtleties, and affected to scorn the pleasures of the senses. Then it was that she brought out "La Princesse de Montpensier." But at that very moment public opinion was changing. The new generation showed itself severe towards those once famous women, and with some rudeness ordered them back to their domestic duties. The *précieuses* were ridiculed on all sides. They were attacked by Molière, and by the Abbé de Pure at the same time. Madame de La Fayette, like a discreet woman, concealed her Latin and yielded to the new current of thought, although she felt that she had a genius for writing. While she risked "Zaïde" in the face of this reaction—when even Madeleine de Scudéry, that illustrious Sappho, passed for a tolerably ridiculous person—it was with many precautions and behind the mask of Monsieur de Segrais. . . . Women who wrote were looked upon as improper characters, and not

wholly without reason. Madame Deshoulières had been loose in her life, Madame de La Suze still was, and Mademoiselle de Villedieu lived with an officer. Learned women like Madame de La Sablière made great concessions to the emotions. Madame de La Fayette was unwilling to seem learned, and entered the republic of letters only behind a triple veil.”

In France women have always known how to cultivate the humanities without disregarding the existence of their toilet table. The mind of Henrietta of Orleans had been formed by the upholders of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, and the teaching of Mademoiselle de Scudéry must have been quick to her recollection. This Sappho, like Madame de La Fayette, had a godly fear of the *femme savante*. “ I wish it to be said of a woman that she knows a hundred things of which she does not boast, that she has a well-informed mind, is familiar with fine works, speaks well, writes correctly, and knows the world.” These lines might form the motto of any modern girls’ high school. But Mademoiselle de Scudéry added a characteristically French remark. “ I do not wish it to be said of her that she is a *femme savante*.”

She held up for reprobation “ the light and coquettish women whose only occupation is to adorn their persons and pass their lives in fêtes and amusements—women who think that scrupulous virtue requires them to know nothing but to be the wife of a husband, the mother of children, and the mistress of a family.” She regarded with horror “ men who look upon women as upper servants, and forbid their daughters to read anything but their prayer-books.” Mademoiselle de Scudéry laid down

an educational code for her sex. "She can know some foreign languages, and confess to reading Homer, Hesiod, and the works of the illustrious Aristée (the poet Chapelain) without being too learned. She can express an opinion so modestly that, without offending the propriety of her sex, she may permit it to be seen that she has wit, knowledge, and judgment. That which I wish principally to teach women is not to speak too much of that which they know well, never to speak of that which they do not know at all, and to speak reasonably." Yet, with all this wisdom, she does not forget that "woman is the ornament of the world, made to be served and adored"—the knowledge of which is perhaps the greatest wisdom of all.

These women were intellectually superior to the men of their time. But they did not neglect more potent fascinations. They had laughing eyes as well as active brains. Henrietta's salon was not a collection of bluestockings. The Duchess de Châtillon was renowned for many intrigues, political as well as amorous. An even more inflammatory companion was Madame de Monaco, Duchess de Valentinois, sister to the Count de Guiche. "Monsieur loved her much for herself as well as for the sake of her brother, and he had towards her all the inclination of which he was capable," wrote Madame de La Fayette. Mademoiselle de La Trémoille (who married in 1662 Bernard of Saxe-Weimar) pleased the Princess by her good heart, and also by a certain ingenuity in revealing everything in her mind, "which resembled the simplicity of the early centuries." Madame de La Fayette described her own merit as one of extreme seriousness. This

was not allowed to cast a gloom upon the little court held in the Palais Royal.

Malheureuse est l'ignorance,
Et plus malheureuse le savoir,

said Madame de Sablé in a letter. Like Figaro they laughed continually to escape weeping. For these bright spirits could not elude the bitterness and unjustness of the world.

Nothing can be urged in extenuation of the doings of Philip. His tastes were ignoble. He repeated the scandalous deeds that disgraced the memory of Henri III, and surrounded himself with a crowd of "mignons" at once the ridicule and the shame of the court. Chief amongst these young men was the Chevalier de Lorraine, "beautiful as an angel," whose evil control of Philip was fiercely resented by Henrietta. Philip on his side had not recovered from the irritation caused by the King's partiality for the company of the Duchess. Scandal said that the father of her child was to be found on the throne. There was no truth in this malicious gossip, which has been repeated by many historians. Both Louis and his sister-in-law were unwise. Madame de Motteville and Cosnac equally remarked that at the birth of Madame's children the King rejoiced, and that at their death if Monsieur did not actually laugh he certainly did not weep.

Throughout her wretched married life Henrietta of Orleans remained faithful to her miserable husband. The Abbé de Choisy wrote that "she had all the wit necessary to make a woman charming, and what is more all the talent necessary for conducting important affairs. . . . But at the Court of our young King in those days pleasure was the

order of the moment, and to be charming was enough."

Madame, like every real woman, was conscious of her charm. She loved to exercise her powers of fascination. She gloried in bringing all her worshippers to their knees. She used every art to produce that result, and saw no harm in an operation which may have been a trifle cruel but was certainly human. She did not escape wholly unwounded.

"She hath a certain languishing air, and when she speaks (as she is every way lovely) the very words seem to command the heart, so that the most indifferent thing she says hath a kind of attractive sweetness." Madame de La Fayette, the Abbé de Choisy, and Saint-Evremond use an almost identical phrase in discussing her character. She was naturally "gallant," using the word in no dishonest sense. She enjoyed playing with fire. She shed abroad her brilliance of manner as another woman would flaunt her jewels. To attain the required effect, to bring another adorer fluttering to the ground, she was prepared to take every risk.

Under such circumstances appeared Armand de Gramont, Count de Guiche, a youth of twenty-two, extremely handsome, with some military glamour attached to his name. He was son to the Marshal de Gramont, son-in-law to the Duke de Sully—his wife, Marguerite de Béthune-Sully, calls for our sympathy, she was so entirely disregarded—brother to Madame's bosom friend, Madame de Monaco, and one of Monsieur's boon companions. The "Grande Mademoiselle" drew attention to him as early as 1658, when she met him at a ball given by the Marshal de Villeroy at

Lyons. He pretended not to see her, but Mademoiselle's observant eyes watched him through the dance. He did not treat Monsieur with much respect, was rather rough in his behaviour, and actually dared to give the sacred person of the King's brother several well-directed kicks.

"This familiarity appeared to me rather strong," wrote his cousin, with her old-fashioned doctrine of the sanctity of royal blood.

"The Count de Guiche in his air and manner is a hero of romance. In nothing does he resemble the rest of men." Madame de Sévigné was correct in her judgment. She sometimes appears to laugh at this fine figure of a courtier, but it is easy to guess that she had a secret admiration for his beauty and intelligence. For Armand de Guiche was no empty-headed rattle. Affected but clever, he did not disdain the arts. Like some quite modern practitioners he pushed symbolism and imagery to such an extreme that his letters are often incomprehensible. There was only one course for such a man to pursue. He was compelled by all the rules of the game to indulge in a hopeless passion. It is odd that he did not pay his court to Henrietta earlier. The hero of a hundred fights—which had not all taken place on the open field of battle—the acknowledged lady-killer of the court set forth upon a fresh conquest. He knelt at the shrine, and the goddess laughed at him and his comic eccentricities. In those days of girlhood one fancies that Henrietta laughed at everybody and everything. He waited in patience.

What Michelet calls "the first reign of Madame" lasted some three months—May, June and July 1661. Madame de La Fayette gives the usual

picture of life at the court. After supper a gay crowd amused itself with charades, cards, and music. The bright conversation intermingled with the violins and hautbois. The Count de Guiche being one of Monsieur's oldest friends was a frequent visitor to Madame's circle. "He saw Madame at all moments with all her charms. Monsieur even took care that he should admire them. He was thus exposed to a peril it was almost impossible to escape."

At the time of the marriage of the Princess Henrietta with the Duke of Orleans the Count de Guiche was ardently in love with Madame de Chalais, a lady who was very amiable without being extremely beautiful. It will always remain an open question as to which is the more attractive gift for womanhood. How did the Count first turn his eyes towards the star? Madame D'Aulnoy said that he was spurred by ambition, and relates with what a melancholy air he stalked about the palace. But one cannot be gay with the heart load of a hopeless passion.

"Alas, Count," sighed the Princess, with a very engaging look, "pray tell me without disguise what grand project you are framing at this time, which takes up all your thoughts and makes you so pensive?"

Madame D'Aulnoy wrote fairy tales, but her relation is founded upon contemporary gossip, and the English translation of her memoirs conveys the atmosphere of a formal age. The question so innocently put set the ball rolling. "The Count de Guiche, quite amazed at his unexpected good Fortune, was so far from being able to return an immediate Answer that he was ready to drop down at her Feet; however, having recovered himself a

little, he made the Duchess sensible in a languishing Tone that he was touched to the Heart beyond expression. The Duchess, who was of a tender Disposition, and knew very well that the King's Addresses to her had afforded no small Subject of Jealousy to the Count, told him with a smile :

“ ‘ You are very agreeable in Point of Love, there are not many who can compare with you, your Addresses will not fail to meet with a grateful return.’ ”

We feel sure that Henrietta never said anything of the sort. No duchess, out of a book, ever spoke such grandiloquent nonsense, and Madame D'Aulnoy's memoirs must be laid aside by the conscientious historian.

The Count had been paying attention to Louise de La Vallière, one of the ladies-in-waiting attached to the Princess. It had been freely predicted that he would transfer his court to Madame. Now it was rumoured that, deserted by the maid, he had laid his heart at the feet of the mistress. The intrigue was political as well as domestic. For the moment Henrietta had fascinated the King, and Anne of Austria realised that her old authority was rapidly waning. Henrietta urgently desired to further the interests of her brother on the throne of England. Charles was about to marry Catherine of Braganza, and Anne of Austria—educated in Spain—hated the Portuguese from her earliest days. It was necessary to smash the combination, and De Guiche was thrown across her path at the moment Louise de La Vallière stirred a fresh emotion in the bosom of the King.

“ It was in the middle of summer,” wrote Madame de Lafayette. “ Every day Madame went to bathe,

On account of the heat she left the palace in a coach, returning on horseback, followed by all her ladies in their finest clothes, a thousand feathers waving on their heads, accompanied by the King and all the youth of the court. After supper one mounted in light coaches, and, to the sound of violins, promenaded half the night round the lake."

Madame's most intimate friend at this moment was Madame de Monaco, Duchess de Valentinois, and sister to the Count de Guiche. She was engaged in a brisk flirtation with Monsieur, and some people thought that Philip was at once the dupe of brother and sister. The court watched the tragi-comedy with infinite zest. Monsieur, true to the old tradition of one law for man and another for woman, actively resented the open attentions of De Guiche to the Princess. In the ensuing quarrel the Count had the audacity to behave as if he were on terms of social equality with the King's brother. Even his own family could not swallow this impertinent proposition. His father, the Marshal de Gramont, interfered, sent his son flying to Paris, and forbade his return to Fontainebleau.

Events were now moving to a crisis. Amongst the prominent men of the period was Nicolas Fouquet, a financier of consummate genius who was restoring the credit of the state after the long wars of the Fronde. Fouquet did not forget his own interests, and was wealthier than the King. He had spies in every quarter, and from the court his intelligence was particularly exact. One of the ladies-in-waiting to Anne of Austria was a certain Mademoiselle de Meaux du Fouilloux, famous for her looks, her gallantry, and her skill at intrigue. Racine, in writing to La Fontaine, cited her as a type of beauty.

Her delight in underground manœuvres remained unexhausted until her last days.

Fouquet was at first involved with Mademoiselle du Fouilloux, and although he later became entangled with Anne of Austria's other attendant, Mademoiselle de Menneville, he did not lose the affection of the first. Monogamy was not one of the pattern virtues at the court of "le roi soleil." Du Fouilloux collected news and assisted in the traffic of offices of profit under the crown, a lucrative employment for those who possessed the ear of the King. She was closely allied in friendship with Olympe Mancini, Countess de Soissons, and she keenly disliked the modest Louise de La Vallière.

In a letter to Nicolas Fouquet occurs the following passage: "I have seen Mademoiselle de Fouilloux who told me that on Tuesday the King shut himself up in company with Madame, Madame la Comtesse (de Soissons), Madame de Valentinois, and the ladies-in-waiting to Madame. He did not wish any man or other person to join them. She told me that they performed a hundred follies—even to throwing wine at each other. The King took a good deal of notice of her and was very pleasant. That assuredly he thought nothing of La Vallière, and that all his tenderness was for Madame. She tells me that the King has the utmost confidence in Madame la Comtesse and talks to her about the most private matters." Fouquet paid well for the information, as he wished to obtain the goodwill of Olympe Mancini and Mademoiselle du Fouilloux. This letter, however, probably drove him to his doom.

Louis may have been dissimulating, or he may have been unconscious of his growing interest in La Vallière. The last supposition however is hardly

likely. Madame de La Fayette writes that the attachment of the King for La Vallière continued to increase. He took many precautions to conceal his thoughts. He never saw her under his sister-in-law's roof, or during the public promenades of the day. But, at the "promenade du soir" he left Henrietta's carriage, and stood by the open door of that which carried the lady-in-waiting. "And in the obscurity of the night he was able to talk to her with much ease." On the 17th August Nicolas Fouquet gave his wonderful fête at Vaux, and on that evening he dared to rival his master in his inclination towards Louise. He was too late. Gossip reported that the King and La Vallière had arrived at an understanding on the very day of the fête. The truth is given by Madame de La Fayette. The Count de Saint-Aignan had acted the part of intermediary, and arranged the compact some little while earlier. The King's jealousy aroused, Fouquet was soon trapped. On the 5th September he was arrested at Nantes and sent to Pignerol. His career was over, for he remained in captivity until his death. More love-letters than state documents were found in his desk. The correspondence with ladies of whom scandal had never whispered an unkind word gave rise to the remark that Fouquet had met all the most honest women in France. One unlucky lady-in-waiting to the Queen suffered. She was about to marry a duke, but, when Fouquet's papers were read, the marriage was broken off, she was disgraced, and compelled to retire to a convent.

Louise de La Vallière was now the openly recognised mistress of the King, and the brief supremacy of Henrietta was ended. Monsieur considered his brother's behaviour towards La Vallière, who was



LOUISE DE LA VALLIÈRE

1644-1710

Engraved by J. Gole after a portrait by Plaats

still lady-in-waiting to the Duchess of Orleans, a slur on his honour. Henrietta's attitude cannot easily be explained. The standard of morality was low, and she did not seek to improve it. Madame de La Fayette does not try to extenuate the conduct of her heroine at this period, and admitted that she lacked in many things the due respect she owed to Anne of Austria as well as to her husband. Her only excuse was her age. She had barely reached seventeen years. "On all sides the bitterness was great."

In the last week of August 1661 the King and his court travelled to Nantes. Henrietta heard with dismay that the Count de Guiche was openly expressing his feelings about her in Paris. She professed a strong displeasure, and asked the Count's sister, Madame de Valentinois, to restrain the impetuous knight. "Although she was very young," writes Madame de La Fayette, "and her lack of experience increased the faults which youth can hardly escape, she resolved to ask the King to order De Guiche not to follow her to Nantes." Anne of Austria had already taken the same precaution, and the Count remained in Paris.

Whilst the visit to Nantes was in progress Madame de Valentinois took the opportunity to call upon her husband in Monaco, of which little realm he was prince. Before she left Paris she tried to persuade her admirer Monsieur not to believe the tales which linked the names of Madame and De Guiche. She attempted to extract a promise from the Duke that her brother should not be exiled from the Court. Philip became jealous and abruptly refused, whilst Henrietta quarrelled with her friend for opening so unpleasant an argument. Madame de Valentinois took her revenge by allowing another admirer

“who had adored her from childhood,” Puy-guilhem (afterwards Duke de Lauzun) to escort her south—so that Monsieur was jealous of De Guiche on account of his wife and jealous of Lauzun on the score of his mistress. And to further complicate a very involved business Lauzun had to disguise himself as a postillion in order not to arouse the marital animosity of the Prince of Monaco.

On the 1st November the heir to the throne was born. Madame was herself unwell. She was exceedingly thin, and her face so meagre as to appear longer than ordinary. She could only obtain sleep by taking opium, and when she coughed her attendants thought she was about to die. But her light-hearted spirits seldom failed. She received at her bed, and her room was crowded until nine o'clock. The King often visited her. “At Fontainebleau,” writes the “Grande Mademoiselle,” “we were for a long while in doubt whether he was in love with her. The Count de Guiche pretended to be in love with La Vallière. We were soon enlightened and found that the King was in love with La Vallière, and the Count de Guiche in love with Madame. These were matters that every one whispered and all the world knew.”

Louise de la Vallière remained in waiting to Madame, and formed part of the Orleans household in the palace of the Tuileries, although there was no question as to her equivocal relationship with regard to the King. Anne of Austria was much troubled, but at a loss what step to take. Among the women surrounding the Princess was a girl known as Mademoiselle de Montalais, of good family, but spiteful and naturally inclined towards intrigue. On the day of the Dauphin's birth, when

all the members of the family had assembled at Fontainebleau, she found an opportunity of approaching her mistress, and, throwing herself on her knees, pleaded the secret passion of the Count de Guiche for Henrietta.

The next day she brought a letter. Madame refused to read it, so Montalais opened it and read the contents aloud. Guiche's folly was not hidden from the Princess, who treated the matter as a joke. A few days later, Madame, being unwell, returned to Paris in a litter. As she entered the conveyance the girl threw on to the cushions a volume of letters from the persevering lover. Madame afterwards admitted that she read them during the journey.

Monsieur's violent jealousy prevented De Guiche from visiting the Princess at the Tuileries. But during her illness in the winter of 1661-1662 he wrote to her three or four times a day. She did not trouble to read all the letters, and she allowed Montalais to take them. Had the correspondence been an annoyance she might easily have ended it. Henrietta of Orleans lived in an age of sentiment when it was deemed fashionable to encourage the emotions. There were many risks, which gave the recreation an added spice. Pascal is reported to have said that "*parler d'amour, c'est faire l'amour.*" In the twentieth century the conversation of men and women has become more practical. But it must be agreed that the story of a love-affair is more engrossing than the detailed régime of a cold-water cure.

Mademoiselle de Montalais had her head turned by the striking success of her companion Louise de La Vallière. The two girls had been in attendance upon Marguerite of Lorraine, widow of Gaston, Duke of Orleans, at Blois. There she had been

the confidante of La Vallière in an early love-affair with a Monsieur de Bragelonne who was steward in the Duchess's household. Like every other woman at court she had dreams of the King's favour. Louis, on the contrary, disliked the girl, knew about the courting of De Bragelonne, and forbade La Vallière to talk to her. This did not prevent a full exchange of confidences. Mademoiselle de Montalais was not without her admirers. One she trusted, for she was a true woman at heart although otherwise very intelligent. Germain Texier, Count de Hautefeuille and Baron de Malicorne, was asked to take care of the bundle of letters from the Count de Guiche. They were not safe in Mademoiselle's chamber.

The Count de Guiche had now arrived at the stage when an interview could well be demanded. Madame de La Fayette reveals in a phrase the attitude of the young Duchess. "She did not foresee the consequences. She found in the affair all the pleasantries of a romance." She was a victim to the long-winded fictions of Mademoiselle de Scudéry and her sisters. Theoretically, and according to all the laws of the poets, the passions were omnipotent. Henrietta of Orleans was, however, merely trifling with the sacred flame. She allowed the interview to take place. Montalais enjoyed the intrigue, De Guiche the danger. The Count was disguised as a woman, passing through the crowded corridors of the Tuileries into the rooms of the Duchess without a single recognition. The visit was quite innocent though clandestine. Nothing more would have been heard of it had Montalais kept the story to herself. Unfortunately she related the whole history to La Vallière, making her swear

that she would say nothing to the King. She thought the intrigue was now of state importance, for she hoped to engage La Vallière in the interests of the Duchess.

A rumour spread through the palace. To Henrietta's anger the Count had told his secret to the Marquis de Vardes, who probably spread it abroad. It soon came to the ears of Louis, who attempted to discover the truth. He was unsuccessful. He then naturally went to Louise de La Vallière, as she might be expected to have some acquaintance with the doings of her mistress. She refused to answer his questions. Her word was pledged, and she was not free to speak. Nothing was better calculated to arouse the King's gravest suspicions. When she admitted that she knew much, but had been forbidden to speak, he rose in a fury and dashed from the room.

Louise de la Vallière possessed the most honest soul in France. She was immoral because she was weak, not because she was wicked. Her lapse from virtue was a trial to a restless conscience. She was the first and last woman who really loved Louis for himself. When he left her she was in despair, passed a sleepless night, and, not receiving any letter of forgiveness from her lover, fled at daybreak to a convent at Chaillot.

News soon reached Louis that she had disappeared, and his own action aroused the court, for he was absent from the morning chapel. He was trying to trace the fugitive. At first he went to the Tuileries and interviewed his sister-in-law. She knew nothing, and the terror-stricken Montalais kept out of the way. Finally Louis found the girl in the convent. She was in the parlour—for the nuns would not

receive her in the convent itself. She was stretched on the floor weeping hysterically. Louis sent the nuns away, and under pressure she told him the story of Madame and De Guiche as she had received it from Montalais. He did not pardon her—his manner was always magisterial—but commanded her to return to the Orleans household in the Tuileries. A coach was brought to the door to take her back.

Philip had never cared for La Vallière. She was too mild for his perverted tastes. As her disappearance became public he loudly announced his pleasure at her absence. And he blustered that nothing would make him receive her back under his roof. When Louis reached the Palace his brother's complaints passed unheeded. He went at once to Madame, and, with tears in his eyes, begged her not to dismiss the girl he loved. At the same time he revealed his knowledge of the dangerous game that was being played with De Guiche, and he insisted that all friendship in that quarter should be promptly ended. The coach from Chaillot arriving, Louise took her position again in the household she had quitted but a few hours previously.

The involved intrigues of the summer of 1662 belong more to the personal history of Louis XIV than that of Philip of Orleans. Madame gave birth to a daughter on 27th March 1662, and her health rapidly recovered. She did not relinquish the friendship of De Guiche. "The Count loved to hazard everything," wrote Madame de La Fayette, "and although Madame and he had no real passion for each other they exposed themselves to every danger." But De Guiche's servant told Primi Visconti that the Princess was head over heels in love

with his master, and this was the general contemporary opinion. It must be remembered that Madame de La Fayette was one of the closest friends of the Duchess, and wrote the greater part of her memoir from the actual dictation of her mistress. She tells us of the first clandestine interview which was followed by others, the Count wearing fresh disguises on each occasion. "These perilous conversations made a mockery of Monsieur."

Anne of Austria was growing older. She lived in a whirl of incessant domestic disturbance, and she had lost her former authority. There is a passage in the memoirs of Mademoiselle de Montpensier which suggests grey days. After Easter there had been several ballets, and much gaiety in connection with the marriage of the Duke de Bouillon and Marie Anne Mancini, youngest of the nieces of Mazarin. The "Grande Mademoiselle" had caught a fever, and Anne of Austria visited the invalid.

"She told me of a great quarrel between Monsieur and Madame on account of the Count de Guiche. She was very annoyed with Madame, and said to me: 'What a mistake I have made. If you had been my daughter-in-law I should have lived in peace with you, and my son would have been so happy to have a wife as wise as you.' She remained two hours by the side of my bed telling me her griefs." Mademoiselle said as little as possible. She regretted that she was not the Duchess of Orleans, but she wanted to live without quarrelling with her cousins. So she remained silent, and if the Queen Dowager received sympathy she did not obtain support. Politically her old position in the state had gone. Her son attached much importance to a close alliance with Portugal. Her lifelong animosities as a Spanish

princess were aroused. She protested against any compact. He insisted.

“If the King wishes it, it is a terrible pity,” was her last remark. “He is the master, and as for me I have nothing to say.”

Another domestic problem was arising like a cloud on the horizon. Amongst the ladies-in-waiting upon the Queen was Mademoiselle de la Mothe-Houdancourt, and it was rumoured that she had attracted the interest of the fickle King. Louis had shown her some diamond earrings. She threw them in his face.

“I will have nothing to do with you or your earrings,” she cried indignantly. “It is well known that you do not intend to leave La Vallière.”

The King’s illicit affection she does not appear to have disdained if it was at all likely to result in a permanent establishment. But to become the object of casual fancy was an insult she would not endure.

The affair caused excitement at the Court. La Vallière had in the opinion of many reigned long enough. It was believed that Olympe Mancini had pushed Mademoiselle de La Mothe-Houdancourt forward in order to dethrone Louise. The scheme had evidently failed, but the conspirators determined to do their utmost to break the lien between Louis and his mistress. La Vallière was governed entirely by the King, and, although she owed her position partly to Madame and partly to the Countess de Soissons, she refused to give her former friends any account of the conversations which passed between her and her lover. This robbed them of much secret influence. Olympe Mancini, fired with the passion of a discarded woman, turned to an old admirer for help and revenge.

François René du Bec-Crespin, Marquis de Vardes, was one of the many disreputable beings who were admitted to the highest circles of the French Court. Vardes (according to La Fare's description) was no longer in his first youth. But in wit, in person, and in seductive manners, he was more attractive than any of the young men. Born about 1620, his mother, the Countess de Moret, had been in her youth notorious as the friend of Henri IV. Her son's military career had been brilliant, and during the wars of the Fronde he had remained steadfastly attached to the royal cause.

In 1660 he was given the governorship of Aigues-Mortes, and, despite the difference in their ages, the young King had displayed much friendship for him. In the intrigue which elevated Louise de La Vallière above the other ladies of the Court, Vardes had played on behalf of the sovereign a usual but not creditable part. Famous for his own gallantries, he was a man without honour and without sincerity, a fit companion for Olympe Mancini, whose favour he never lost.

The plot concocted to ruin La Vallière was simple, as all good plots should be. She was to be denounced to Maria Theresa, who was not supposed to have any knowledge of the intrigue. It is difficult to believe that the Queen remained in ignorance of the identity of her rival, but it is not improbable. She kept closely to her apartments, was generally ailing, and there was no reason why anybody should tell her what it was not pleasant for her to hear.

The history of the plot was not unravelled for years. Olivier d'Ormesson says that a bogus letter was invented by Olympe and Vardes. One would prefer to believe that Henrietta had no hand in the disgraceful transaction. It was drafted by Gourville's

brother-in-law, and translated into Spanish by De Guiche who had returned from Lorraine. It was then sealed in an old envelope somebody had found which had originally contained a letter from Philip IV of Spain to Maria Theresa. Conveyed under a second cover to Flanders, it was forwarded by courier back to France and delivered to the Dona Maria Molina, one of the Spanish women in attendance on the Queen. She—not knowing the contents—was requested to hand it to Maria Theresa. But Molina recognised that this letter, ostensibly from the King of Spain, was in an envelope she distinctly remembered throwing away. Turning it over and over, she discovered that the wax of the seal was fresh. The “Grande Mademoiselle” describes her action: “Being a prudent girl who did not wish to have any trouble with the King, she took the letter to him and explained her suspicions.”

Louis tore it open and read every episode of his intrigue with La Vallière. “He was in an anger impossible to describe,” writes Madame de La Fayette. “He spoke to every one he thought might be able to give him some knowledge of the plot. He even addressed himself to Vardes.” The Marquis was much embarrassed. However he threw suspicion upon the Duchess de Navailles, and the King believed him so well that the lady was soon disgraced.

Vardes was now in the absolute confidence of the Princess. “He found her very amiable and full of wit, and, either with a feeling of love or a sentiment of ambition and intrigue he desired to become her absolute master.” It was necessary to get his friend De Guiche permanently out of the way. Madame had promised the King that she would see no more of the Count. Montalais also had pledged her

word. Vardes knew that these undertakings were not likely to be strictly observed.

He went to his friend's father, the Marshal de Gramont, and easily convinced the Marshal that his son was in imminent danger. There was but one safe thing to do. Ask the King to give the Count the command of the troops in Lorraine. The Marshal loved his son passionately, and immediately demanded an audience. Louis imagined that De Guiche wished for the favour, and accorded it without hesitation.

Madame and De Guiche knew nothing. The Princess was at the Palais Royal, and some ladies in the course of a casual visit—not knowing the interest she took in De Guiche—mentioned that the Count had applied for the command and would be off in a few days. She was unpleasantly surprised. The same night the King visited her. She asked if the report were true. Louis said that the Marshal de Gramont had begged for the appointment, which the Count accepted with pleasure. Louis was probably quite pleased to be quit of a man who was too witty to be acceptable to the crown. He must have known that De Guiche had given him two nicknames: the "Marquis de Parade" on account of his love of public show, and the "Marquis de Filigrane" because of his innumerable costumes.

Henrietta was offended at the lack of consideration shown towards her. She told Montalais to find the Count and demand an explanation. The story is given by Madame de La Fayette. De Guiche was so troubled that he offered to refuse the command. Again Vardes was in a difficult position. He did not wish De Guiche to ruin himself—which he would most assuredly do if he declined to leave

Paris. He went to the Countess de Soissons and implored her advice. Olympe Mancini saw Madame and prevailed on her to write to the Count giving him leave to go to the front. De Guiche consented to go upon condition that he saw the Princess.

Mademoiselle de Montalais, despite her pledges to the King, arranged the interview. She smuggled the Count into the palace by one of the servants' staircases, and then hid him in an oratory. Madame was dining. When the meal was over she rose, saying that she wished to sleep. She then passed through the corridor, where the Count was able to bid his adieu. Whilst they were together Monsieur returned, and De Guiche was compelled to hide in a fireplace, which, not being in use, was masked by folding shutters. Monsieur was eating an orange. He went to the hearth to throw away the skin.

“Don't !” cried Montalais in alarm.

“What ?” asked Monsieur.

“You are throwing away the peel. I love orange peel, Monsieur.”

And De Guiche crouching behind the shutters escaped detection. Here he remained until night, when Montalais released him and escorted him from the palace.

They imagined the adventure had passed unperceived, but they deceived themselves. One of Montalais' companions was Mademoiselle du Gast d'Artigny, “an *intrigante* of much wit,” writes Saint-Simon, who had attracted the favourable notice of Monsieur.* She acted as a spy upon Montalais, and was very jealous of the favour the

* Mademoiselle du Gast d'Artigny was afterwards seriously implicated in the poisoning mystery of La Voisin and her hideous associates.

latter enjoyed with Madame. Suspecting an intrigue she spoke to Madame de La Basinière. Then, with a woman called Merlot, she waited, and was overjoyed to see the Count de Guiche enter the rooms of the Princess.

“Madame de La Basinière warned the Queen-Mother by Artigny ; and the Queen-Mother, in a way one can hardly pardon to a person of her virtue and goodness, wished Madame de La Basinière to warn Monsieur. Thus they told this prince what would have been hidden from any other husband.”

Philip resolved to dismiss Montalais together with another girl in the household. In the morning Madame du Plessis, first lady-in-waiting to Madame, waited on the two girls, ordered them to pack up, and placed them in a coach. Montalais implored her to be allowed to take her casket of letters, for, if Monsieur got hold of them, Madame was lost. Madame du Plessis went to Monsieur, and, without giving any reason, asked him to release the box. This, “by a goodwill unbelievable in a jealous man,” was allowed, and Montalais went off to her sister’s house with the precious papers.

When Madame awoke, Monsieur marched into his wife’s room and told her that he had dismissed two of her maids. She was so astonished that he quickly withdrew before she could ask for an explanation. A moment after the King sent word that he did not understand what was happening, and that he wished to see her as soon as possible.

Monsieur had gone to grumble about his wife to Queen Henrietta of England. She hurried to her daughter, who then avowed to her husband that she had one interview with De Guiche, and had received some three or four letters from him. Philip was

flattered at the confession. He explained that he knew it already. He embraced her and forgave her. But he took care that Montalais was sent into a convent, and that La Vallière had no further conversations with the Duchess.

Vardes had succeeded in his intrigue, and he now worked to gain the complete confidence of the Princess. Mademoiselle de Montalais in her semi-captivity was also active. In conjunction with Vardes she wrote letters of advice to La Vallière, telling her what she ought to say to the King. These letters dropped into the hands of Louis, who fell into "a strange anger." He sent a police officer to conduct Montalais to Fontevrault, with orders that she should not be allowed to speak to a soul. Montalais does not seem to have been much disturbed, for she held Madame's letters.

At Saint Germain the Marquis de Vardes saw much of Madame. He also managed to retain the affection of the Countess de Soissons, who was endeavouring to attract the attention of the King to Mademoiselle de La Mothe-Houdancourt. She persuaded Louis that the girl had an overpowering passion for him. This was enough to catch his favourable attention, and he forbade the Countess to whisper a word of his new intrigue to Vardes. But the matter was made public by the Chevalier de Gramont, who, being himself in love with Mademoiselle de La Mothe-Houdancourt, spied on the King with such complete success that the irate sovereign banished him for several years from France.

Vardes soon knew that the Countess de Soissons had not admitted him to her complete confidence. He concentrated his activities upon Madame. Monsieur displayed no jealousy, and Madame no

dislike to his company. Anne of Austria hated him and carefully watched the drama. Mademoiselle du Gast d'Artigny took her place near La Vallière, and Mademoiselle de Montalais patiently waited for a chance of revenge. Maria Theresa, according to Madame de La Fayette, was still ignorant of the King's affection for La Vallière, believing that her husband was solely interested in Henrietta. Monsieur paid no heed to Vardes, being exceedingly jealous of the Prince de Marsillac, eldest son of the Duke de La Rochefoucauld, and he obliged that prince to quit his house.

In the spring of 1663 Vardes declared his passion openly to the Princess. We must not judge her harshly, but her duty clearly was to dismiss him at once. On the contrary she appears to have been rather flattered. Letters passed frequently between them. In the case of De Guiche Mademoiselle de Montalais had acted as the intermediary. Now the Count du Plessis, first gentleman of the chamber to Monsieur, took care of the correspondence. Perhaps he was a safer servant.

For the old letters between Madame and De Guiche were still in existence. Montalais had handed them to her lover Malicorne and also to Jean Corbinelli, a youth of much wit, who stood probably in the same relationship to her. In after years he became famous as a prominent member of the circle of Madame de Sévigné. Malicorne and Corbinelli, tired of the continued absence of Montalais at Fontevault, feared that time would diminish the value of the letters, which in De Guiche's handwriting contained many free criticisms and offensive remarks concerning the King. They therefore guardedly spoke of the documents

to the Mère Angélique in the convent at Chaillot, and the Marshal de Gramont was given to understand that it would repay him to devote some time to the interests of Montalais, who held secrets which concerned the honour of his family.

Vardes knew Corbinelli, and had also been told by Montalais of their mutual affection. When he heard of the letters he at once realised that they would make him master of the situation, would keep De Guiche from Paris for an indefinite period, and would give him the ascendancy over Madame. He talked to Corbinelli, but that astute boy did not allow him to discover that he held several of the much sought after documents.

He elaborated his plot by writing to De Guiche. He told that exile that Marsillac had been attracted by the charms of the Princess, persuaded him that Henrietta was already forgetful of and unfaithful to her absent lover, and finished with the assertion that he, Vardes, was the only friend De Guiche could place any trust in.

With Madame his tale was different. He proved to her how necessary it was for her domestic peace and safety to regain possession of the letters she had written to the Count. Immediately he wrote a second letter to the Count, imploring him to recover the letters he had sent to the Princess. De Guiche agreed and asked him to act as he thought best.

These arrangements involved many interviews, most of which had to be in secret. The Mère Angélique unsuspectingly believed that Vardes' only interest was to serve Henrietta. She had known the Princess from childhood, and she was alive to the fact that there could be no permanent quietude whilst the correspondence remained undestroyed.

She therefore placed the parlour in her convent at Chaillot at the service of Madame for a private conversation with the Marquis. Actuated by the best intentions the Mère Angélique was far from wise. Vardes arrived, and did not waste his time. He gave the Princess a bitter and sarcastic letter he had received from De Guiche. The Count harshly referred to her encouragement of Marsillac. Vardes "said all that a man would say who wishes to take the place of his friend." According to Madame de La Fayette he was not unsuccessful, and the Duchess was deeply impressed with the goodwill of her seductive friend.

They agreed to get the letters from the control of Montalais, who allowed Corbinelli to hand them over on the instructions of De Guiche. One report says that Vardes retained the most compromising, and gave the Duchess only the less important. Madame de La Fayette writes that Montalais and her friends kept a few which might prove useful. The Princess received the bundle under the roof of Madame de Soissons. She did not examine them but immediately cast them in the fire. She then arranged that Vardes should meet her again at the convent. To her indignation the Marquis did not keep the appointment. He had discovered that the King knew of the first interview through his spies, and was hardly likely to approve of a second. Perhaps, says Madame de La Fayette, he feared the anger of Olympe Mancini who knew nothing of these meetings.

During the whole of the summer of 1663 Anne of Austria was ill. Louis left for the campaign in Lorraine in August. Madame feared that the Count de Guiche would make his peace and confess

everything to his master. She despatched a letter to De Guiche saying that if he revealed a word she would never speak to him again. The letter arrived too late. Out of pique and anger, the Count had told Louis the whole intrigue the Duchess had so carefully suppressed. The King's favour to De Guiche told its own story, and Madame recognised that she had been betrayed. She wrote a furious letter to De Guiche forbidding him ever to think of her again or to mention her name.

After the siege and fall of Marsal the Count's business in Lorraine was over. He therefore asked the King's permission to travel. He wrote to Madame requesting her pardon, but received so bitter an answer that he replied that he wished to be rid of his life.

Vardes was now happy. De Guiche was in Poland and unlikely to return. Only the Prince de Marsillac stood in his way. Vardes never hesitated to ruin a friend. He gained the confidence of Marsillac, and then warned Monsieur and the Duke de La Rochefoucauld, with the result that Marsillac was exiled from the Court. This business, writes Madame de La Fayette, made much noise, and it was generally considered that Vardes was in love with Madame. Even Olympe Mancini commenced to be jealous, but Vardes was able to quieten her suspicions. There still remained a few friends of the Princess he wished to remove. The Archbishop of Sens was one. He was forty, about the same age as Vardes. The Marquis dealt with him without scruple and accused him to his face of being in love with the Duchess. He told the priest that the King had taken notice of the shameful fact, and had mentioned in conversation that he would soon find it necessary to

send an archbishop to Nancy. At the threat Gondrin set off for his diocese and rarely appeared again in Paris.

With the King different tactics were necessary. Vardes told Madame that Louis hated her, and that to assure herself against his ill-will it would be necessary to cultivate the amity of her brother the King of England. Henrietta replied that she already possessed her brother's friendship. Vardes asked to see the letters Charles wrote to his sister. She was weak enough to produce them. Vardes did not fail to make use of this intimate information in his conversations with the King. He convinced Louis that Madame was dangerous as well as indiscreet, but that he had enough influence over her to prevent her from doing any foolish act. He returned to Madame, and—whilst professing the deepest passion—repeated the observations of the King. To prove the strength of his affection he offered to give up his intimacy with Olympe Mancini. This alarmed Henrietta and she forbade it. She had already been too indulgent. Now she was beginning to become suspicious. Vardes was an extremely clever scoundrel, but, unless the Duchess was infatuated with him there is no reasonable explanation of the power he seemed to possess over her.

One intrigue succeeded another, and it is not always easy to follow their tortuous labyrinths. The ascendancy of Vardes was broken by a quarrel in which all Madame's friends were involved. Madame de Montespan's animosity against Madame de Mecklenbourg was the prime factor. These ladies were both in Henrietta's confidence, but they were blindly jealous, and Madame de Montespan was ready to use

any weapon which would destroy Madame de Mecklembourg.

A third lady, Madame d'Armagnac, was at the moment in Savoy. Upon her return Philip asked his wife to invite her to all the gatherings held by the Princess. Madame did not object, although she noticed that Madame d'Armagnac was rather eager to escape the honour she could not easily refuse. Madame de Montespan was ready with the explanation. At the time of Madame d'Armagnac's marriage she had become involved with the Marquis de Vardes. Like Henrietta (but the Montespan did not know this) she had written many letters to him, and she was trying to get them back. Vardes said he would only return them if he could feel assured that she had not given her affection to any other man. Before travelling to Savoy she made a final effort. Vardes refused to give up the letters. He told Madame d'Armagnac that she was in love with Philip. She foresaw that if she accepted Madame's invitations Vardes would insist that he had proof positive of her intrigue with Monsieur, and that she would have little chance of obtaining her letters.

Madame came to the rescue. She decided to ask Vardes herself for her friend's letters. She asked Madame de Montespan for advice. That lady approved the action, and took advantage to play the blackest treason.

Madame d'Armagnac came from Savoy distracted and jealous. She had been told that Vardes and the Princess were much together. Madame de Montespan said that there was good reason for her jealousy, that Henrietta and Madame de Mecklembourg were acting in unison. Madame had asked Vardes for the letters in order to destroy Madame d'Armagnac, and

unless Madame de Mecklembourg could be ruined every one would come to the ground. Madame d'Armagnac had little wit—some of these stories would not have deluded a child—and she agreed with Madame de Montespan. They called in the help of Anne of Austria and the ugly and vindictive Madame de Beauvais. They represented to Monsieur that Madame de Mecklembourg's reputation was now so notorious that she was no longer a fit companion for the Princess. Monsieur forbade her to visit the Duchess. Henrietta, in despair at the affront, and knowing who were the real instigators, refused to receive Mesdames de Montespan and d'Armagnac in her salon.

Unfortunately she turned to Vardes for help. She asked the Marquis to threaten Madame d'Armagnac that if she did not prevail upon Monsieur to withdraw his order of exclusion against Madame de Mecklembourg the Vardes-d'Armagnac letters should be placed in Henrietta's hands for public exposition. He was so difficult to move that Madame commenced to see that Vardes was a great hypocrite. Monsieur had arrived at the same conclusion by a different path. He had admitted Vardes to his friendship, and the Marquis repeated all his conversations to the King. At the same time he carried the King's gossip to Monsieur. The air became cool. Vardes attended Madame's receptions more rarely. He even became possessed with the idea that the King was in love with her again.

Occasionally news filtered through from Poland where De Guiche was performing prodigious feats of valour. At last they heard that the Polish army with the Count was reduced to an extremity. He was lost. The information was published at the

King's supper-table. Madame turned faint, but her troubled state was not noticed in the sensation of the moment. As she left the table she met Vardes.

"I see that I love the Count de Guiche more than I think," was her remark.

Vardes heard the words and changed his manner. He told Henrietta that she was playing with him, as she was encouraging the King and had not forgotten De Guiche. She laughed, and threatened to acquaint the Count with all his treachery. Vardes attempted to arouse her jealousy, and wrote, saying that after all he felt that the Countess de Soissons was not altogether indifferent to him. Henrietta's reply was vulgar—for a princess. She disparaged Olympe Mancini's nose, and suggested in Rabelaisian fantasy that one such nose was large enough to fill any bed by itself. "From that time," writes Madame de La Fayette sadly, "the understanding between Madame and De Vardes was founded more on consideration than on any of the reasons which had given birth to it." Royal jokes are always dangerous.

The summer of 1663 was spent as usual at Fontainebleau. Monsieur was unhappy at the forced absence of his friends Mesdames de Montespan and d'Armagnac. But Madame would not give way, and he was compelled to agree to the withdrawal of the interdict against Madame de Mecklembourg. The affair was brought to a climax at a water-fête given by the King on the canal. She asked Louis to exclude both the ladies from his invitations. Philip was horrified, and announced that if they were not present he would not attend.

Anne of Austria, according to Madame de La Fayette, hated her daughter-in-law. She told

Monsieur to persist in his determination. When she saw that her elder son was taking Henrietta's part she became more angry. Henrietta triumphed. The ladies were not invited. The air was charged with storms.

Olympe Mancini had long been wildly jealous of the Princess, although she hid her feelings and lived in friendship with Madame. Now she wished to understand the terms on which Vardes and Henrietta stood. She reproached Henrietta for keeping the intimacy secret.

"If it is gallantry, you are acting falsely to me, and I am sensitive at the treatment. If it is friendship, why do you hide it from me? You know I am devoted to your interests."

Henrietta of Orleans could never see her friends in trouble. Her soft heart was the cause of half her misfortunes.

"There has never been in the heart of Vardes any feeling towards me that you have a right to complain of," was her untruthful answer.

"Tell me in the presence of Vardes that you will have no further dealings with him," was Olympe's next request. Henrietta consented, and sent for the Marquis. He was alarmed and astonished. As far as his emotions can be reconstructed he seems to have been fascinated by the Countess de Soissons as one is fascinated by a beautiful snake. Anyway it is clear that he had no wish to excite her animosity.

Madame took all the blame for the misunderstanding upon herself. Afterwards Vardes thanked her for her consideration. She had spared him the wrath of Mazarin's niece. He promised to remember her generosity until the end of his life.

The Countess de Soissons still feared that she had been tricked. She cross-examined Vardes so closely that he tripped. Men are never expert liars. She was convinced that the Princess had not spoken the whole truth, and she was determined to shatter the friendship. She told Madame that Vardes had asked to read the letters from Charles II of England in order to discuss their most private contents with Louis. The Duchess was astounded, but she would say no more than that Vardes had never paid any attention to her. To reveal the truth would have been to admit her falsehood.

The Marquis, on the contrary, gave himself away. Hard pushed, he admitted his infatuation for the Princess. Olympe in despair taxed Henrietta with her treasonable encouragement. Little by little the two women became calmer. They told each other all they knew, and "they discovered deceits which are beyond imagination. The Countess swore that she would never see Vardes in her life. But what cannot a violent inclination do! Vardes played the comedy so cleverly that he soon appeased her."

But the Duchess of Orleans had no more to do with this arch-intriguer.

The Count de Guiche gracefully and romantically wrecked his career. Three times he was exiled for reason of his infatuation over the Princess. In April 1662, as we have seen, he was sent to Lorraine. On his return, engaging in the conspiracy of the bogus letter from the King of Spain, he was commanded to travel in Poland. He arrived at Warsaw with his brother the Count de Louvigny during the month of November 1663. He had already won his spurs in Flanders, and his furious bravery astonished the

Poles who were at war with Russia. In one battle he received a sword thrust which undoubtedly would have killed him if the blade had not been turned aside by a small case he carried enshrining the portrait of Henrietta. The case was broken, but the Count was saved.

In the summer of 1664 he returned to Paris, and remained at the Court for ten months, on his father's promise that he should be kept out of Madame's way. His passion was as strong as before. The portrait was given up at the command of the King. In January 1665 Monsieur and Madame attended a masked ball. They drove to the house in a hired coach so that their disguises should not be discovered. Arriving unheralded in the ballroom they selected partners at random. Henrietta soon realised that she was dancing with De Guiche. With much to say to each other they wished to talk. It was impossible. Henrietta dared not excite the jealous suspicions of her husband.

In leaving the ball she was so agitated that whilst descending the staircase she slipped and fell. The Count caught her in his arms and saved her from a serious accident. It was their last meeting. Possibly their identity was known, for he received orders to set out on a fresh campaign.

Before he left France he determined to obtain a final interview. To enter the palace was too dangerous. Rising from a sick bed he disguised himself as a servant, and waited at the gates of the Palais Royal until the Duchess came forth. When her carriage passed he was so feeble and overwrought that he fainted away. She did not notice the beggar in the gutter, and the opportunity was lost for ever.

“If ever you find De Guiche with the Princess

throw him out of the nearest window," was the advice Louis gave to his brother. But the occasion never arose.

"The passion De Guiche had for Madame brought upon him much unhappiness," Madame de Motteville remarks very truly. She adds, however, that his flattered vanity amply compensated him for all his troubles. Madame also enjoyed the romantic aspect of the intrigue.

"It would make a pretty story," she said one day to Madame de La Fayette, who was the authoress of "La Princesse de Cleves." "You write well. Write now, and I will give you some good reminiscences."

Madame admitted her affection for De Guiche, but she always protested against any criminal interpretation. Anne of Austria blamed her conduct, but believed in her innocence. There is no reason to doubt the judgment of the Queen-Mother, who had considerable experience of men and women, and little prejudice in favour of her daughter-in-law. The Princess and De Guiche played a comedy of sentiment which might easily have become a tragedy had they acted in earnest. Few people treated their emotions too seriously in the "Grand Siècle." Perhaps they displayed their superior wisdom. At times, if all their mad pranks are to be believed, the comedy degenerated into farce. They are said to have filled Monsieur's holy water stoop with black ink.

Gradually Henrietta recovered her old position in the estimation of Maria Theresa and Anne of Austria. As they knew her better they cared for her more. "Those who had the honour of her company believed that at times, and through experience, she



HENRIETTA OF ORLEANS

After a portrait by an unknown artist in the Palace of Versailles

almost comprehended that the joys she had sought with such eagerness were not alone capable of satisfying the heart.” The phrase is slightly patronising, but Madame de Motteville, who wrote it—if warm-hearted—was somewhat pedantic. Her observation was generally just and impartial. Undoubtedly Henrietta of Orleans was growing wiser. She was better qualified to value at its true worth a suspicious, unstable, and insincere world. But a natural inclination towards gaiety she was never able wholly to repress, and this must be remembered in judging her character.

One serious annoyance had to be removed. Madame de Saint-Chaumont told Cosnac, the Bishop of Valence, that a manuscript had been circulated in Paris dealing with Madame and the Count, and that it had been sent for publication to Holland—the home of all anonymous libels and scurrilous pamphlets. They feared that it would be shown to Monsieur, or used for blackmail by the evil person who had composed it. In 1666 it was printed, under the title “*Les Amours de Madame et du Comte de Guiche*.” Madame was at Fontainebleau. She soon heard of the volume, which contained the grossest falsehoods and libels. Immediately she wrote to Madame de Saint-Chaumont at Saint Cloud, who communicated with Cosnac in Paris. He went to Fontainebleau, where the Princess told him that their mutual enemy Boisfranc (the treasurer to the Orleans household) had already informed the Duke. Her urgent desire was to suppress the publication. A copy had indeed been sent to Louis XIV, who had warned her of its outrageous nature. She implored Cosnac to help her.

“Leave it to me,” replied the Bishop, according

to Saint Simon. "Don't trouble yourself about it any further."

He returned to Paris and mysteriously disappeared. Not for two weeks were his movements explained. In company with Charles Patin, son of the physician, he journeyed to Holland, secured a decree prohibiting the sale of the obnoxious book, and saw the type broken up. There were only eighteen impressions, together with the original manuscript. These he bought. One report says that they were burnt in the presence of the Duchess; Cosnac in his memoirs said that Monsieur gave them to Mériille, the secretary, for safe custody.

Only three copies are said to have remained; one belonging to Louis XIV, another given to Charles II of England, and a third preserved by the Bishop as a curiosity. These also were obtained by the Duchess and burnt. However the Bishop did not account for the whole of the edition. It is no easy matter to kill a book. Bussy-Rabutin—suspected by many of the authorship—included part of the work in his "Histoire amoureuse de Gaules." Charles Patin was accused of having preserved several copies, which he distributed amongst friends who failed to keep the secret. The history of the pamphlet is lost, but Charles Patin wrecked his career through the affair. He may have done his duty quite honestly in company with Cosnac. His father was a man of the strictest integrity. But from this moment the son failed to prosper. In 1668 he was denounced by the Syndics of the Booksellers' Guild in Paris for fraudulently importing prohibited books from abroad. The offence was serious, he was found guilty, and condemned to the galleys. In some manner he managed to escape and fled to Italy, where he died—

a professor in the University of Padua—twenty years later.

Why did he never return to France? According to Deffing's "Correspondance" Louis XIV granted him a pardon in 1681, which he refused to make use of. If he failed to execute his mission in Holland with complete fidelity that must have been forgiven at the death of the Princess. There is a mystery surrounding Charles Patin which cannot be fathomed.

The "Amours of Madame" was translated into English and openly published in London in 1680, a rather remarkable fact, only to be explained by the easy disposition of Charles II, who neglected to take the necessary steps to preserve the memory of his dead sister from insult. In Paris the censorship of the press was far stricter, and the volume was not reissued until 1754.

The Count de Guiche did not uphold the exalted standard of chivalry to be expected from so gallant a knight. His actions were more theatrical than sincere. Primi Visconti found him presumptuous and fantastic. In Holland he attempted to uphold his reputation by the merest eccentricity, and at The Hague astonished the Dutch by habitually wearing carnival costume. He never returned to France, and does not seem to have been troubled by the tragic fate of the woman he pretended to love. Eighteen months after the death of Madame he was actively paying addresses to Madame de Brissac. But his own life was drawing to a close and he died in the Palatinate on the 29th November 1673 at the early age of thirty-six. All said and done the Count de Guiche was little more than a pinch-beck hero.

Vardes was sent to Aigues-Mortes when Louis XIV

was told the facts about the bogus letter from the King of Spain. He remained in exile for nineteen years. His attraction of manner did not diminish, and the daughters of the nobility of Provence fell easy victims to his court affectations. Not until Louvois visited Provence was he able to procure his recall. He appeared at Versailles in a coat which had been out of fashion for twenty years. Madame de Sévigné tells us that his appearance created a sensation. He was a ghost from a dead world.

When the old Marquis was presented to the King he fell on his knees.

“Whilst my heart was wounded I ceased to think of you,” said Louis graciously. “But now that is all forgotten.”

He was a sinister scoundrel, and might well have been left to rot in Aigues-Mortes.*

* The Palace of Saint Germain-en-Laye as built by Henri IV was almost entirely destroyed in 1776. There remain to-day in the original condition but the magnificent terrace and the “Pavilion of Henri IV.” Louis went for the first time to Versailles in 1651, and it was the scene of some of his most elaborate spectacles long before he took up his residence in 1682. In May 1664 he gave a performance of the *Plaisirs de l'île enchantée*, based on Ariosto's poem. Molière directed the actors, and Lulli the musicians, whilst an Italian, Vigarani, had control of the illuminations and fireworks. These fêtes lasted eight days. In September 1665 a great hunt was given in the park at which the entire Court assisted, but the tournament of February 1667 surpassed all previous extravagances. Louis was dressed in a “rich Hungarian habit covered with gold and precious stones, his helmet with waving plumes, on a spirited horse, which seemed prouder of carrying so grand a monarch than of its magnificent trappings and its jewelled saddlecloth.” Monsieur followed the King in a Turkish costume.

VI

Daniel de Cosnac : Philip promises to reform : A priest's advice : The Neapolitan scheme : Campaign in Flanders : Philip's military adventures : The Chevalier de Lorraine : Cosnac dismissed and ordered to Valence : His clandestine visit to Paris : He is betrayed and exiled : Disgrace of Madame de Saint-Chaumont : The English Ambassador complains to Charles II. : Henrietta's unhappy Christmas.

“**T**HE more I studied the ideas, the conduct, and the intelligence of Monsieur, the more I became convinced that his favour—whenever I should be able to gain it—would not only be useless to me but even dangerous.” Thus wrote Daniel de Cosnac, Bishop of Valence, when referring to the period immediately after his installation as grand almoner to the household of Orleans. With some dismay he returned to his diocese, and, being a fighting man, engaged in a hot skirmish with the governor of Die, a certain Monsieur de Saint-Ferréol, who was alleged to have encroached upon the bishop's temporal rights and privileges. This quarrel compelled him to come back to Paris, as only the King could adjust the argument. Happily Cosnac gained all his points, and was able in the meanwhile to observe the trend of events at the Court. Anne of Austria invited him to her card table every evening where he cheerfully lost money. “As for Monsieur he had marvellously well preserved and added to the reputation he had so justly acquired—that of being

incapable of keeping his own counsel or any other person's secrets."

For a few years Philip remained on good terms with his chaplain. In 1665 he expressed an intention of asking the King to give the almoner the see of Orleans. Cosnac diplomatically but gracefully asked that the request be not made. The diocese was expensive to hold, and there was reason to doubt if the King was in a mood to grant a favour to his brother. Cosnac mentions in his memoirs that the Duke commenced to treat him as a person who might be useful. Possibly the valet M^érille was responsible for the change. Both he and the jesuit confessor, P^ère Zoccoli, were friendly to the Bishop. They invited Cosnac to follow up his success and make himself indispensable to the prince. The answer was characteristic of the wily priest. "I replied frankly that there was no glory and no advantage to expect from Monsieur. The whole world knew that he was so feeble that he repeated every word that was said to him. Without wishing him to take any step contrary to his duty there were a thousand advices to give him which interpreted wrongly might thus ruin the councillor. The first advice necessary to give Monsieur was to be discreet and secret. Discretion is the most important virtue a prince can possess."

The remark, although of sound common sense from a worldly point of view, was that of an ambitious courtier rather than of a minister of religion. And Cosnac was correct in his idea that the man who attempted to teach the Duke would lose all ultimate chances of success. His own downfall dates from the day when the King became suspicious of the prelate's influence.

Luck did not help Cosnac. On the 20th January 1666, after months of terrible suffering, Anne of Austria died, and the Bishop lost a good friend. Her death made a deep impression upon Monsieur. "He was very much afflicted," says Cosnac. "The King endeavoured to console him by every means in his power, going so far as to give him the right of entry to the state councils held each Friday." Monsieur, in a solemn mood, considered his past career, and admitted that it had not been altogether creditable.

"I will alter my conduct," he told his chaplain. "People imagine that I have neither intelligence nor ambition. Let the future prove otherwise. They will see from the manner in which I act that I too love glory."

He had never before spoken with such an open heart, and Cosnac hastened to improve the occasion with a series of windy pulpit moralisms.

"If you do not receive all the justice you merit with regard to your elevated intelligence and tender heart, at least I can assure you that you are much loved, and that, if you would only aid the goodwill of those around you, the aim to which you aspire will soon be reached."

The Bishop commenced to esteem the Duke, who appeared to return the confidence as if he wished to prove himself a master worthy of admiration. The sudden death of Cosnac's former patron, the Prince de Conti, rendered vacant the governorship of Languedoc. For the second time Monsieur made application for it. He told the Bishop that he did not know whether he would receive it, and if it was refused he did not care.

Cosnac revealed himself as a man of affairs with a sound knowledge of human nature.

“Speak to the ministers in a very obliging fashion. Let them understand that you will remember the success of your application. Suggest also that you will not fail to resent its failure.”

Monsieur did not succeed, and the governorship went elsewhere. The King followed his fixed policy of keeping Philip in the background. He refused to allow his brother's name to be nominated. Monsieur took his defeat in a tranquil spirit.

“I always thought the King would deny it. When my eldest son was born he told me that he would never allow me to hold a governorship.”

Henrietta hated Louvois. Philip detested Colbert. To the grand almoner was confided all these troubles.

“I must warn you to be extremely cautious,” said the priest, delivering a little lecture upon statecraft. “The situation is delicate, and you must walk with prudence. Before you say anything against Monsieur Colbert consider what effect your words may have. If you have anything to tell His Majesty which may prove that Monsieur Colbert serves him badly, or betrays him, or blackens his reputation, it will be admirable. But if all you can say to the King is that you do not care for Colbert, I do not think your remarks will carry much weight. The hatred of Marie de' Medici and of your uncle, the late Duke of Orleans, simply consolidated the power of Richelieu. As soon as His Majesty notices that you dislike Colbert he will place more trust in that minister. You will make a formidable enemy, and since the King will consider him more necessary than you, he will also become more powerful. Allow me to speak freely. Your best policy is to gain the esteem of the King and his ministers. If

they are wicked enough not to pay you their respect, then you may dream of making yourself feared. But commence quietly. Follow unobtrusive paths. This will give you less trouble, with the hope of almost certain success. But if you wish to gain the goodwill of the ministers you must endeavour to create a different impression. They believe you to be a prince without ideas and without ambition, and shirking in application. You must alter this. Devote yourself to serious study. Read history, for in history you will be able to learn many things no one can dare to tell you openly. Render yourself capable of business. Become more active in the King's council chamber. Even if you find that you are unable to read an hour a day, shut yourself up in your study, and pretend to be reading, so that the world may shed its bad opinion of you. Cardinal Mazarin spread the idea that you were interested only in trifles. If we were at war you could do more in advancing yourself by some fine deed of bravery than you could manage by ten years of reading. As we are in a period of profound peace you can only dream of acquiring the reputation of a prudent, discreet, and wise prince."

Admirable if Machiavelian advice, which might have had brilliant results had it been addressed to another individual. Philip of Orleans, like his mother Anne of Austria, lacked application, and, in addition to his graver vices, was naturally indolent.

The Prince listened to the long homily which (as Daniel de Cosnac self-complacently remarks) was prompted by such affection as to change the chaplain almost into an orator. Monsieur did not like the suggestion of study. Reading was always distasteful to him. He promised to devote some of

his leisure to the task, and hoped to profit generally. The Bishop continued the conversation at every opportunity, laying stress upon three cardinal points of behaviour—Philip's position towards the King, the ministers, and the Court.

“With regard to your conduct in relation to the King. Above all things you must avoid his contempt. Try to merit his regard and affection. At present matters are so strained between you that it can only come by time. Little by little you will be able to efface the bad impressions His Majesty has of you. Attend him in all his military operations. Meet all his wishes with a blind complaisance. Praise him on every occasion. Put up with his sarcasms without getting angry, and display an extreme attachment and tenderness for his person. Lose no chance of joining in his amusements. Preserve and add to that familiarity which nature allows between brothers. Ask his advice about all your affairs, especially the business of your household. Speak at the councils, but only to the point, and submit always your suggestions to those of the King. Ask few favours of him, and only just demands. Take care that all your wishes and desires please His Majesty. And, for fear of doing anything which might seem like flattery, never forget that you have the honour of being his brother.”

This must have been most unpalatable to the Duke, who, since his earliest childhood had been compelled to bow down and worship his puissant elder. The Bishop had further maxims to expound, and tackled the subject of the ministers.

“The most advantageous means, and the most infallible, to make yourself liked or feared by the

ministers of state, is to be on good terms with the King. As soon as they understand that His Majesty has some inclination and consideration for you they will run after you with assiduity, and will seek every occasion to please you. On your part it is necessary to praise them in public, and to show them much friendship. But you need not give them too much confidence, for fear that they should use it to damage you in the opinion of the King."

Daniel de Cosnac was not an old man, but he had nothing to learn in the art of self-advancement. He ended his discourse by discussing Monsieur's attitude towards the members of the Court. It was to be entirely different from his behaviour towards the King. Louis was proud, reserved, and not over-kind. Monsieur must therefore be soft and gracious. The King was adamant, difficult to obtain graces from, and rarely according praise. Monsieur must gain by comparison, sympathising with the separate interests of each courtier, affecting to share their joys, and not forgetting to join in their sorrows.

"Even if you have no benefits to confer," added the Bishop, "you must make it up in words, and be careful to pick out flattering and complaisant ones. Praise their virtues to excess. Excuse their faults with goodwill."

Monsieur de Valence confesses that these deep counsels were spread over many interviews, and were often said hurriedly and with precipitation. Monsieur had the awkward habit of momentarily running away from his visitor, ten or a dozen times in half an hour, to give orders for some trifle or other which had suddenly occurred to his wandering mind. Perhaps Cosnac's long periods were unduly exhausting. Still the grand almoner had hopes that

his pupil would gradually improve. At the close of every conversation Monsieur remarked wisely that the subject was so important that it must be continued directly he had more leisure—although he had practically no duties of any description. The leisure was evidently difficult to find, which leads us to the belief that Cosnac was becoming a bore. But the Bishop was never a man to relinquish easily a task he had got in hand, and his maxims were set down in writing. The letter which contained them was very frank, and discussed without fear the personal characters of Colbert and Le Tellier. It was given to Mériille the valet, with a request that when the Duke had read it the paper was to be returned to its author, whom it would assuredly ruin if made public. Instead of his own letter Cosnac received one from the Prince.

“I received your letter with the greatest joy in the world. I understand that the advice it gives is actuated only by the greatest friendship for me and my reputation. I assure you that my reputation is dearer to me than my life. Now, dealing with your letter. It agrees exactly with my own ideas. Even when I differ from you I will follow your advice, because I believe your intentions are so good. . . . I do not pay you any compliment in repeating that I have a very particular esteem for you, and that you are one of the men in the world I care for most, and that deeply. Remain persuaded of it, and continue always to love me and my honour.”

The Bishop was troubled, and entreated Mériille to get hold of his letter. The valet replied that the Prince wished to keep it. The result must be given in Cosnac's own words. “I made some useless reflections upon the reasons which obliged him to

keep it. I saw that I had committed an imprudence in writing so openly, and thus surrendering myself to his discretion. As the thing was done I tried to turn it into a merit. Directly I saw Monsieur I told him that I was quite contented that he should retain my letter. Monsieur replied that there was nothing for me to fear, that he had much friendship for me, and that even if I did some act detrimental to his interests—a thing he could not possibly imagine—he was not so dishonest as to wish to make use of such a method to destroy me. I said that the supposition had never entered my thoughts, that I was pledged to him personally as well as to his interests, and that if my destruction would serve him in any way I would gladly consent.”

This may be accepted as a fair example of a conversation in which two men express to each the exact contrary of their secret thoughts. Cosnac's early prophecy that the Prince was utterly worthless verified itself. A short while after this interview the Bishop found himself at Monsieur's country house at Villers-Cotterets. He was received by his master “in the tenderest manner in the world. He took me into his study, and told me everything that had recently taken place.” The King had been brusque. Languedoc had been given to the Duke de Verneuil. Cosnac gave certain advice. Monsieur incorporated it in a letter to Louis which was despatched the same evening. The communication did not attempt to hide the writer's chagrin at the Languedoc decision, but it breathed (according to Cosnac) “a tender and respectful sorrow,” and its leading theme was the apprehension that the King did not sufficiently love and esteem his brother. Considered from a modern English standpoint it

bears more than a trace of Pecksniff, for if Philip complained of his brother's lack of sympathy, he could not boast of any strong fraternal affection himself.

Three days later Monsieur and Madame left Villers-Cotterets, and joined the royal household. The King, according to his habit, made rough fun of Monsieur, who lost his temper and replied with considerable bitterness. The time-serving almoner remonstrated.

“You must be more prudent. You must be complaisant towards His Majesty. He is the master. If you act like this you will bring down all manner of evil upon your head. Under the present circumstances it would be most unfortunate, for, whilst the King is all-powerful, you are without credit and without friends.”

Cosnac had not failed to observe the high consideration Louis displayed towards Madame. Through the mediation of the Duchess he arranged an interview between Louis and Philip, for the purpose of arranging a truce to their perpetual bickering. Philip vowed a sincere devotion if the King would only treat him in a more brotherly spirit. The interview was held at Versailles, and promised the happiest results.

The Bishop flattered himself he had been of true service to his master, and that now was the occasion to ask for repayment. The Abbey of Saint Mesmin had become vacant, and the Duke held the patronage. Cosnac was the first ecclesiastic in rank on the establishment. He had married his master, and had baptized his children. He had never yet asked for a favour, nor had he been given one. He believed that Boisfranc, the treasurer, wanted the

benefice for his brother-in-law, but he did not flinch from the attack.

“There’s a fine abbey vacant!” he suggested to Monsieur, in much the same manner that Mr. Wemmick suggested under quite different circumstances: “Halloa! Here’s a church! Let’s go in!”

But Monsieur was not going in. He did not look pleased. His short answer to the question was “Quite right.” In order not to commit himself any further he immediately ran away.

The Bishop was hurt. He explains in his memoirs that he found the reply not only lacking in civility, but actually insolent to a man of his position. He talked to Père Zoccoli, who told him that the Prince was worried about the affair. The following day Cosnac managed to get hold of Philip and informed him that he was honoured enough by the Prince’s friendship, indeed it gratified him more than the gift of the benefice—hardly an observation for a strictly truthful ecclesiastic. Monsieur interrupted the Bishop, made a number of excuses, professed deep affection, seemed very embarrassed, and got into his coach to go to Saint-Germain.

Within four days the Bishop followed him to the same palace. When he paid his respects to the Prince, Monsieur explained without loss of time that he had pledged his word to Boisfranc. It was doubtless disappointing, but he intended Cosnac to enjoy offices of far greater importance than the Abbey of Saint Mesmin.

The Bishop was a perfect courtier.

“Monsieur,” he replied with dignity, “when I was a poor man nobody accused me of greed. At present I have no needs. If I have anything to

desire it is your glory and affection. Do me the justice to judge me only by my actions, and not by the prejudices my enemies endeavour to poison your mind with. It is the only favour I ask of you."

Philip said that he would allow nothing to destroy the affection he always felt for his grand almoner. Moreover he would warn Cosnac of every rumour or statement made to his disadvantage.

Years after, when Cosnac sat down to write the story of his life, he recapitulated the conversation, and he drew attention to his faithful service. Then, recollecting all his grievances, he added one brief comment.

"From that time I believed in the good faith of his promises. And I did very wrong."

Upon the death of the Duke de Valois, his eldest child, Monsieur saw an opportunity of obtaining from the King the pension of fifty thousand livres which had been allocated to the child. Cosnac wrote a long letter, advising him as to the argument which stood most chance of success. The King refused the request. Again Monsieur neglected to return the Bishop's letter, but his reply was charged with the grossest flattery. "I have the greatest confidence in your friendship. My regard for you is very deep."

A priest drew his horoscope, and the predictions overwhelmed him with delight. In two years he would be King of Naples. The astrologer had mixed with some Neapolitan refugees in Paris and listened to their discussions. Monsieur took the matter seriously. His brother repeatedly snubbed him, and refused to allow him to take his rightful position at Court. He would show France that all the same

he was a man of parts. He could act the king as well as Louis.

The Bishop of Valence considered the project with him. At first the Prince talked wildly about the stars. Cosnac brushed all those speculations aside. Astrology was an idle science which was not to be allowed to dupe his quick intelligence. It was true that a group of Neapolitans in Paris were plotting to overthrow the Spanish viceroyalty of Naples. Monsieur was soon in touch with them through Cosnac, who was introduced to the Abbé Laudati and Don Louis de Saint-Severin. The Abbé was a tiresome fool, and Cosnac soon guessed that he was only out for his own interests. Don Louis was more reasonable. He wanted the help of France to aid him in a rebellion against the Spanish outpost. In return the nobility of Naples were prepared to offer the crown to the King's brother.

Cosnac threw himself into the intrigue unreservedly, for, if it succeeded, there was much to be gained. The last revolt of Naples in 1647 under Masaniello had been promptly suppressed. If Monsieur were able to gain the support of the kings of France and England he ought to secure the crown with ease. In six weeks Cosnac received confirmation from Naples that Philip would prove acceptable. He doubted whether the letter—which was vague in terms—really came from the south, and thought it might have been concocted in Paris. However it was enough for Monsieur to act upon. A lengthy memorandum was drawn up in which Monsieur set out the reasons why the King should assist him in a filibustering expedition against Spain. True France and Spain were at peace, but, as Cosnac explained, this was a trifle historical

precedent soon disposed of. Henri III had helped his brother, the Duke d'Alençon, to conquer Flanders without rupturing his own friendship with the Court of Madrid.

A more difficult affair was to work Monsieur's courage up to the point of opening the subject with his brother and presenting the memorandum. The members of the royal family walked in the utmost fear of the King. Monsieur was afraid. Weeks rolled by, and nothing happened. Then the Bishop asked how the negotiations were progressing between the brothers.

"I have not found a good occasion yet to speak to His Majesty," replied Monsieur. "Besides I am told that near Naples there is a fiery mountain which shakes the town. Now I cannot bear earthquakes. They disgust me."

Philip disgusted Cosnac, who understood that the Prince was repenting his haste. The Bishop explained that there had been no earthquake for forty years, and that Vesuvius was not to be dreaded. Naples, a town which had stood for ages, would surely outlast his generation. Monsieur then promised to speak to the King, and to gain—if possible—the necessary consent.

In the meanwhile Cosnac and the Neapolitans arranged the details of the expedition. Monsieur was to set out at the head of six thousand infantry and two thousand cavalry. His navy was to comprise ten armed ships, and his pay-chest was to contain a million and a half of silver "livres."

"You will gain an immortal reputation," urged this active priest. "The King will at last be convinced that you are capable of great deeds. Don't ask him for too much at first. Say that you

need only four thousand men. The King of England will lend you the ships. Indeed, he will not be able to refuse you when you remind him that he still owes you Madame's marriage portion."

With all these reasons, writes Cosnac, Monsieur became fortified and approached his brother. He spoke to the King, but in a very casual manner, doing little more than to present the memorandum drawn up by the Bishop. A few days later Louis replied that he was not in a position to offer any help, and that Philip must not push the scheme further. To Cosnac's anger the Prince received this rebuff not only with tranquillity but with much joy, as if he had thrown away a heavy burden. "I understood," remarked Cosnac, "that he had been in a great fear of becoming a king."

The Neapolitans were furious. The Bishop of Valence did not repeat the King's decision. He merely said that as His Majesty was shortly carrying a campaign into Flanders it was not possible at the moment to spare any troops. Secretly the priest anticipated that when war was declared against Spain Louis would change his mind, and he still dreamed that he might become the Mazarin of Naples. So he persuaded the conspirators to postpone all their arrangements until the ensuing spring.

Monsieur, freed from responsibility, devoted himself to the congenial task of erecting some magnificent tents, furnished with mirrors and crystal chandeliers, in the gardens of Saint Cloud. This upholstering was more to his taste than directing an Italian campaign. Cosnac, thoroughly dispirited, announced his intention of returning to his diocese. Monsieur was afraid to lose the goodwill and services of his almoner. So he flattered Monsieur

de Valence by telling him that he had considered his good advice, and had determined to join the army in Flanders.

The priest frankly assured him that it was his last chance. In no other manner could he rehabilitate his character. "I painted his past life—which was not so beautiful as he believed it to be. I said to him that up to the present his mind had been occupied with childishness, and that he had solely been interested in debased pleasures."

"Rest content," answered Monsieur. "Follow me to Flanders, and see how I behave."

Louis had already left Paris to conduct that extraordinary campaign which covered him with a glory he certainly never deserved. The Bishop had a passion for drawing up rules of conduct. He wrote another long memorandum, which explained how Philip should act at the front, and also how he should behave towards the King, the generals, the officers, and the troops. He was to be very careful to praise everybody. Brave men should be spoken of with the utmost eulogy. In their case if the praise became excessive it would not matter, as it might impel them to repeat their deeds of heroism. Monsieur must also visit the sick and wounded, and give money to all the poor officers, preferably to those of reputation. His conduct was set out with detail,—in the trenches, in the midst of an alarm, or during a sudden engagement. No opportunity must be lost of acquiring glory.

"I insinuated," writes Cosnac, "that he must gain this reputation by means of money, of praise, and of goodwill. Such things—properly managed—were more capable of bringing him esteem than courage itself. Above all I begged him not to show

his usual weariness and attitude of boredom ; on the contrary to let every one see that he was engaged in a very agreeable and congenial life."

Monsieur cast his eyes over the first few lines of this ponderous document, folded it up, locked it carefully in his cabinet, and promised to take every maxim as his guide.

With Louis XIV departed most of the Court. Many of its members had travelled in such a hurry that they had left their equipage to be forwarded later. The Princess of Monaco was in a quandary. Her husband had gone, and, though impressing upon her the necessity of sending his effects, had not left the wherewithal. She had not a farthing, so she tried to pawn her jewels and borrow on the security of her mother, Madame de Gramont. By chance the Bishop met her in the rooms of Madame de Saint-Chaumont. She was unable to hide her troubles. Daniel de Cosnac offered to find the money and become the security. Monsieur overheard the conversation. He followed his chaplain out of the room.

"Monsieur de Valence," he commenced in a bad humour, "I have just been reading in your memorandum your excellent suggestion that during the campaign I should distribute money amongst the troops. I am afraid that I shall run short of cash. Instead of looking after Madame de Monaco why not think about me. I can deposit some diamonds. And I must have two thousand 'louis d'or.'"

"You are quite right," replied the worried Bishop. "You ought to have the preference, but why didn't you warn me earlier ? I could have got the money in other ways. Now I shall have the

annoyance of pawning your jewels, and you start in a couple of days ! ”

“ Yes,” answered Monsieur. “ I require the money to-morrow, but, without regret, I can give you twice as many jewels as are necessary. I shall still have plenty left.”

He turned out of his drawers rubies, diamonds and pearls.

“ That will bring us plenty of friends,” cried Valence philosophically.

The Bishop went to Paris. He pawned the stones for 18,000 livres for one year certain. At the end of this time, if not previously redeemed, they would become the property of the broker. The obligation was 19,500 livres, which left 1500 livres profit. Another banker lent 4000 livres at a high interest, and Cosnac added 500 écus of his own. The conditions upon which he borrowed were exorbitant, but he did not trouble his master with financial details. Instead, he changed all the dirty worn cash into freshly minted pieces, and, from his own pocket, replaced the false coins with true metal. Then this good priest did not forget his promise to a lady. Happily Madame de Monaco’s agents promised her a remittance in eight days. All she needed was a thousand écus to buy and despatch her husband’s equipage. The Bishop found this amount in his own purse, and he adds that she repaid him sooner than he expected—which seems to have surprised him.

Philip departed punctually to the front on the day he had previously announced. He bade a solemn farewell with much tenderness to his wife and the ladies of her circle. He noticed that some of them wept, and it pleased him. He also observed that

Madame de Thianges did not take his mock heroics too seriously, and this so offended him that she never regained his esteem.

The Bishop of Valence followed later, in company with the Bishop of Orleans who was Grand Almoner to the King. It was difficult to find His Majesty, and they dreaded being captured by a band of marauding Spaniards. At Avesnes they were told that Louis was at Charleroy, so they waited two days before they could get an escort. Then without warning the King rode into Avesnes to meet the Queen, and Monsieur was left alone at Charleroy. Cosnac now had to wait eight days until the King returned to that besieged city. As they approached the camp Monsieur came forth to meet them. He greeted the Bishop with evident pleasure.

“Your memorandum has been a great help,” he whispered. “You will soon be able to notice how well I am getting on with the troops.”

“I am delighted at so happy a beginning,” replied the Bishop. “I am sure it will end gloriously.” Following his own maxim of praise he commended the Duke for remaining alone at Charleroy during the absence of the King. In his Memoirs he sets down the secret thought in his mind: “Only such an action was capable of wiping away the bad opinion every one had of his idle habits.”

The campaign of 1667 was diplomatically disreputable. At the death of Philip IV, Louis XIV considered himself free to snatch the rights of his Queen, Maria Theresa, to the sovereignty of the Low Countries. These rights had been relinquished by treaty upon her marriage. But oaths have a shifting value. The King took the supreme command. Turenne was under his orders, and with that military

genius were the Marshal d'Aumont and the Marquis de Créqui. The Bishop of Valence followed the operations as bear-leader to Monsieur, and Monsieur was forced into the semblance of a brave soldier.

“During the long and tiresome march to Tournay I had many conversations with Monsieur,” wrote Cosnac in his autobiography. “I pointed out to him that his agreeable manners commenced to produce a good effect. Numerous officers were courting him. I impressed upon him that if he would only exercise the slightest vigour he would acquire in two or three months a glory sufficient to make him happy for the remainder of his life. Indeed, it would oblige the King to give him a high command, otherwise the world would acknowledge that he had been dealt with unjustly. Up to the moment his only reputation had been that of exercising the softer social virtues. Now he must prove that he had the makings of a hero. Monsieur listened to these remarks very well, and replied with an air of contented assurance.”

Never did the Bishop preach upon the value of duty for its own sake, or upon heroism inspired by the love of a patriot. His story is always virtue rewarded by the King's favour and the approbation of the Court.

Tournay was duly invested by the army, and, whilst waiting for the siege guns, huge trenches were dug in front of the doomed city. The Bishop was active. He told Philip that he must take his place with the batteries, that he must not forget to flatter the officers and to scatter largesse amongst the men. He must refuse to listen to praise. Philip prepared for danger. His methods were slightly theatrical. “Before leaving he took a very Christian precau-

tion. He confessed. Then he entered the trenches." Cosnac followed to watch the effect. It was superb.

"When he arrived all the officers gathered around him and said they had never known a prince so nobly inclined, so amiable in manners, and so intrepid. His cool self-assurance made them feel ashamed. I replied that Monsieur's real character was not yet known. His heart, his intelligence, and his goodwill, would soon be revealed, and if they were so satisfied at the beginning they might expect to be more satisfied later on, when Monsieur would place himself at their head in command of the King's army. Particularly I assured them that they had good reason to praise the Duke, for he had a special affection for their regiment. Indeed the same morning he had remarked to the King that since the guards held the trenches he knew he was in safety—their bravery and experience were warrant enough for that."

It would be pleasing to have a record of the gossip amongst these soldiers when Prince and Bishop were out of hearing, for the flattery was fulsome. Cosnac paid many visits to the trenches, and his behaviour was generally modelled upon his own creed of unremitting praise. One day the King met him.

"What!" cried the monarch. "Monsieur de Valence in the trenches!"

"Sire," replied Cosnac, "I have come in order to be able to boast that I have seen the greatest King in the world expose himself to danger like a common soldier."

Philip pleased his tutor. He scattered coins amongst the troops, and sedulously praised the officers. His reputation increased. He began to

believe that he was of value in the military service, and the Court thought him strangely changed. Tournay capitulated. Louis had a "Te Deum" chanted, and, after leaving a strong garrison, went on to Courtray. During the night the King and his brother made a reconnaissance. A live shell fell amongst the company. A page belonging to the royal household and a gentleman in the Duke's service were wounded in the explosion. Louis and Philip showed considerable courage.

The next day whilst the troops were laboriously throwing up new earthworks the King held a council of war. Turenne, de Bellefond, Duras, and d'Humières were invited to join in the deliberations. Monsieur was left in the outer tent, amidst a crowd of officers and courtiers. The public snub irritated him almost beyond endurance. He retired hurriedly to his own tent, and complained bitterly to his faithful almoner.

"The best thing you can do is immediately to take up your position in the trenches. When you return explain to His Majesty that, seeing you were not wanted at the council, you retired to a position where you could be of some use, and where work remained to be done."

Monsieur went off to the batteries, leaving Cosnac admiring his courage.

"If he gets killed it will be your fault," said Lesprit, the Duke's physician, to the priest. The unkind remark troubled Cosnac, who was afraid that the King would understand that he was prompting Philip in his actions. However Monsieur returned alive, and his deed added considerably to the impression he had already created. He did not forget to repeat Cosnac's sentence to the King, who softened

towards him. At every succeeding council held before Douai, Monsieur took his place with the generals. The Bishop of Valence had yet another duty to perform "which contributed not a little to extend the glory of Monsieur." He wrote detailed accounts of the various actions of the Duke in face of the enemy, and these he despatched to Renaudot, editor of the *Recueil des Gazettes* published in Paris. The good journalist printed everything without changing a word. To this day the files of the *Gazette de France* (the better-known title of the paper) are a witness to the bravery of Philip and the activity of his almoner. Never before had the columns been so full of the Duke's name and his doings; and it must be added that never again did they give him so much space. Cosnac was one of the first press agents to be found in history. His scheme formed part of the greater plan to rehabilitate the prince in the opinion of the Court and in the eyes of the citizens of Paris.

At the commencement of the siege of Douai Louis declared that directly the town was captured he would return to France to spend a couple of weeks with his Queen at Compiègne. The Bishop of Valence wished Monsieur to remain with the army.

"I told him that the gain of a battle could hardly give him more the reputation of being born for war. I explained that if anything happened in the interval he would receive all the glory, as the King would not be present to snub him. I added a number of other reasons too lengthy to write. But it was useless to speak to Monsieur when one attempted to persuade him against enjoying a pleasure. He was passionately anxious to return to Saint-Cloud, to receive

from the hands of the ladies the laurels he believed were his due."

Cosnac, seeing that his efforts were in vain, then gave some characteristic cautions.

"If you will go, at least pretend to go against your will. Say that you really desire to stay with the troops, and only make the journey at the request of the King."

Monsieur was too afraid of being taken at his word. He was tired of campaigning. When Douai fell he left the camp so hurriedly that he would not even wait to accompany his brother. A message arrived that Madame was unwell. The excuse was excellent, and he was on the road almost immediately.

"You have lost a beautiful opportunity," complained the Bishop. "If you had not been so anxious, and if you had followed my counsel, you would have been covered with all the glory of wishing to remain, in addition to enjoying the pleasure of being free to go."

Monsieur's flight—for it was nothing else—created a bad impression. As he disliked riding he returned to France by coach, and the King ordered an escort of five hundred cavalry. When he started only one hundred horsemen appeared. The stern old *generalissimo* Turenne was in command of the army. He had no love for featherbed soldiers, and he refused to detach another four hundred men. Monsieur departed in a wild anger at the indignity. But worse remained.

At Arras his escort suddenly dwindled to twenty-five or thirty. The others were under order to return to camp. The cavalcade was now so small that it was at the mercy of any wandering party of

disbanded combatants or homeless peasants. However the fates were kinder to Monsieur than Turenne, and he soon arrived in safe territory. At Senlis fresh carriages and horses were ready, and the prince reached Saint-Cloud at two in the morning. Madame was indeed extremely unwell.

The indefatigable Cosnac went to Paris to re-open negotiations with the Neapolitans. Louis crossed country to see Henrietta. The King openly despised his brother, but his deep affection for his sister-in-law never changed. Cosnac advised Philip to talk to Louis again about the proposed expedition to Naples. Louis knew his brother's capacity. Convinced that the scheme, under such a leader, could only end in disaster he flatly refused to reconsider his former decision.

The Bishop's policy was two-sided. His memoirs give an explanation we can only partially accept. It is true that he wished to awaken in Monsieur's heart a desire to serve France in some distinguished and reputable manner. But this formed but half the hidden spring of his action. The greater importance of the Duke would also add to the influence and dignity of the Grand Almoner. In looking after his master's interests Cosnac was not forgetting his own.

During the short interregnum Cosnac suggested in many quarters that Monsieur should be created lieutenant-general of the army. In the middle of July the King returned to Douai and Monsieur could not refuse to accompany him, particularly as the Queen formed part of the royal train. The Bishop was in attendance, and there was nothing to warn him of the sudden calamity which threatened to overwhelm his future career.

The Marshal d'Aumont captured Courtray in two

days, and then went to Tournay to pay his respects to the King and Queen. Amongst his officers was a gentleman Monsieur had met for the first time during the previous winter. With the Chevalier de Lorraine Philip soon became upon terms of the closest intimacy. He asked Louis to transfer the Chevalier's regiment from d'Aumont's troops to those under the royal command, so that he might continue to enjoy the chevalier's company. At first the King refused the favour; then he granted it. Monsieur was in ecstasies. He told Cosnac that his Majesty had been extraordinarily gracious. The Bishop expected to hear some startling act of royal beneficence. When he discovered that it merely concerned Lorraine he replied seriously and dryly :

“Monsieur, I am very content. This is an extremely good commencement.”

The Queen returned to France, and the army took up its position before Oudenarde. Twenty siege cannon had been planted on a hill overlooking the town. “Upon my advice,” wrote Cosnac, “Monsieur went there, and had the enjoyment of observing all that took place without being in any danger. He distributed money amongst the artillery officers, who spoke very highly of him.” Oudenarde capitulated, and operations were transferred to the wealthy city of Lille. Philip was visibly tiring of these marches and counter-marches. He no longer troubled to follow the movements of the King. He neglected the outposts, and for five days he forgot to visit the trenches. He spent every hour with the Chevalier de Lorraine. Cosnac implored him to sustain his new reputation, and warned him that if he gave way to idleness he would lose all the glory he had earned. This moved him to go to the front, and, as the

Chevalier and his regiment were sent to the trenches Monsieur visited them also.

Again Monsieur created a good impression, and the story of his courage was repeated in the camp. The King's brother had been under fire! Other men were not so brave. Some of the most prominent members of the Court had asked for, and received, the royal command forbidding them to enter the danger zone. Monsieur followed up his advantage by scattering money and praise amongst the wounded. "He gained the reputation of a liberal and magnanimous prince," writes the delighted Bishop, although truth compelled him to add, "people said he had many good qualities which he could really lay no claim to."

This happy state was not destined to continue. During a moonlight engagement the Chevalier de Lorraine was slightly wounded in the head by a hand grenade. This unbalanced the equanimity of Philip. He passed entire days in the Chevalier's sick room, warmly thanked all those who called upon the invalid, and obliged them to praise without restraint the youthful hero.

Lille was taken. Louis entered at the head of his troops, chanted a "Te Deum" according to his habit, and then pushed forward without loss of time. Monsieur rode by the side of his Majesty. The Bishop of Valence and the lame Chevalier shared the Duke's coach. Cosnac realised that he was with a rival it was necessary to propitiate. "I knew that the Chevalier was a young man without experience, without care as to his conduct, and who—far from being able to advise Monsieur—was incapable of forming any fixed ideas for himself. His only aim was to make favour by being useful in the Prince's

pleasures." As they travelled together the clever priest took the measure of the coming power. Then he demonstrated his efforts upon the Duke, who was able to talk of nothing but the excellences of his new friend.

"He must be given a post in my household," said the Prince. "I cannot do anything better." And Cosnac could see no way of safely opposing his design.

Louis decided to return to France, and leave Turenne in supreme command. At Lille Monsieur spent some time with Lorraine, who had not yet recovered. In the evening Valence attended the ceremonial "coucher" of his master. The head valet asked the head-butler for two hundred pistoles to pay for some tapestry the Prince had bought at Oudenarde, part of the sack of that unfortunate city. No one in the household had money, and the goods were not to be left without payment. The Bishop came to the rescue, and paid the bill out of his own pocket. Monsieur watched the whole proceeding, saw the coins handed over to the merchant, and did not have the manners to thank his almoner.

Monsieur quickly followed the King, and arriving at Villers-Cotterets, was welcomed by Madame and her circle of ladies, de Monaco, du Plessis, Saint-Chaumont, Thianges, Fiennes, and Gourdon. To his annoyance the rooms had been arranged for his use, so that he lost his usual employment of adjusting the furniture to his own taste. However he changed most of the pieces, for he had the inclinations of an upholsterer. "He applied himself to the business with extreme care. The ladies remarked that he had certainly benefited by his experiences with the army. He placed all the chairs in a line, fortified the beds, turned the mirrors into advantageous

outposts, flanked each table with smaller tables, and generally disposed the whole of his furniture according to military rules—and the maxims of Vauban.” It is easy to imagine the laughter and amusement which these odd preoccupations excited amongst a witty and sarcastic band of women. Monsieur, who always took himself seriously, resented these raileries. The Bishop was sad and disgusted. Such a man could never change his character.

The Duchess now commenced to take Cosnac into her confidence. Evidently she had long ceased to influence her husband, whose chief subject of conversation was the Chevalier de Lorraine, to whom he wrote every day. She was troubled about this new passion.

“ If the Chevalier would think only of Monsieur’s interest and glory, if he would endeavour to distract the Duke from trifles, there might be some advantage in his control. I believe that I have enough authority over the Chevalier to oblige him to act decently.” The end of the tale proves how wrong the Princess was in her supposition.

Monsieur still looked to Cosnac for advice. He wanted to know what he should do if the King refused to give him a military command. Cosnac suggested that he should volunteer for active service. Philip did not approve of so energetic an action. He changed the conversation by remarking that the Chevalier would soon arrive, and that he had resolved to distinguish him in every possible manner.

At first the Bishop did not answer. Then he simply said that Lorraine was a man of birth, intelligence, and good heart. This did not satisfy Philip, who, interrupting the priest abruptly, asked for his sincere thoughts.

“Since you wish to know my real feelings, as a faithful servant I must say that I do not think you ought to make the Chevalier your one admitted favourite. You have need of many chevaliers, not one. Every gentleman at Court should flatter himself that he stands first in your friendship. As soon as the position is publicly occupied all the other aspirants will retire. Your friendship is the only favour you are able to grant. Exhibit it to the whole world. Let each one hope to enjoy it. Do not enrich one solitary person with it. A favourite is a strange individual. Clever, he ruins the reputation of his master, for everything his master does is attributed to him. Clumsy and tactless, he is the cause of much anxiety, for his master has to support him, unless he wishes his poor choice of a feeble friend to be condemned. Let the Chevalier enjoy your friendship and confidence secretly, but do not let him pose openly as your governor. That will wrong you. Help him if you wish, but do not shut the door in the face of all those who desire to serve you.”

The advice was very worldly and very wise. Philip left the room without a word in reply, and the same afternoon the Chevalier de Lorraine arrived at the château. Monsieur received him “with transports of unbelievable joy, and from that moment his position was made evident.” For a while Lorraine remained on good terms with Cosnac. Then Boisfranc, the treasurer, lured him in the rival domestic camp. The young man became so infatuated with a success he had never anticipated that he did not even trouble to make himself agreeable to Madame.

Gradually Cosnac realised that his master was tiring of him. Valet Mérille reported that the Duke

complained that the priest was too much in evidence, that he spent too much time with the Duchess and with Mesdames de Saint-Chaumont and de Thianges. Cosnac defended himself. The complaints were unreasonable. He assisted the Duchess with her correspondence at the Duke's own request, and the ladies referred to were still treated as good friends by the head of the house. It was clear however that his presence was distasteful, and he made up his mind to sell his office and return to Valence.

A week later the King promised that his brother should command the army in Catalonia during the next campaign. Monsieur told the Bishop.

"I rejoice at the news," said Cosnac. "I hope that this appointment will be the prelude to your governorship of Languedoc."

"You are never satisfied!" cried Philip in anger, "personally I am contented, and I ask no more of his Majesty."

"I only wished you to receive Languedoc," replied Cosnac. "But if you are satisfied it would be wrong for me to be anything else."

Monsieur complained to his wife.

"His crime is that he has a strong affection for you, and thinks only of your interests," she answered.

Defence was waste effort. Disgrace loomed in front of Daniel de Cosnac. The duties he carried out for Madame were transferred with savage irony to Lorraine. All his conversations with the Princess were repeated by ready spies to the Duke. One day Philip entered a room in which the Princess and the Grand Almoner were talking.

"What great secrets are you concealing from me?" he cried.

The Bishop obtained a farewell audience at which he unburdened his heart to the King, and asked permission to retire to Valence.

“ I left the audience chamber full of esteem and veneration for his Majesty who was gifted with common sense, intelligence, justice, and true merit. As I walked out I met Monsieur de Luxembourg. I said to him : ‘ I have been talking to a great man. He makes me feel very disgusted with my own little master.’ ”

Thus ended Cosnac’s official position in the household of Orleans. At the last moment the Chevalier tried to make friends with him. But it was too late. Cosnac was sick of Monsieur’s weak, irresolute, and vicious nature, and he resolved to leave Paris directly he could transfer his appointment. Before he could leave a curious transaction made his position more unpleasant. The Marshal du Plessis professed to pick up a letter addressed to the Bishop of Valence, in which the most injurious reflections were made upon the Duke and the Chevalier. The letter was read to Monsieur, and then burnt before Cosnac could deny its authorship. As the Bishop writes in his memoirs, the trick was that of old courtiers. Bogus letters were not rare in the “ Grand Siècle.” The incident had its effect upon the mind of the Prince.

Peace between France and Spain was signed at Aix-la-Chapelle on 2nd May 1668. Louis had been too successful in his campaigns. The rapid conquest of Franche-Comté had alarmed England, Holland, and Sweden. These countries united to form a triple alliance, and forced France to conclude a treaty which allowed the victorious monarch to retain Lille and the conquered portion of the Low

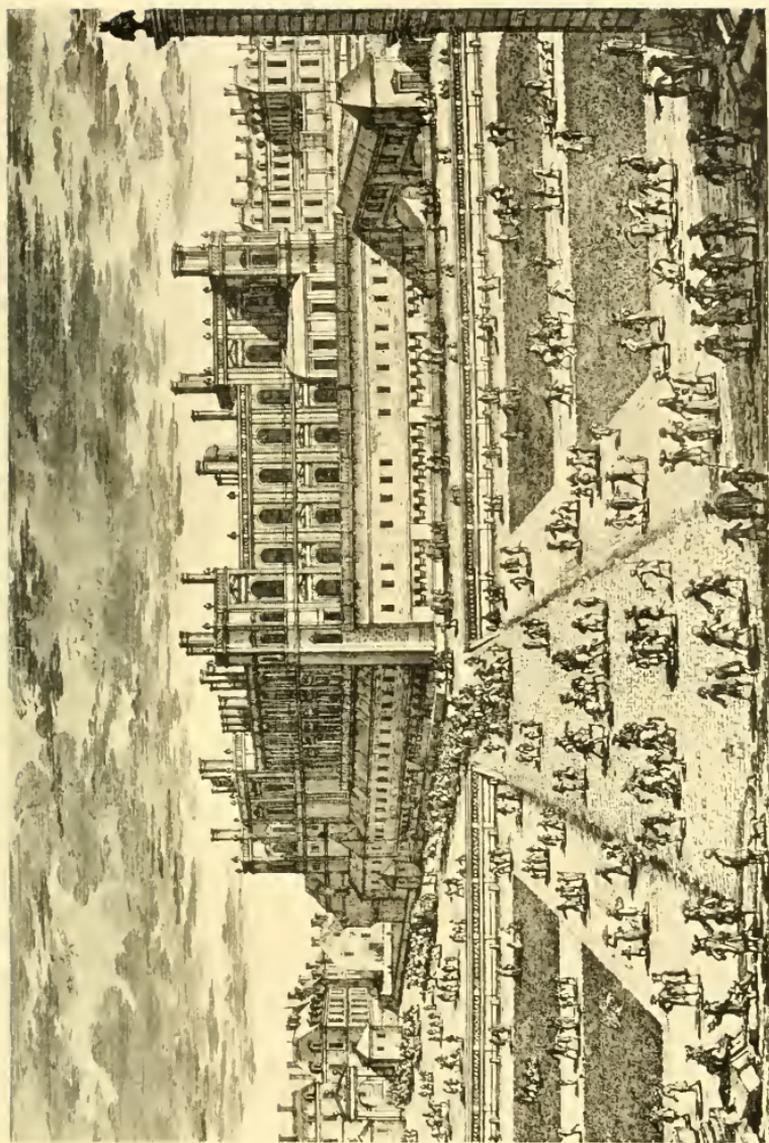
Countries, whilst he had to withdraw from Franche-Comté.

In the meanwhile Monsieur had passed through a domestic crisis. Mademoiselle de Fiennes, lady-in-waiting to Madame, had fallen in love with the Chevalier de Lorraine. This in itself was unobjectionable. Indeed it was a tribute to Monsieur's discernment in selecting a companion of such fascination. The horrible fact was that the Chevalier had fallen in love with Mademoiselle de Fiennes. Their affection for each other was displayed so publicly that the Père Zoccoli, the confessor to the household, was obliged at Easter to warn the Duke that in all conscience the scandal ought to be stopped. Had Monsieur been another man he would have requested the Chevalier to change his atmosphere. But this deprivation would have punished Philip, who pardoned his friend and ungallantly ordered the lady to leave the house without delay. Even her mistress was kept in ignorance, and the Chevalier went into the country for two or three days to escape the recriminations of the girl who was being sacrificed. Madame could do nothing, and submitted without a protest. Mademoiselle de Fiennes left the château swearing vengeance upon the Duke and her worthless lover. Her story was spread abroad, and, according to Daniel de Cosnac, "did a terrible wrong to the reputation of both of them."

So violent became the general indignation that Monsieur looked round for a scapegoat, and in his rage conceived the idea that the trouble had been engineered by the Bishop, who, he thought, had insisted upon Père Zoccoli moving in the affair. Members of the Court asserted that in shaming the girl Monsieur

and the Chevalier had lost all sense of dignity and honour. Henrietta's conduct requires explanation. Learning that one of Mademoiselle de Fiennes' boxes had been left in the care of Madame Desbordes, her first lady of the chamber, she called for it and had it opened. What did she expect to find? Perhaps the secret correspondence between the two lovers. Six letters she retained. What were they? It is not known. Probably they concerned the relationship between her husband and the detested Chevalier. Monsieur became alarmed, and believed that Cosnac had advised the Duchess to search the box.

The Bishop remained in Paris. Day by day he received from the valet Mérille at Saint-Cloud the gossip of the château. Early in May he resolved to have a frank interview with Philip, and to request permission to sell his office of grand almoner. The Duke was at Saint Germain, and to that palace the Bishop journeyed. As soon as Philip saw him he turned away. But Cosnac was a determined man. Monsieur endeavoured to escape a conversation which could only be unpleasant. Directly he was dressed he took refuge in Madame's apartments where Cosnac could not easily follow. Then he hurried back into his private rooms with the Chevalier, and told his servants that he could see nobody. The Bishop waited patiently outside the door in the ante-chamber. When Monsieur came out, still with Lorraine, they affected to be so deep in conversation that the priest was unable to interrupt them. At the morning mass the Bishop officiated, being the senior ecclesiastic present. After the "Ita Missa est" Cosnac went to the Duke to demand formally an audience, but the Prince turned



THE PALACE OF SAINT GERMAIN EN LAYE.
After an engraving by Perelle.

brusquely towards the Chevalier so that he might not hear the request.

The movement was noticed by every one in the chapel. Daniel de Cosnac never gave way to obstacles and he became more resolute to insist upon the Duke receiving him. As he had not seen Madame for ten days he went to her apartments and found her alone. He repeated all the rumours his enemies had spread against him, and he declared that he would irrevocably sever his connection with the ducal household.

To withhold sympathy from the unhappy Henrietta is impossible. Her hands were tied. She could do nothing but sit with her women, and watch the gradual moral deterioration of her miserable husband. She dared not disobey his most absurd request. She knew that Cosnac was at once faithful and conspicuously able. She implored him to remain, but unsuccessfully. At last she promised to talk to Monsieur, and ask for the requisite permission which would enable his grand almoner to resign.

Monsieur was crafty. Before Cosnac's message could be delivered he anticipated it by requesting Monsieur de Valence to relinquish his appointment. The Bishop was at liberty to sell the charge to whom he wished, but he must retire immediately to his diocese. Cosnac replied angrily to the secretary who brought the insulting demand.

"I am accountable to the King alone."

"If you do not start for Valence to-morrow Monsieur will ask for an order from the King compelling you to leave Paris," answered Varangeville, at the same time handing Cosnac a sealed packet. It contained the lengthy memorandum which dealt

with Monsieur's behaviour towards the King and the Court.

"Monsieur has charged me to tell you that he does not wish to retain these documents. If they fall into the hands of other people they might do you considerable harm."

"Tell Monsieur," said Cosnac indignantly, "that I have never done anything, or written anything, which might discredit me. And as for these letters, if they damage me they will hardly enhance Monsieur's glory."

That evening he left the Palais Royal, and lodged in Paris with Laurent, the receiver-general to the clergy. The next day Varangeville called upon him, and again demanded that he should leave the city. Cosnac insisted that the order must come from the King, and not from Monsieur. Then Boisfranc, the Duke's treasurer, and Cosnac's most persistent enemy, entered the lists. He spread a rumour that Cosnac had gained so strong an influence over Madame that she intended to offer Monsieur but two alternatives—either to break off all relations with Lorraine or to say good-bye to her.

This idea threw Philip "into so horrible a fright that he was unable to reason." At any cost and by any means the formidable Bishop must be removed. Boisfranc had the impudence to visit the disgraced man.

"Monsieur has commanded me to repay the three thousand louis d'or you lent to him," said the treasurer. "I have the money ready if you will send for it."

Cosnac describes his reply as being made in a tone of cold astonishment. "As it is three years since I lent the money to Monsieur, and, as he has never

said a word to me in the meanwhile, I imagined that he had forgotten the transaction. So I thought I had better forget it as well."

"Far from forgetting it," answered Boisfranc, "the Prince has ordered me to add a thousand écus for interest."

Cosnac now became angry. "Monsieur has never understood me," he cried. "Now he understands me less than ever. I am a gentleman, and not a moneylender. Usury is not permitted, particularly to a man of my sacred profession. Tell Monsieur, if you please, that I have already received the interest for the loan. I have found it in the honour I have experienced in giving him a little pleasure."

The same day Cosnac wrote to the King for an audience. In the evening he received a letter from Madame. She implored him not to imagine that he had lost her friendship, and she regretted the injustice to which he was compelled to submit. She also spoke of the false friends who surrounded her, a reference to the Chevalier de Lorraine, who but a few hours previously had uttered a thousand protestations of zeal and respect towards his mistress. The Bishop received support in another quarter. Queen Henrietta Maria of England sent her good wishes to Cosnac, and promised to speak forcibly on his behalf to Monsieur. All the men who detested Lorraine—and they numbered many—called upon Monsieur de Valence. Then Madame and her mother made a combined attack upon the Duke. If Cosnac must sell his charge of almoner to the household there was no reason why he need be compelled to quit Paris. For once Philip refused to budge. He was in mortal fear of Cosnac's powerful mind, and if the Bishop remained in the capital he was convinced that

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Lorraine would soon suffer from the priest's anger.

In the midst of this turmoil a message was conveyed from the King.

"Tell the Bishop of Valence that as things are between him and my brother it would not be wise of me to grant him an audience. And he ought not to refuse my brother the satisfaction he desires in retiring to the diocese of Valence."

This was a command. Cosnac immediately left Paris. He was never charged with any definite crime, but Monsieur, speaking generally, accused his late almoner of forming a cabal against him in the household. Cosnac explains and supports his action in a letter to one of his friends at Court.

"I admit that I formed several plans for Monsieur. I wished him to have all the qualities of a great prince. I wished him to earn the esteem of the whole world, and particularly the good will of his Majesty. I wished him to make himself useful and agreeable to the King. I wished him to love and consider Madame, for the nobility of her soul and the goodness of her heart merited such treatment. I wanted him to be just and gracious to his servants. Their fidelity and actions, as well as his own common sense, demanded it. These things have been the simple object of my intrigues."

The Abbé de Tréville, master of the chapel in the household of Orleans, and an intimate friend of Lorraine, purchased the office of grand almoner for 25,000 écus. Cosnac doubted his financial honesty as well as his good faith, and refused to give his formal resignation until he received the agreed cash.

"When I reflected upon the time and the labour I had spent in the service of a master who had so

badly recognised it I was not without sorrow. But my grief was softened by the joy of solitude. Until that day I had very false notions of independence, the sweet joys of which I had never really tasted. Now that I was undeceived about worldly promises I devoted myself to one single object, the government of my diocese.”

He had to suffer a further indignity. The Archbishop of Paris warned him that Louis XIV did not wish him to leave his diocese of Valence and Die without the royal permission. The King was not displeased, but Monsieur had solicited the favour which his brother had been unable to refuse. Cosnac exerted every influence to get the order rescinded. The Archbishop and Madame represented its injustice to Louis. But the King commenced to show signs of temper. He had never been in accord with the Bishop, whose policy—had it succeeded—would have made Philip a person of consequence in the state. To all supplications he briefly replied that the Bishop of Valence might travel where he liked in the kingdom. But he was not to visit Paris or the Court.

The Duchess wrote many letters to her exiled friend, and Madame de Saint Chaumont did not forget him in his disgrace. In one letter she hinted at the real cause of all his troubles. He had attached himself too strongly to the interests of the princess, which were opposed to those of the vicious Lorraine. The lady-in-waiting was destined to suffer for the same reason. Lorraine, feeling his power, intended to rule Monsieur without interference. He took up a position of hostility to the Duchess, and moved the Duke to quarrel with her.

To add to Cosnac's troubles, his banker, Saint

Laurent, died without warning. The Bishop was compelled to hurry to Paris to protect his interests and seize what money was owing to him. With more zeal than discretion, the Duchess and Madame de Saint Chaumont endeavoured to obtain Cosnac's pardon. Believing that Louvois and his brother, Charles Maurice Le Tellier, the coadjutor bishop of Rheims, desired to gain her goodwill, Madame asked them to advance the interests of Monsieur de Valence. They pressed the King to remove the restrictions he had imposed. He refused, and Cosnac's explanation is undoubtedly the reason of the monarch's unyielding attitude.

The King believed that Madame and Cosnac had formed a cabal so powerful that it required breaking at any cost. Every effort to secure the Bishop's return proved how deeply Madame was pledged, and how much she relied upon the prelate for advice and assistance. The King's resolution was strengthened by each new eulogy of Cosnac, who finally was compelled to warn the two warm-hearted women that they were acting unadvisedly, and could not hope to meet with success.

At once Madame sent a letter by private courier to Valence. Dated from Saint Cloud, 10th June, 1669, it casts a valuable light upon the writer's amiable character.

“In the unhappiness you must suffer, from the injustice which has overwhelmed you, it would be strange if your friends did not dream of consolations to help you to support your disgrace. Madame de Saint Chaumont and I have resolved that you must have a cardinal's hat. I can quite understand that at first this may appear to you to be visionary, for those who distribute such gifts are not favourably

disposed. To explain this enigma understand that amongst an infinitude of matters now in negotiation between France and England this last favour will be in a little while of much value to Rome. I am quite certain that they will not be able to refuse the King my brother anything he asks. I have taken steps so that he will ask for a cardinal's hat, but without giving a name. He has promised to do this for me, and the gift is for you. Thus you are able to rely upon it. If I had been able to secure your return, the measures that we should have taken together would have facilitated my arrangements. . . . I have asked Madame de Saint Chaumont to give you the details, and I pray you to believe that as I have undertaken this design with much joy for your advantage, so will I undertake it with all the force necessary to make it succeed."

Cosnac writes in his memoirs that not for a second did he dream that the scheme would bring him the red hat. He was gratified because he was convinced that he still retained his patron's affection. But the memoirs were written in his old age, when his ambitions had long been Dead Sea fruit. There was nothing impossible in the idea, despite its dangers. He tells us that he replied with moderation and indifference. It may have been excessive modesty—not a virtue he suffered from—it was certainly wisdom in an age when letters were systematically opened and no messenger was safe. Henrietta and Madame de Saint Chaumont reproached him for his lack of interest. He knew that any marked activity on their part would arouse all his enemies and defeat its own aims.

The Queen-Dowager of England died in the first week of September. According to the *Recueil des*

Gazettes, the primary cause of her death was a pleurisy from which she had been suffering for over six months. Gossip reported that she had been killed by an overdose of opium, accidentally given to her by Vallot the royal physician. Madame left Saint-Cloud for Colombes, and was present at the deathbed, being supported in the last duties by the King and Queen as well as by her husband.

On the 19th September she wrote to Valence telling the Bishop that the matter of his elevation to the cardinalate was still in progress, but that she had been unable to approach the King owing to the death of her mother. Incidentally she remarked that she was accustoming herself to Monsieur's faults, many as they were. She had gained the assistance of the coadjutor of Rheims. Cosnac was probably in an intense state of expectation, and when the coadjutor passed through Valence on his way to Italy he received magnificent hospitality. Cosnac tried to conciliate him. "To the shame of my natural pride," he writes, "I mixed flattery with my words." Monsieur de Rheims received all these compliments "with the gravity which all great ministers use towards those who have need of them." But he did not disclose his policy to Cosnac.

The drama, so far as the priest was concerned, now approached its close. A brother having recently died in Auvergne, he found it necessary to arrange a journey into that province to settle the affairs of the deceased. At the same time an important letter arrived from Madame. She said that it was impossible to proceed with the negotiations concerning his elevation to the cardinalate whilst he remained at so great a distance from her. She warned him that their correspondence was being opened and exam-

ined. She then suggested that as he would soon have to visit his abbey of Saint Taurin at Evreux near Orléans an opportunity might be found for him to come to the outskirts of Paris, where an interview could be arranged between them.

The Bishop considered the request very carefully. He was forbidden to visit Paris and the Court. Madame's proposal might break the spirit of the sentence, but it did not offend against the letter. He therefore decided after leaving Auvergne to travel through Berry, where his movements would escape observation. Then, by a roundabout route, he would arrive at Saint Denis on the other side of Paris. As a pretext for his arrival he would conduct a memorial service in the Abbey for the late Queen of England. In the meanwhile it would be easy for Madame de Saint Chaumont to arrange a secret meeting with the princess.

Plans so cleverly prepared should have worked without the slightest chance of failure. But blind fate was against the Bishop. Berry was infected with cholera. When Cosnac arrived at Milly, a little village in the Gatinais, east of Etampes, he was shivering with fever. The next morning he was worse. Pressing forward, at Villejuif he became so violently ill that Claude de Cosnac, a kinsman who was with him, advised him to throw caution to the winds and enter the capital for medical relief. Villejuif is not more than eight miles from Notre Dame, and the Bishop gave way. He would be able to hide with more safety in Paris than in the tiny village, and he would also have a better chance of speedy cure. At two o'clock in the early morning he entered the forbidden city and descended at a house in the Rue aux Ours belonging to a gold wire-

drawer in whom he could trust. The tradesman called in his doctor, a certain Monsieur Akakia.

Cosnac remained in the Rue aux Ours nine days. He managed to inform Madame de Saint Chaumont of his lodging and illness. Whether Akakia acted as a confidential messenger is not clear. But he was a physician with many patients, and, as he told Cosnac that he had sick cases to visit at Saint Germain, he was probably able to see the lady in waiting either at that palace or else at Saint Cloud.

On the ninth day of his malady, at eight o'clock in the morning, the quiet Rue aux Ours was invaded by a company of twenty "archers," or armed police. They blocked the street at each end. The Bishop of Valence had been betrayed to the King by Monsieur Akakia. Cosnac was in bed, nursed by his valet and another relation, Monsieur de La Marque. The "exempt," or officer in command of the company, entered the room, and walked to the bedside.*

"This is the man I am looking for," was his ominous remark.

He refused to produce his warrant, and left three men on guard in the chamber. The Bishop was not to be allowed to pass from their sight. But Cosnac, although racked by fever, did not lose his presence of mind. He held two letters from Madame and Madame de Saint Chaumont, and it was vital to suppress evidence of the fact that the journey had been made at the instigation of the Princess. Taking advantage of a momentary relaxation of the watch, he deposited the documents in a domestic convenience from which they could not easily be rescued. Then he waited for the next step with an easier mind.

* Cosnac was arrested by Desgrez, the celebrated police officer who dealt with Sainte-Croix and Madame de Brinvilliers.

At three o'clock in the afternoon a messenger arrived from Saint Germain. The Bishop was to be conducted to the prison of For-l'Evêque. He protested. He was too ill to move. The journey would kill him.

The officer was implacable.

"You must obey. We have a coach at the door. Your men can carry you into it. Otherwise we shall take you by force."

The valet slipped a dressing-gown on to his master. One by one the "exempt" searched the clothes. Forgotten, in a pocket, was a letter from Madame de Saint Chaumont, which had escaped Cosnac's memory. He tried to recover it, but the guard was too quick. It contained nothing but expressions of goodwill. But it was evidence which condemned both priest and lady, as well as their mistress. The officers then opened the Bishop's despatch box, finding nothing but episcopal papers and three hundred louis d'or.

Cosnac was now unnerved. Twice during the journey to the prison he fainted. At For-l'Evêque his room was so repulsively dirty that even Akakia—whose treachery had apparently not yet been discovered by his patient—was unable to remain in it. At seven o'clock the governor made an official visit and demanded his name. His attitude was so insolent that Cosnac refused to answer.

"If I treat you as we usually deal with the people who pretend to be mute you'll soon speak."

During the night three guards remained in the foetid room. Smoking, drinking, and singing, they effectually destroyed any sleep the sick man might have enjoyed. At nine o'clock the following morning the officer in charge reappeared.

He apologised profusely, and made every excuse for not having recognised his prisoner.

“The King has been very angry with me for being so stupid as to arrest you,” he explained. He returned to the Bishop some of the gold coins found in the despatch box. The remainder had vanished. They were probably confiscated to pay the prison dues. Then Cosnac was set at liberty.

He was bewildered at the tragi-comedy. If he had committed a crime he was ready to stand his trial. But, secure in his innocence, he considered that whoever was guilty of the outrage which had consigned him so brutally to For-l’Evêque should be discovered and punished. He refused to leave the prison, and wrote immediately to the King. The letter was not delivered, but given to Louvois who was in Paris. The minister energetically used every possible indirect influence to soothe the Bishop and silence the scandal. Within a few hours the ecclesiastical agents waited upon Cosnac and begged him to leave the prison. The false Akakia declared that if he slept in it a second night his life would be forfeit. At five o’clock the Bishop was carried in a litter to his bed in the Rue aux Ours.

The next day brought the King’s command. Monsieur de Valence was to take up his residence in the village of Ile-Jourdain, a hamlet in the southwest not far from Toulouse. There was no appeal. Exiled from Paris and also from his episcopal seat, he accepted his fate with resignation. Slowly he travelled across France to the tiny hamlet which was to form his prison. The journey occupied twenty-two days. He was four months recovering from his attack of fever.

The letter written by Madame de Saint Chaumont

was skilfully manipulated by Henrietta's enemies. She was compelled to resign her post as governess to Monsieur's children. The princess thus lost the services of another devoted friend. Recognising that her disgrace was permanent, and unable to fight against a ceaseless stream of calumny and ill-will, the unlucky lady-in-waiting fled from the world and entered a Carmelite convent.*

The arrest of Cosnac, and the dismissal of Madame de Saint Chaumont, created a most unfavourable sensation, which was even stronger outside France than at the Court. Ralph Montagu, who had been appointed ambassador extraordinary to Louis XIV in January 1669, related the whole history to Arlington in his confidential letters. During the early months of his mission he does not seem to have been on the friendliest terms with Madame, but before the end of the year he was her devoted servant, and his letters display a feeling of personal resentment at the gross manner in which she had been treated.

On 26th November 1669, he tells Arlington the wretched tale. "Some time ago the Bishop of Valence, first Aumonier to Monsieur, who is counted a man of as good parts as any in France, and looked upon by everybody as one particularly devoted to Madame's service, was forbidden the Court, and had order to sell his place, upon some displeasure Monsieur had taken against him, the use of which was from some advices given him not to live in so scandalous a way as he did both to God and man with the Chevalier de Lorraine. The King was easily brought to consent to his removal from Court, the

* Madame de Saint Chaumont died 31st July 1688—"une forte honnête femme" wrote Mademoiselle de Montpensier.

said Bishop having been represented to him as a man that put his brother upon ways and counsels that he did not like. Madame was extremely mortified at the removal of this man from about Monsieur, looking upon it as an effect of the Chevalier de Lorraine's power. At the same time that all this *brouillerye* was, Madame had a great confidence and trust in Madame de Saint Chaumont, sister to the Mareschal de Gramont, and governess to her children. She is counted here as good a kind of woman as any in France, and in my opinion a degree above what we call a discreet woman in England. This woman, it seems, the King of France never fancied, but never could have any exceptions against, but because Madame loved her and esteemed her, and she would not betray her to the King."

Montagu then tells how the Bishop visited Paris, was arrested upon the pretext of being a coiner of false money, and the discovery of the letter from Madame de Saint-Chaumont. As soon as the King saw this, "he said he was glad he had found anything against her, and so sent to Monsieur, who was at Paris with Madame, to come to him, and commanded him immediately to turn Madame de Saint-Chaumont out of her place, without saying anything to Madame, who he knew loved her so well. After he had given his orders to Monsieur, he sent Monsieur de Turenne to Madame to acquaint her with the thing, to whom Madame replied that of necessity she must obey the King's will, but that willingly she would never part with a servant she loved so well, that had given no other occasion than this."

The Princess asked Montagu to appeal on her behalf to the King (Louis XIV). "After arguing

the thing a great while, I could have no other reason for his doing the thing than that he had resolved to do it. All France, as well as Madame, looks upon this as a very harsh thing, and the rather because that Madame de Montespan, who hates Madame and Madame de Saint Chaumont particularly, is at the bottom of the business. . . . If the King (Charles II) had seen how much Madame has been troubled at this business, I am sure it would trouble him extremely, for I never saw anything in my life done so rudely and so uncivilly. The King told Monsieur, who can hold nothing, and so told it Madame again, that he believed Madame would complain to her brother, the King of England, and he perhaps would take it so ill that he would not be his friend."

" ' Well,' says he, ' let her be whose sister she will, she shall obey me.' "

Montagu finished his letter with the reflection that by such doings men's humours could be judged, and so, he advised Arlington, " you may take your measures for matters of greater consequence. The King's chief pleasure here is to domineer and insult over those that are in his power, and I will conclude with thanking God, both for you and myself, that we serve so good a master."

Madame herself wrote to Charles II. On 12th December the ambassador returned to the subject, telling Arlington " how necessary it is for the King for his own sake as well as for his sister's, if anything is to be done, to do something or get something to be done that may make her a little more considered here. The little regard that the King and Monsieur have had to her in this business of Madame de Saint Chaumont, is taken notice of by everybody, for not

only all the French, but all the strangers here are in expectation how the King of England will resent this. . . . I will say nothing to you of Monsieur's usage of Madame, but if she had married a country gentleman in England of five thousand pound a year she would have lived a better life than she doth here ; for Monsieur, though he be a very wise Prince, doth, as Sir Daniel used to, take a pleasure to cross his wife in everything."

On the same day Montagu wrote to King Charles : " By all the observation that I have made since I have been in this country, nobody can live with more discretion than Madame does, both towards the King and Monsieur, and all the rest of the world ; but she is so greatly esteemed by everybody that I look upon that as partly the occasion of her being so ill-used both by the King and her husband." Montagu laid the whole evil at the door of the Chevalier de Lorraine, and he suggested that " nothing could be more for Madame's comfort, as well as credit, than that your Majesty should desire to have her make a journey to you into England in the spring."

The affair was of direct political importance. " Your Majesty," writes Montagu, " may perhaps think me very impertinent for writing of this, but I assure you, sir, not only all the French, but the Dutch, the Swedish, and Spanish Ministers are in expectation of what your Majesty will do in this business, for' they all know Madame is the thing in the world that is dearest to you ; and they whose interest it is to have your Majesty and the King here be upon ill terms, are very glad that he has done a thing which they think will anger you."

Yet a third letter was written by the energetic ambassador on the same day, this time to his sister Lady Harvey. The Abbé de Clermont had won from Madame a sum of four thousand louis d'or. Although the debt was five years old Madame had not been able to pay. Now the Abbé had bought the post of Gentleman of the Robes to Louis XIV for 50,000 pistoles.* In order to make up this huge sum he called upon Madame to discharge her debt of honour. "She sent for me and told me of the business, being very unwilling Monsieur or the King should know it." The money was borrowed upon the ambassador's personal guarantee. "If I get well off of this, I promise you I will never meddle with such businesses again," said Montagu to his sister.

Cosnac in his solitude had been utterly extinguished. His case proved the truth of the Psalmist's reflection on the gratitude of princes—and other men. People he had helped in the days of his prosperity refused to answer his appeals. Not one dared to place his petition before the King. Even the clergy did not openly resent the indignities which had been heaped upon the most active member of their order. Cosnac had been exceptionally capable and prominent as a bishop. Yet, of one hundred and thirteen French prelates, only eight wrote to him during his disgrace, and but five actually visited him at Ile-Jourdain. The high road passed through the town, and Cosnac was able to sit at his window and watch his episcopal brethren as they drove through the one long street and endeavoured to escape his gaze. Others did not wish to hide their ill-will, and

* In 1678 a pistole was worth about 17*s.* 6*d.* English money, and a louis d'or was the same.

advised Louvois to make a drastic example of the Gascon—probably with an eye upon the several benefices which would fall vacant.

One friend did not change. On the 28th December 1669 the Princess wrote. “If I had not received news from your acquaintances I should have been much troubled, and I fear that the hardships of your journey cannot have improved your health. But, in learning that you have not been so ill since your departure I notice (as from my own experience) that a healthy body does not depend upon a contented mind. We can have the first without the second. If it were not so I should not find myself as I am—after having had the deep sorrow of losing you; and your own sorrow could hardly have resisted the fatigue of a bitter season as well as the chagrin of leaving me. Madame de Fiennes showed your letter to Monsieur. He blindly follows the Chevalier de Lorraine, and there is no sign of an alteration. I do not hope for it any longer. . . . If the King keeps to the promises he makes to me every day I shall have less sorrow in the future. . . .”

Then she tells Cosnac that she is beginning to doubt all these fair words, and Father Zoccoli is advising her to make peace with the Chevalier. “I assure him that I must have some esteem or obligation to force myself to like a man who has been the cause of all my troubles—past and present. Esteem I can never have, and obligation is difficult enough, considering his conduct towards me.” Her relations with Monsieur were very strained because she continued to reproach him for his intimacy with Lorraine.

“Adieu! Nothing has diminished the esteem I have for you.”

The dying year was full of gloom. She had lost happiness and hope. With the Chevalier de Lorraine at the height of his power there could be little gaiety in the miserable household of Orleans. The bells which announced the new year brought no consolation to one broken woman.*

* Louis de la Tressan, who ultimately bought Cosnac's appointment, was nephew to the Abbé de la Vergne, the friend of Madame de Sévigné and her daughter. He was made Bishop of Mans in 1671, and received several rich benefices from the King and Monsieur. Saint-Simon says that he was a man of the world who was mixed up in several unsavoury intrigues. He was supposed to have had relations with Sainte-Croix and Madame de Brinvilliers, and was suspected of having poisoned his predecessor, Monsieur de Lavardin.

VII

Disgrace of the Chevalier de Lorraine : Philip's anger : Charles II and Louis XIV : Bribery of the English : Preparations for Henrietta's visit to England : Philip gives his consent : The royal tour in Flanders : The "Treaty of Dover" : Henrietta returns to France

THE disgrace of the Chevalier de Lorraine came abruptly and without warning. When the Princess wrote to the Bishop of Valence on the 28th December 1669, she anticipated no immediate change in her wretched situation. A month later she was announcing the welcome news to Madame de Saint-Chaumont. Unfortunately for the historian, the Duchess was so eager to renew her protestations of undying affection towards her late attendant that she tells us little concerning the actual dismissal of the Chevalier. Knowing that her personal correspondence was always subject to examination whilst passing through the post, she probably deemed it wiser to reserve the details of Lorraine's fall until she could talk unreservedly with Madame de Saint-Chaumont.*

As the acknowledged favourite and intimate of

* Madame's correspondence was watched in England as well as in France. Montagu reported to Arlington, the 23rd April 1669: "Monsieur de Turenne and he [the Earl of St. Albans] and Madame and Ruvigni are in great consultations together, and couriers are some time (*sic*) despatched into England, which perhaps you do not know of; but if you would order to the post-master at Dover, you would easily find it out."

Philip of Orleans, Lorraine was naturally detested by the numerous parasites of the Court, who yearned to fill his dishonourable position. The King was able to shut his eyes to the scandal of his influence over Monsieur, which had developed to the discredit of the whole royal family. Even the Abbé de Choisy, whose standard of morality was not above the low level of his associates, considered the prince's attitude degrading and undignified. Although Louis continued upon affectionate terms with his sister-in-law, Lorraine's insolence towards Madame did not arouse protest or opposition. The thunderbolt only fell when the monarch believed that Lorraine was advising Philip to take action antagonistic to the royal wishes. This was the unpardonable crime. It wrecked the career of Daniel de Cosnac, and it sent the Chevalier southwards under a heavy escort.

From the memoirs of Mademoiselle de Montpensier and the Journal of Olivier d'Ormesson we can piece together the history of those eventful days in January. The Chevalier tried to persuade Louis that his brother had been hardly dealt with.

"Sire, Monsieur is a good man. He loves your Majesty. Assuredly he will never do anything to displease you. I will stand guarantee for that."

The King expressed his happiness at the change in his brother's attitude. On the 29th January the Bishop of Langres died. Better known as the Abbé de la Rivière, he had been the favourite of Gaston of Orleans, brother to Louis XIII, and had received from his patron the gift of several abbeys which were now in the appanage of Monsieur. It was customary for the sons of the reigning monarch to ask for the

presentation, and the Pope accepted the nomination of the King as a matter of course.

Monsieur acted without loss of time. He at once gave his friend the Abbey of Saint Benoît-sur-Loire, a benefice which had in earlier days been exclusively reserved for the greatest ecclesiastics of the State, such as Cardinal Duprat, Odet de Coligny, Cardinal Châtillon, and Richelieu. It was not only the second largest basilican church in France, but, dedicated to the founder of the Benedictine order, the Abbey had been sanctified with the relics of the saint. The Chevalier was not a fit person to enjoy the revenues of so historic a foundation, and this was evidently the King's opinion if we are to trust Ralph Montagu. "I happened to be in Madame's chamber when Monsieur heard it, who, before a great deal of company, told the Chevalier de Lorraine that he would give him those two benefices, though it seems the King had already told Monsieur that he would never consent that the Chevalier de Lorraine should have them, not thinking him a man of a life fit for church benefices."

Whilst the Court congratulated Lorraine on his good fortune Philip tried to induce the King to alter his mind. But Louis remained firm. No entreaty moved him. Returning to his apartments, Monsieur requested his wife to renew the demand. Henrietta could hardly have disguised her distaste for the mission. She loathed the Chevalier, to whom she attributed her marital disasters. But she did her best, and we find the story in Montagu's correspondence. "Madame endeavoured to interpose between the King and Monsieur. The King is very well satisfied with her part, and has declared that she had no hand in this matter against the

Chevalier. . . . Monsieur, I believe, in his heart thinks that this is Madame's doing, though she has in the opinion of all the world behaved herself the best to Monsieur that can be in this matter."

When Philip realised that all his applications were in vain he decided openly to insult his brother. Ordering his rooms to be dismantled and closed, he declared that he would live at Saint Germain no longer. He would quit the Court.

The minister, Le Tellier, attempted to persuade him to stop. Monsieur said that if he had a house a thousand leagues away he would go to it. Louis had gone to Versailles, and a messenger was despatched to warn him. Philip's intended action was too grave to pass disregarded. During his short journey Louis considered the position, and arrived at the conclusion that Lorraine was at the bottom of the mischief. His brother's anger was being kept at fever-pitch by the Chevalier, who dared to question the royal command.

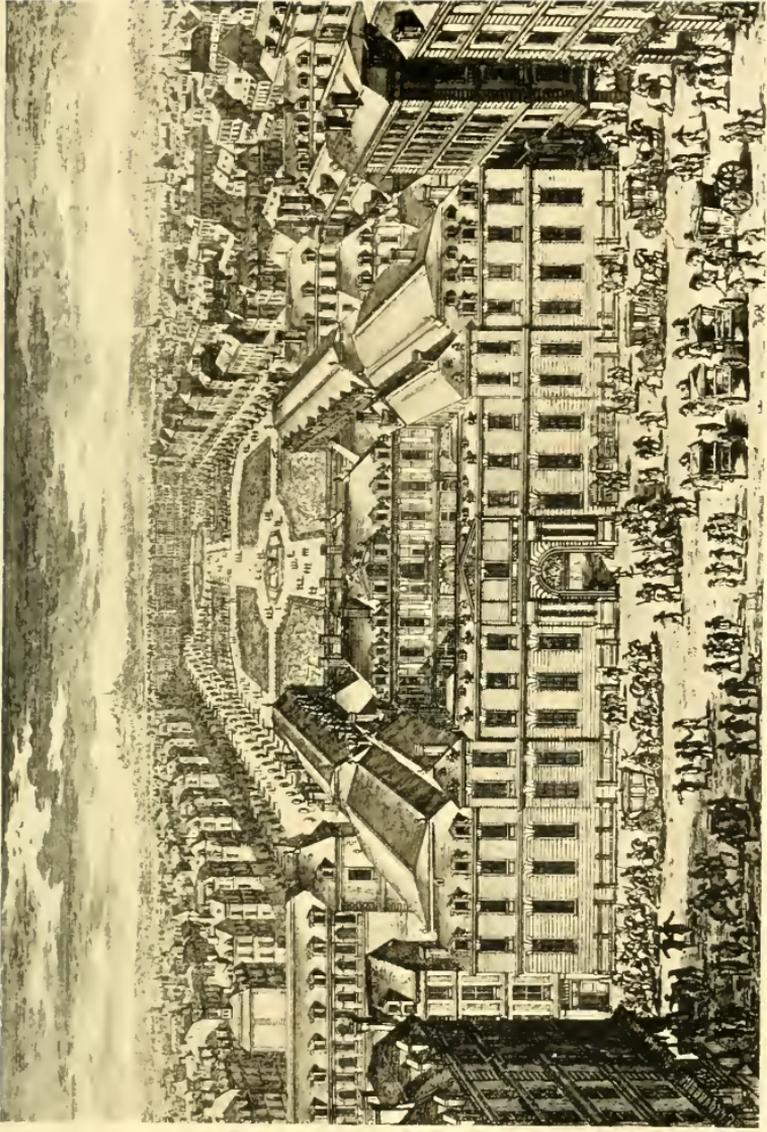
Olivier d'Ormesson relates what happened that evening at Saint Germain. "The King gave orders for the Chevalier's arrest. Guards were placed round Monsieur's apartment where the Chevalier was. Monsieur Le Tellier acquainted Monsieur with the King's resolution, and, after Monsieur had embraced him and witnessed much friendship, the Chevalier went out, and at the door of the chamber found the captain of the guards, who made him prisoner. He was taken by the Lyons road to Montpellier. Monsieur left Saint Germain with Madame at midnight, went to Paris where he remained a day, and allowed no one to see him."

The last sentence is not strictly correct. Mademoiselle de Montpensier was in Paris at the time,

and received the news early. "Monsieur arrived in the night with Madame. They are going to Villers-Cotterets. The Chevalier de Lorraine has been arrested." She went without delay to the Palais-Royal. Monsieur was much upset, and complained bitterly of the manner the King behaved towards him. He repeated that he was going to Villers-Cotterets as he was unable to remain at Court. Madame was unhappy at seeing Monsieur so annoyed. She knew who would have to live with his ill-temper, and remarked that although she was not on good terms with the Chevalier she regretted his misfortune. But Mademoiselle mentions that she seemed very much at her ease, and looked exceedingly well. In the afternoon Monsieur visited his cousin to bid her adieu. During the evening Mademoiselle returned to the Palais-Royal "where we laughed a good deal." The next day they left Paris for the rural solitudes of Villers-Cotterets. It was very cold, and there was much snow on the ground.

"Madame has desired that all letters to her may be sent constantly to me, and I will send a servant to her with them," wrote Montagu to London. "This action of Monsieur will make more noise out of France than it does here."

Monsieur loved company, and his self-imposed retirement did not quieten his distraught nerves. The more he considered the exile of his beloved Lorraine the more he raved. In his violence he sought a victim. At his hand was Madame. She had instigated the vengeance which had fallen upon his favourite. Mademoiselle de Montpensier gives a vivid picture of the daily quarrels between Philip and Henrietta, which gathered to such storms of passion that finally she intervened.



THE PALAIS ROYAL
After an engraving by Perelle

“Remember,” she cried, addressing Monsieur, “your wife is at least the mother of your children.”

Monsieur's reply unveiled his motives. Lorraine was in confinement at Pierre-Encise. He had even been deprived of his valet. Philip could not deprive Madame of her servants, but she too would be confined at Villers-Cotterets until the day when the Chevalier was permitted to re-enter Paris.

“You will understand how troubled I am at the step Monsieur has taken,” wrote the unfortunate Princess to Turenne. “How little, compared with this, do I mind the weariness of the place, the unpleasantness of his company in his present mood, and a thousand other things of which I might complain.”

Monsieur's action had upset all his brother's plans, and a family scandal was now affecting State negotiations of the utmost importance. At first, to Philip's wrath Louis applied no salve. The imprisonment of Madame at Villers-Cotterets reacted upon Lorraine, and the King retaliated by ordering the Chevalier from the semi-liberty of the fortress of Pierre-Encise at Lyons to the rigid seclusion of the dreaded Château d'If, on the little island facing the port of Marseilles. But Louis imagined that he could force the inclinations of his brother too easily. Philip remained passive, and did not move from Villers-Cotterets.

For the moment the King had lost the services of an indispensable servant. Henrietta had been drawn into the vortex of foreign diplomacy. She was not blind to the inherent selfishness of her brother-in-law's character. In a letter to Madame de Saint-Chaumont, written at this period, she said: “Although the King is very well disposed towards

me I find him insupportable in a thousand ways, committing faults and imprudences unbelievable without intention." Her friendship was more than that of a bright and attractive companion. He found her to be a singularly skilful adviser, and—with one exception—free from the taint of personal interestedness. Daughter and grand-daughter of kings, she had inherited all the skill of her forefathers in the management of men and the subtle art of directing the ship of State. Louis proposed to make every use of her genius in the vast political scheme he was endeavouring to carry to success.

Whilst England and the United Provinces were striving for maritime supremacy and commercial pre-eminence, Louis XIV was seeking to obtain a hold upon the colonies of Spain. His invasion of the Netherlands in support of Maria-Theresa's claim to the Spanish succession was an open violation of definite treaties. The Infanta of Spain had renounced her claims upon becoming Queen of France. But treaties are made to be broken, and the aggrandisement of France, together with the decadence of Spain, put a new aspect upon affairs. Louis XIV and his Ministers dreamed of occupying the first place amongst the States of Europe. The only drawback was the attitude of England. With her agreement—active or passive—they were free to plunder their neighbours without fear. Her opposition, however, would probably bring all their plans to the ground.

Charles II of England had been compelled at the Peace of Breda to patch up a treaty with the Dutch which was far from honourable to his nation. He had never forgotten his wanderings in Holland, and in his memory still lingered recollections of the

lampoons which bespattered him from the presses of Amsterdam. All his personal inclinations made him desire an alliance with France, and his Ministers did not wish to drive the Low Countries into the arms of Louis XIV. His people were hostile to a French understanding. France meant Rome and the Catholic religion, and the cavaliers in the House of Commons were still loyal to the Anglican Church. The English King had been reared in an atmosphere of deceit and falsehood. He was not blind to the fact that the success of France's continental expansion depended upon his acquiescence. His own Parliament refused to vote him adequate supplies, and he saw without shame an opportunity of blackmailing his brother-in-law. But he was determined not to sell himself too cheaply, and he acted with his usual duplicity.

His earlier terms were so rapacious that they disgusted Louis. He was willing to allow France to rob Spain if he received some of the booty—cash, mercantile privileges, a part of the Netherlands. When his propositions were refused, he adroitly authorised his Ministers to enter into a new treaty with the Dutch, and the convention of the Hague was immediately joined by the Swedes. The Triple Alliance (January 23, 1668) between England, Holland, and Sweden was an instant check upon the French aggressions in the Spanish Netherlands. The three Powers bound themselves to resist France, and Louis saw his position rapidly weakening. He made peace with Spain at Aix-la-Chapelle in the following May, and then considered how best to obtain the goodwill of England. For the key of the situation was at Whitehall.

Ruvigny, who had acted without distinction as

ambassador, was recalled in 1668, and replaced by Colbert de Croissy, brother to the greater Colbert, who had so triumphantly re-established the finances of France. Henrietta of Orleans never ceased to correspond with her brother, and in July she received a letter from him in which he wrote : " I am very glad to find the inclination there is to meet with the constant desire I have always had to make a stricter alliance with France than there has hitherto been. . . . When Monsieur de Colbert comes I hope he will have those powers as will finish what we all desire." The fresh negotiations made little progress. Charles wrote to Henrietta : " You cannot choose but believe that it must be dangerous to me at home to make an entire league till first the great and principal interest of this nation be secured, which is trade."

The English Court was rich with French money, and Louis zealously bribed any person who might influence Charles. Even one of the royal mistresses participated in the golden shower. Lady Castlemaine displayed her readiness to help France. In reply Lionne wrote to the ambassador in London : " The King thinks well of your efforts to obtain the help of the Countess of Castlemaine, and reads with interest of her point-blank way of telling you how King Charles had confided to her that Lord Arlington would not hear of an alliance with France. His Majesty hopes that you will profit by this good beginning, and he authorises you, if you judge well, to let her know that you have reported what she said to his Majesty, who charges you to offer her his warmest thanks. In this order of ideas, the King has directed your brother, the Treasurer, to send her a handsome present, which you can give her as if

from yourself. Ladies are fond of such keepsakes whatever may be their breeding or disposition : and a nice little present can in any case do no harm."

Colbert de Croissy entered into his duties with exceptional energy. A letter dated 7th February 1669, shows how he was engaged. "I have given away all that I brought from France, not excepting the skirts and smocks made up for my wife, and I have not got money enough to go on at this rate. Nor do I see the use of going to much expense, in satisfying the greed of the women here for rich keepsakes. The King often says that the only woman who has really a hold on him is his sister the Duchess of Orleans. If handsome gifts are lavished on Madame Castlemaine, his Majesty may think that in spite of his assertions to the contrary we fancy that she rules him, and take it in bad part. I should therefore advise giving her only such trifling tokens as a pair of French gloves, ribands, a Parisian undress gown, or some little object of finery."

The Duke of Buckingham was the first to suggest the employment of Henrietta of Orleans. He had already met her, and, as Gilbert Burnet writes, he had "a great ascendant" over Charles. His liveliness of wit endeared him to the monarch. "The Duke of Bucks is one that has studied the whole body of vice," said another contemporary. Out of hatred to his rival the Earl of Arlington, who was bribed by Spain, he devoted himself to the furtherance of French interests. Arlington (according to the Marquis de Ruvigny) "would sell his soul to the devil to worst an enemy." But his chief agent, Mr. Secretary Williamson, was not to be corrupted, although Buckingham's confidential agent, Sir Ellis Leighton, was more easily tempted. Louis XIV wrote an

autograph letter to Colbert de Croissy concerning them. "I see very well that I shall make no real progress so long as I have not gained the Duke and Arlington by forwarding their separate interests. If each has a strong motive for helping me, they will both, however they may detest each other, plot for a common object. Hints may be held out to Leighton and Williamson, that they are to receive some gifts from me. I prefer that it should be in money. When they have received payment of this kind, I shall in a degree have the advantage of them. And it seems to me that when they are thus in my power you can without danger use plain speech with them." Leighton received four hundred pistoles and a ring worth an equal amount. Pepys says he was "a wonderful witty, ready man for sudden answers and little tales." Colbert de Croissy had a different tale. "We know what a knave he is," wrote the ambassador. "Nevertheless he is active, pushing, and intriguing; and as he has the ear of the King, rubs shoulders with the highest men at Court, and is a leading member of the Merchant Taylors' Company and of the Corporation of the City of London, I believe he can keep us well informed." So Leighton received a French pension worth about £340 a year, and Louis wrote to Colbert: "Seeing how irresolute the King of England is, do not neglect to gain Arlington. I would willingly spend on him twenty thousand gold pieces. You must take care not to frighten the King by letting him feel that I am seeking to draw him into a war with Holland."

That was the crux of the whole intricate intrigue. If Charles had any definite wish, beyond that of raising more money from his unaccommodating

Parliament, it was a desire to bring his country back to its old faith. Whether he was actually a Catholic upon his restoration to the throne remains debatable. But he admitted in conversation (January 25, 1669) "how uneasy it was to him not to profess the faith he believed." In August 1668 he was in correspondence with the General of the Jesuits at Rome, and the novice who was sent to him with secret instructions was James La Cloche, his own natural son. His brother, the Duke of York, was ready to avow his conversion, and Charles, in conversation with some of his Catholic ministers, decided that the reconciliation of England with Rome could only be effected with the assistance of France. Human character is at all times and ages an extraordinary study. Charles II was the last man to be credited with deeply religious feelings. Yet when he discussed his inclination towards the old creed tears filled his eyes. By temperament he was a man of peace, "not bloody nor cruel," according to Evelyn. He had seen the horrors of war, and had no wish to rouse again the furies. His deeply rooted selfishness forbade him to take trouble of any description. Yet he knew that once the religious problem was reopened it could only lead to revolution and a second loss of the crown.

Louis XIV was soon acquainted with the new movement. Henrietta of Orleans corresponded with Charles through an Italian adventurer, who had gained reputation as a fortune-teller and astrologer. Prégiani was a Neapolitan, and had been given the Abbey of Beaubec in Normandy. He made an impression on the English Court, but spoilt all his chances at Newmarket. Colbert de Croissy wrote to Lionne (April 1, 1669): "The Abbé hopes that

he will be able to overcome the King's taste for mental trifling, and to bring him to take a good resolution by forecasting in his horoscope impending disasters. I wish I could be confident on this point, because the King said to me, on arriving from Newmarket, that the abbé's predictions about the races there were wrong in every single case, and that his errors had caused great loss to the Duke of Monmouth's servants; who regulated their bets according to his forecasts. Certain gain had been promised to them all. The King of England has since puzzled the abbé about his misleading prognostics; but as his Majesty's curiosity is great, perhaps he will resort in private to what he affects to laugh at in public." However the abbé did not recover his position and was recalled to France, one of many similar instances which have proved that the sporting "tipster" can expect little help from the occult sciences.

The Duke of Buckingham had already fancied himself in love with Henrietta of Orleans, and been the object of Philip's jealousy. As a Protestant peer he had been excluded from any knowledge of "the great secret" which embraced the reconciliation of England to Rome. But, in order to deaden his suspicions, the princess had continued to correspond with him on other subjects. In some way he got wind of the Italian's mission, which he misinterpreted. He believed that the Abbé Prégiani had been sent over by Henrietta to strengthen her influence with Charles. Buckingham was annoyed. He was the intimate friend of the English King, and he had not disguised his feelings towards the princess. If she wanted to approach the monarch why should she disdain his mediation. He complained to Ellis Leighton, who retailed the conversation to Colbert

de Croissy. "She sends a humbugging astrologer, who flatters himself that I am his dupe in love and politics, and who makes me a laughing-stock for Monmouth and Hamilton." When the ambassador reported the circumstances to Louis he added: "He shows all the fury of a too enterprising gallant, who is vexed at finding himself an object of mirth. Perhaps the best thing to do would be to send over Madame herself, to keep alive her brother's tenderness and heal the wounded vanity of Buckingham, which may breed hatred where love was."

In 1669 Henrietta was unable to visit England. Her daughter was born in August, and her mother died in September. It was the aim of Louis to hasten the negotiations. Nothing was better for his purpose than the inclination of Charles to seek the protection of Rome. If he succeeded in restoring the Roman Catholic Church in England, Whitehall would become dependent to a very large extent upon Saint Germain, and its foreign policy would fall into line with the interests of France. But if Charles failed, England would be crippled for years by internal dissension, and France would be free to follow her own policy on the Continent. In the autumn of 1669 Colbert de Croissy and Arlington had arrived at some definite conditions. France would pay an annual subsidy to Charles, which would release the King from any servitude to the uncertain temper of his Parliament. If religious troubles provoked rebellion France would come to Charles's aid with money and troops. From a French point of view the most important condition was the last. In the near future France and England agreed to combine in order to crush the growing power of the Dutch Republic.

In a letter dated 2nd January 1670, Colbert de Croissy wrote to Louis XIV that the King of England passionately desired to see his sister and converse with her. "I was greatly surprised at the intimation, and I lose no time in sending you an express to say that this is a case, if ever there was one, in which the iron should be hammered while it is hot." Henrietta was already in correspondence with her brother. Charles desired to see the reconciliation of England with Rome, which he thought would unquestionably consolidate his supremacy on the throne. Louis considered the Dutch war of primary importance. If it came second the military power of England would probably be disintegrated by religious differences. The English Ministers insisted that out of the common conquests France should cede to them Minorca in the Mediterranean, Ostend, Walcheren, Sluys, Kadzand by Flushing, and all the colonies in America under Spanish rule. "As the Senate and Republic of Hamburg were bound by ties of interest to the United Provinces, war was to be declared on them." In fact, all commercial rivals were to be swept out of the field.

Colbert had his own ideas respecting the three Hansa towns. Since the close of the Thirty Years War wealth had gradually concentrated itself at Lubeck, Bremen, and Hamburg, and he ardently wished to attract the savings of the German merchants into the coffers of his great companies for exploiting the East and West Indies. "The most odious of the clauses," wrote Colbert de Croissy to Louis XIV, "is the one binding us to attack Hamburg without any given motive or plausible excuse. To do so would be to bring down foolishly on our own

backs the Hanseatic towns and the princes of the German empire." Henrietta wrote to her brother that Louis was shocked at the demand, and that Arlington must be forced to modify it. This letter arrived in London during the last week of January 1670. Before a reply could be received Louis had disgraced the Chevalier de Lorraine, and Philip vanished with his wife in the solitudes of Villers-Cotterets. Monsieur had been carefully excluded from any participation in the negotiations towards an Anglo-French treaty, but he probably knew that Henrietta's presence at Court was vital to the success of French diplomacy.

Monsieur's action provoked protests in every quarter. A curious letter from Montagu to King Charles, dated 5th February 1670, reveals that the dismissal of Madame de Saint-Chaumont had not been forgotten. Charles had ordered his ambassador to say anything to Louis that "might be of service or advantage to Madame." Montagu had therefore obtained an interview with the French king, and informed his own master of the result. "You had commanded me to let him know . . . that there was nothing you were so sensible of as of any kindness or unkindness done to her; and that therefore, she having lost the Queen her mother, you recommended her now to his care, as the person in the world you valued and loved the most. This took the best in the world, and I hope I have done nothing in it that your Majesty will disapprove of; my intentions I am sure were good." Louis expressed every desire to serve the interests of Madame. "She should see how much he was her friend." But, adds Montagu, with suspicion, "whether he meant this last action

or no I do not pretend, and therefore will say nothing more of it."

On the same day he wrote to Arlington: "I hope when this storm is over she will have a happy and quiet time of it, for the removal of this man (Lorraine) will make all those humours in Monsieur cease, that so vexed and disturbed her." On 21st February, the ambassador had a long interview with Louis XIV. "He made me a whole relation of all that had passed between him and his brother since this difference, wherein he complained of, and there did really appear several neglects on Monsieur's part towards him, as going away from Court without his leave, and, since his absence, never sending once to inquire after nor make any compliment to the King, who was for several days indisposed and took physic. He concluded with telling me that if Monsieur came back without capitulating or standing on terms, that he would receive him with all the kindness and affection that one brother could have for another; for he loved him so well that he could never forget that he was his brother, and, on the other side, could not also forget that he was also his King." On the 23rd of the same month Montagu himself went to Villers-Cotterets.

In addition to Louis and the ambassador, Charles and his brother James, together with the Earl of St. Albans (who had occupied so ambiguous a position in the household of Queen Henrietta Maria), were attempting to bring the sulky Orleans to a better humour. The situation was too strained to last, and Philip was afraid that his wife might be provoked into some drastic action. What forced Louis to move on behalf of his sister-in-law was the news that Charles was displaying an inclination to

make up his quarrels with his Parliament, and had already been voted a considerable increase of revenue. The English ambassador in Paris, Montagu, wrote to Arlington in February: "You cannot imagine how blank this Court were at the news of the Parliament's readiness to supply our master with what money he desired." Louis recognised that the prize was slipping out of his grasp, for, if Charles became financially independent, any English treaty subservient to France was hopeless. The time had passed for ambassadors and envoys. Henrietta herself must persuade her brother to enter a French alliance. On Saturday 1st March Olivier d'Ormesson noted in his journal that Colbert had gone to Nanteuil on his way to Villers-Cotterets, "to see Monsieur on the part of the King. From that one judged that a reconciliation was made." On Monday he chronicles: "Monsieur and Madame returned from Villers-Cotterets to sleep at Saint Germain, where they were received with the greatest joy in the world. It was pretended that he had returned without condition, on the word of Colbert that being at Court he would obtain everything he desired. Others said that the two abbeys had been given to the brother of the Chevalier, who would himself receive a pension of 10,000 crowns. Time will reveal the truth; but it is certain that a courier has been despatched with orders to allow the Chevalier to remain in Marseilles, and to give him the town for prison, instead of taking him to the Château d'If, where he was being conducted."

The King had been compelled to give way. The Chevalier was refused permission to enter Paris, but he received his liberty and left Marseilles to travel in Italy. Perhaps it would have been better had

he been allowed to resume his place at the Court. His absence continued to irritate Philip, who by no means forgave his wife. She received from the King a present of 50,000 livres in twenty purses, some diamonds, "and other gallantries."

On 10th March the Duchess found leisure to write to Madame de Saint Chaumont. "I have not been able to write to you from Villers-Cotterets, because a safe conveyance was rare, and the post is too perilous for anything more than a compliment . . . Monsieur continues always to believe that I have been the cause of the Chevalier's exile, and that it is the result of the promises I made to you. . . He hopes by ill-treating me to make me wish for the return of the Chevalier. I have told him that he will never succeed by such means. . . . He continues to poison the King's mind against you, and he is so ashamed and so offended at having done you an injustice that he will never pardon you." Two weeks later she wrote to the same friend: "It seems as if all the tranquillity of my life went with you, and the injustice which has been committed leaves neither peace nor repose to those who are the cause of it. I suffer, and the irritation of Monsieur falls upon me. He is very annoyed because the King my brother wishes me to visit him. These irritations have carried him to lengths you have never witnessed. Without being afraid that the world may support his complaints against me he says that I have ill-treated him, that I have reproached him concerning the life he has been leading with the Chevalier, and many things of this sort. People have laughed at it. The King has done his utmost to bring him to reason, but without result. He wishes me to beg for the return of the Chevalier, but I am not to be forced

by such rough methods. We seldom see each other, and we never speak. This has not happened before, however bad our relations have been."

Madame added that she hoped matters would improve before Easter, but that Monsieur's little circle of companions was not favourably disposed towards her. She needed all the patience she could muster, and she anticipated with pleasure her forthcoming journey to England.

Her condition was pitiful. In May 1669 Ralph Montagu, in one of his confidential reports to Lord Arlington, refers to her political activity and financial embarrassments. "Madame," he wrote, "is in everything extremely concerned for the King my master's interest, and with a great deal of address and discretion. I think, as long as she lives, the King would do well to save the charges of an Ambassador, and give her the money, for I am afraid Monsieur gives her not much, but . . . spends all . . . upon the Chevalier de Lorraine." Two months later, in a letter to his sister, he gave fuller details.

"You know I have writ formerly to you that if ever there could be any money spared, it were very fit for the King to make Madame a present. In the first place, the King really owes it to her, and when the Parliament gave her, at her coming into England, ten thousand pound, the King desired to make use of it, and never gave her a penny of it ; besides, she has really but a little money, but she is too high ever to ask the King to send her any ; though I believe, if she did, he is so kind, at least it appears by what he writes to her, that I believe he would not refuse her ; and the King himself would be pleased and well satisfied with those that proposed it to him,

and to her it would be an eternal obligation. I know money is so scarce at this time that I would not propose it, if at the same time I did not think there was a way of getting it easily, which is this."

"They say Sir Robert Southwell has agreed in Portugal for the remainder of the Queen's * portion, or at least some of it, which is to be paid at several payments. If it be so, it is money the King never reckoned much upon, and I believe not yet designed to any other use by the Commissioners of the Treasury. It should be, methinks, no hard matter to get the King to give Madame five thousand pound out of this money, that is, out of the first payment. . . . My Lord Arlington may have one scruple, which I will remove and be answerable for ; perhaps he may think it will cause a clamour on the Queen Mother's side that the King should send Madame money at a time that he stops, as she says, what is due to her. For that matter she shall never know a word of it, and they do not love one another so dearly but that this may be kept from her knowledge."

In money matters Henrietta had been invariably unfortunate as well as extravagant. When the English Parliament in loyal enthusiasm voted her a gift of £10,000 upon her marriage—and sent the cash in a cart the same afternoon—she did not enjoy the handsome present for more than a few hours. Charles II immediately borrowed it, and, as it was not repaid nine years later when Montagu was ambassador, it is not likely that the Princess saw her money in the last year of her life.

The resolution to make a triumphal journey through Flanders was taken early in January, and

* Catherine of Braganza, Queen-consort of Charles II.

several weeks before the disgrace of the Chevalier de Lorraine. Montagu soon discovered the French king's ideas. “The part of an ambassador,” he told Arlington in one of his letters, “is to be a spy and a tell-tale.” It was difficult to learn all the tortuous moves in the diplomacy of Saint Germain. On 19th January he wrote: “It is a hard matter, according to the various opinions of the politicians, to give you an exact account of the affairs of this Court, where the things of greatest consequence are carried so privately, and where so few have admittance into the secret.”

The Duchess of Orleans was one of the inner ring, and in the same letter the ambassador recounts his last conversation with her. “Madame has discoursed with me upon her coming into England, when the King shall be at Calais. I believe the King our master will like the proposition very well, and I believe the King here will be inclinable enough to it, out of the hopes that he may have of the good offices that she may do between the two Crowns, but I believe Monsieur will never consent to it; he is so jealous, I mean, of her credit and her interest both in England and here, that there is nothing he would not do to diminish it in both places.”

Although Montagu was termed by some of his English contemporaries “an arrant rascal,” he was a singularly able representative of English interests in France, and his budgets of foreign intelligence kept Whitehall accurately acquainted with the truth. His surmise as to Monsieur's jealousy turned out to be correct. But when he wrote to London the Prince could not have known much about the proposed expedition. Louis resolutely refused his brother any employment in matters of State. “He

is not to be trusted," said the King. "Monsieur had not the humour to apply himself to business." Much earlier, Daniel de Cosnac complained of Philip's lack of discretion, and Montagu noticed the same characteristic within a short while of settling at the embassy. The failing was notorious at the Court.

Monsieur chafed at a treatment he considered unjust, and, to add to his indignation, he saw his wife admitted into the profoundest secrets of French policy. It was an additional grievance which aroused fresh anger upon his return from Villers-Cotterets. On all sides he was pestered to give his wife permission to visit England. The reason was carefully concealed from him. He had not forgotten the marked attentions paid by the handsome Duke of Buckingham, and he was morbidly suspicious of her young nephew the Duke of Monmouth. The Chevalier de Lorraine was still unpardoned. He refused to assist his brother's plans. "I can yet get no positive answer of Monsieur for Madame's coming into England, although I press him every day," wrote Montagu. "Pray put the King in mind, if he has not done so already, to write to him upon his return to Court."

Charles II wrote, but without result. According to Montagu, "Monsieur's capriciousness and crossness to Madame" increased daily. "They are on worse terms, and do not speak to each other." At the end of March there was a sudden change of mood. Monsieur gave a limited consent. Louis had bribed him into submission with a gift of 20,000 pistoles a year. Monsieur immediately settled 10,000 upon the absent Chevalier, and declared that he would not only let Madame visit England,

but that he would go with her himself. This was more than any one had bargained for.

Madame explained the situation to Madame de Saint Chaumont in a letter dated 6th April. "He wishes to show the world that he is the master, and that he treats me as shamefully during the absence of the Chevalier as he does when the Chevalier is here." Happily a friend entered the disturbed household, and with infinite tact managed to make peace. Anne of Gonzaga had passed through many troubles of her own, and knew how to manage an angry man.*

* The adventures of Anne of Gonzaga surpass the imaginations of Dumas. She was the daughter of the Duke de Nevers, and her sister became Queen of Poland. She fell in love with her cousin, Henri de Guise, archbishop of Rheims, and he obtained a dispensation from the Pope to re-enter lay life and marry her. But when everything had been arranged they amicably decided not to make the sacrifice. They swore a promise of mutual conjugal fidelity, and Henri de Guise wrote the oath in his blood. Their open union was publicly accepted, but that they were legally and ecclesiastically married is doubted. Henri de Guise was actively conspiring against Richelieu. The plot was discovered and he fled into Flanders. Anne was at Nevers. She disguised herself as a man, and attempted to join her lover. Richelieu captured her before she reached the frontier, and then set her at liberty. "Monsieur de Guise has some valuable benefices in his gift," said the Cardinal. "If he marries her they will come into my hands." This seems to prove that they were not married. For some time she remained at Besançon, then she went to Cologne where she joined the archbishop. She insisted upon being called Madame de Guise, and when she referred to the Duke it was always as "my husband." Jules Loiseleur says that this marriage of conscience, based simply upon the reciprocal promise of the two lovers, without the consecration of the Church, might have continued indefinitely if a certain Madame de Bossut had not crossed the Duke's path. For a long while Anne refused to believe in the perfidy of her husband, but, when his faithlessness did not admit of any doubt, she left him and returned to France. She took her old family name of Gonzaga, and, according to Mademoiselle de Montpensier, "reappeared at Court as if nothing had been." Henri de Guise married the Countess de Bossut with all the forms he had disregarded in the first case. Nemesis

“He accused me of having said a thousand extravagances about him,” continued Madame in the same letter. “I denied it. . . . He became appeased, and after many promises to forget the past and to live well in the future, without mentioning the Chevalier as if he did not exist, he agreed that not only should I go to England but that he would go with me.”

This complicated matters. In a later letter to Madame de Saint Chaumont she complains that the King still refuses to allow her friend to return to Paris. Although so much was depending upon her goodwill Louis was excessively trying and arbitrary. Upon first thoughts he gave his brother permission to visit England, “not dreaming (says Madame) of the embarrassment I should be in, for the King my brother would then only go into the business to a certain point.” What was the business? Lingard suggests that Henrietta intended to ask Charles to allow her to obtain a divorce from Philip. The idea is improbable and unlikely. But the secret reason impressed Louis, who refused the proposition abruptly on the pretext that “if Monsieur went to Dover the Duke of York could not come to Calais.” This subterfuge annoyed Monsieur who believed—with truth—that his wife wished to travel without him. His companions, Marsan, Villeroy, and De Beuvron, advised him to continue in a bad temper until Lorraine was permitted to return.

“It is said that the King will not permit Lorraine to return for eight years,” wrote Madame to her overtook him. The marriage was a mistake, and he endeavoured to divorce her. Anne of Gonzaga remained throughout her life a romantic sentimentalist. She was a bosom friend of Anne of Austria, and, like many youthful sinners, became extremely devout in her old age. Her character has a certain charm, and she was generally liked by her critical contemporaries.

correspondent. In the light of after events this sentence should be carefully remembered. "We must hope that before that time Monsieur will be cured or changed. Something or other may reveal to him the faults this man has made him commit, and he will not be able to perceive it without hating him as much as he cared for him. That is my hope. But I am not able to flatter myself with the happiness of knowing when it will come. The natural jealousy of Monsieur will trouble me all my life, and the King is not the man to make those happy he wishes to treat well. From what we have seen his mistresses are disgusted with him more than three times a week."

Finally Monsieur gave way, but with bad grace. He permitted his wife to travel without his escort. She might visit her brother at Dover, but he refused to allow her to go to London, and he expressly stipulated that she was not to be out of France for more than three days. On 12th April Montagu reported the decision to Charles, and at the end of the month the Duchess wrote to Madame de Saint-Chaumont. There had been endless arguments with Philip, and she referred to the limitation of her stay. "It is better than nothing, but it is not sufficient for all the conversation two people who love each other so much as the King and I have to say. Monsieur is always intensely irritated, and I can foresee much unhappiness upon my return. . . . Monsieur wants me to plead for the return of the Chevalier, otherwise he will treat me as the lowest of creatures. Before the Chevalier was exiled he told Monsieur that it was necessary to find some means to separate us. I warned the King, who laughed at me, but since then he has found it true

for Monsieur himself proposed it to him. Thus I said to the King he could see that the Chevalier must never return, for, if he did, he would act worse in the future than in the past." This letter has much significance, and Lorraine undoubtedly knew Madame's sentiments. While she lived his reappearance at the Court was problematical, and, despite the protests of Monsieur, he might easily drift into a forgotten exile like Vardes and a score of others.

The journey to Flanders, which was to mask Henrietta's sudden flight to Dover, was in the nature of a picnic—and a very badly organised picnic. The gay cavalcade left Paris on the 28th April. It included the whole of the Court. The ugly Gascon dwarf, Lauzun, was in command of the troops, which included the musketeers. A contemporary writer says that the arrangements were made on a scale of the utmost magnificence, and this is corroborated by Ralph Montagu, who told Arlington more than once that he would require additional grants in order not to shame his royal master. The soldiers were clad in superb uniforms, and Louis had never appeared at the head of a more brilliant crowd. They were all so happy in their new clothes that no one had troubled much about food. As the King passed through the villages on his way to the conquered provinces he threw handfuls of gold to his delighted subjects.

Mademoiselle de Montpensier gives the brightest unofficial history of the voyage. She was light-hearted, for she was able to see much of Lauzun with whom she was deeply in love. The first night they slept at Senlis, the second at Compiègne. Commissariat was easily obtained in Picardy, and the sun

was shining. At Saint Quentin on the 2nd May she attended the Queen Maria Theresa at Mass.

“There are many strangers about,” said the King to her. “I should feel more easy if the Queen is not left. Follow her everywhere, my cousin.”

Next morning they left Saint-Quentin. The weather had been threatening, and now the storm broke. The King ordered the Court to rise at five so that they might get away promptly at seven. The ladies were sleepy and not amiable. Dinner was a failure. There was no fish, no fresh butter, no eggs, and the bread was badly baked.

In the meanwhile the leaden skies deluged the unfortunate troops. From the windows of her coach Mademoiselle beheld her loved Lauzun riding to and fro wet to the skin. The roads became bogs, and the passage of this huge train was marked by dead horses, and abandoned coaches which had collapsed in the mud. Many of the officers had to walk with their men.

At midnight they approached Landrecies, but the governor of that town met the procession and said that the Sambre had become so swollen that it was dangerous to ford. Several coaches had already been swept away by the flood, and in any event the water would sweep through those which might successfully attempt the passage. The King refused to halt, and a more promising ford was looked for. By the flare of torches the unwieldy coaches commenced a perilous journey through the black waters. Louis on horseback took command, but to his annoyance the Queen refused to obey. She said that she was too frightened. The “Grande Mademoiselle” joined in the rebellion. She tells us in

her memoirs that usually she was brave enough, and we know from her history that she did not fear gunpowder. Water, however, was an element she was constitutionally afraid of, and when she saw it she admitted she was not accountable for her actions.

The Queen's ladies agreed with their mistress. Mademoiselle had some attendants who raised their voices in the tumult. What Madame said we are not told. The "King Soleil" was irritated. He could command an army, but he could not control a band of women. Very rarely was he so flatly ignored, but, unless they were thrown in, there was no probability of getting the ladies to cross the stream. The coaches were turned back to the high road. In the midst of a field somebody found a miserable little cottage. Here Maria Theresa decided to spend the rest of the night. There were only two rooms with an earthen floor. Directly Mademoiselle entered, her foot caught in a crevice, she slipped down, and was covered in mud.

"We will wait daybreak and sleep in the coaches," said Louis. They were drawn up by the house and the tired horses taken out. The ladies put on nightcaps and dressing gowns, but they found it impossible to sleep in the midst of so much noise.

Hearing the voice of Monsieur, Mademoiselle inquired after him, and discovered that the Duke was in the next coach with Henrietta and Madame de Thianges.* They invited her to pay them a visit,

* Gabrielle de Montemart married in 1655 Claude Léonore de Damas, Marquis de Thianges. She was the elder sister of Françoise Athénais de Montemart, Madame de Montespan. Madame de Thianges was a close friend of Mademoiselle de Montpensier.

so her servants carried her through the mire and she entered the ducal carriage. Madame was ill and low-spirited, Monsieur was disagreeable. He was talking to the Marquis de Villeroy, and making sarcastic remarks about Lauzun.

“If I were as ugly as Monsieur de Lauzun I would not show myself. With his wet hair I have never seen a man look so hideous.”

This did not please Mademoiselle. As she writes in her memoirs, she found Lauzun handsome under all circumstances, although it was not advisable to express her preferences. “The conversation was wearisome, and I returned to my coach.” There a footman announced that the King and Queen were about to dine. Mademoiselle de Montpensier was dying with hunger, and her servants carried her into the cottage. The mud was too thick to allow any one to walk.

The Queen was extremely bad humoured.

“I shall be ill if I am not able to sleep,” she grumbled. “What pleasure can be found in making such journeys?”

The King suggested that mattresses might be laid on the floor.

“That would be horrible!” cried Maria Theresa, all the prudery of her Spanish education rising to her mind. “What? Do you wish us to sleep all together?”

“There’s no harm in being on a mattress fully dressed,” answered Louis. “At least I don’t find anything wrong. Ask my cousin. Refer it to her, and do as she thinks fit.”

Mademoiselle de Montpensier was too tired and hungry to prevent so reasonable an idea. She said that there would be ten or a dozen women in the

room with the King and Monsieur. The mattresses were laid down, and dinner was served. It had been brought across the stream from Landrecies and was quite cold. First on the menu was soup without meat. Maria Theresa said it looked disgusting. She refused to touch it. The King, Philip, Madame, and Mademoiselle were not so critical. When they were ready for the next course the soup dish was empty.

“I really wanted some, and now you have eaten the lot,” cried the querulous Maria Theresa, and the “Grande Mademoiselle” takes a malicious delight in chronicling her conversation.

A roast was brought forward, but the meat had an unappetising appearance, and was extremely hard. A fowl was so tough that it was only after the members of the party had combined strength that they were able to pull the joints asunder. The meal was an additional disaster, and they gathered in front of the fire, for it was a cold May night. The Queen took a corner next the hearth, then came Madame de Thianges and Madame de Béthune. On the successive mattresses were Monsieur, Madame, the King, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, Mademoiselle de La Vallière, Madame de Montespan, the Duchess de Créqui, and several ladies-in-waiting. They retained their nightcaps and dressing gowns, and covered themselves with cloaks and mantles. In the tiny back room were the chief officers of the household, together with Lauzun. As he was in command of the troops messages arrived at every moment. There was no door or window to the apartment, so the servants had to pick their way over the mattresses in the front room. This disturbed the King’s rest. He told Lauzun to smash a hole in the back wall

and give his commands through the opening. The front room was so crowded with sleepers that it was necessary to take short jumps over the mattresses. When Lauzun's spurs caught in the head-dress of La Vallière everybody laughed—except the Queen.

Suddenly Madame de Thianges had a poetical inspiration. Against one side of the cottage was a stable. She had been listening to the cows.

“It makes me feel so religious,” she murmured.

“Why?” she was asked.

“Because it reminds me so much of the birth of Our Saviour!”

Even the disagreeable Queen smiled, and this, writes Mademoiselle de Montpensier, pleased the King who was angry at her grumbling. Gradually they fell asleep.

At four o'clock Louvois knocked at the door and awoke Louis. During the night the stream had been bridged by the engineers, and the royal party were able to gain the town of Landrecies in safety. They were a dishevelled, aching, sleepy Court. Mademoiselle remarked in her journal that women who use much rouge always look exceedingly white in the early morning. Maria Theresa painted her face regularly, and her appearance must have been deplorable. Directly they arrived in Landrecies they heard Mass, and then went to bed. Louis did not get up until two o'clock in the afternoon; the others did not leave their rooms.

The itinerary was constantly changed. Louis decided to visit Ath until he heard that two houses in that town were shut up with the plague. He left Landrecies on Tuesday, 6th May, going to Quesnoy, Château-Cambresis, Catulet, and arriving at Arras on the 12th. At Douai there was trouble over a question

of etiquette. Whilst the Queen was listening to an address Madame and Mademoiselle seated themselves in the royal presence. This so angered Maria Theresa that she complained to the King. At Tournay the streets were decorated with much taste, and great crowds greeted the royal procession.

Henrietta was dull and low-spirited during the whole of the journey. She spoke little. Her head was bent. She was on a milk diet, and did not dine with the others. She went to bed early. The King had many private conversations with her, and she had a long confidential interview with the Marquis de Pomponne, a gifted member of that brilliant family, the Arnaulds of Port-Royal, which had taken so large a part in the history of France since the days of Catherine de' Medici. He, an accomplished statesman of European reputation, was astonished at her business capacity, but he did not fail to note her low spirits and the poor condition of her health.

Monsieur lost no opportunity of displaying his bad temper. One day, as he was travelling in his coach with Madame and Mademoiselle de Montpensier, he remarked that an astrologer had predicted that he would have several wives.

"Judging from the state you are in," he said to Madame, "I see no reason to doubt it."

The "Grande Mademoiselle" was shocked. Formerly she had been amongst Madame's severest critics, but now she had been quite won over by her cousin's sweetness of disposition.

The negotiations between the French and English Courts were still in progress. At Courtray news arrived from England. Charles was ready to meet his sister at Dover. The message cheered Madame

and irritated Monsieur, who declared that his wife must not make the journey. The King commanded him to give way, but he did not conceal his anger. Upon arriving at Lille, on 22nd May, she went to bed in order to have a long rest. On the next day she embarked at Dunkirk. She was much upset at Monsieur's behaviour. He stormed before the Court. The King was unwell and did not join them at table, and, whilst waiting for the meal to be served, Maria Theresa went to prayers. Monsieur took Mademoiselle de Montpensier aside and bitterly complained of his wife. In her journal she wrote that judging from the tone in which he spoke it was hardly possible for them ever to be again on good terms.

She embarked at Dunkirk on 23rd May in the evening, having travelled since five o'clock in the morning from Lille. An English ship was waiting for her under the command of the Earl of Sandwich. Her suite was not large. Charles did not wish much attention drawn to her visit, and asked that her attendants should be limited in number. This pleased Monsieur as it diminished the honour Madame was otherwise entitled to. However 237 persons accompanied her. Count Anthony Hamilton (the author of the famous memoirs) and his sister the Countess de Grammont were her personal attendants. She had also the Count and Countess d'Albons, the Marshal du Plessis and his wife, Monsieur de Rochepate, lieutenant of the guards attached to the household of Orleans, and the Bishop of Tournay. Among the less important ladies-in-waiting was a round-faced Breton girl of good family, Louise de Kérouet, or Kerouaille.

Burnet records the power Henrietta possessed over her brother. "The King went thither, and was so

much charmed with his sister that it did not pass without the severest censures, everything she proposed, and every favour she asked was granted : the King could deny her nothing. She proposed an alliance in order to further the conquest of Holland. The King had a mind to have begun at home, but she diverted him from that. . . .” She proposed that they should begin with Holland, and attack it vigorously both by sea and land.

Lodged in Dover Castle with Charles, she lost no time in pressing her views. She wished the Dutch war to take place before the conversion of England to Catholicism. Her brother the Duke of York had been left behind in London to avoid complicating the negotiations, for Charles’s prime aim was to obtain the French pension without definitely committing himself to any particular action. It was evident that three days would not be sufficient to discuss the proposed treaty. Louis, who was anxiously awaiting news at Dunkirk, wrote to Colbert de Croissy at Dover : “ I send you this to inform you that my brother has consented to let Madame remain ten or twelve days longer at Dover. You can exaggerate to King Charles the efforts we make, and points we stretch to be agreeable to him. Let him feel how much obliged he should be to us, so that when we make demands, he will be in a humour to yield.”

Charles II did not wholly yield, and Henrietta failed to secure all the points she wished to gain. The English monarch agreed to profess himself a Catholic at some future time, and subsequently would join Louis in an expedition against the Dutch republic. But the dates were not stated. Louis promised any necessary aid in money and troops to suppress rebellion in England. In the Dutch war

Charles was to supply fifty ships and Louis thirty, the combined fleet to be under the command of the Duke of York.* Charles did not succeed in his attempt to apportion the Spanish colonies. Brother and sister shared a natural talent for diplomacy and bartering, and only arrived at an agreement by halving their demands. On the whole both parties could claim a success. Henrietta advised her brother "to flatter the English Protestant Church, and by alternately coaxing and persecuting dissenters to render them at last . . . subservient to his will." Immediately the treaty, with its secret clauses, had been signed by Arlington, Arundell, Clifford, Bellings, and Colbert, the French ambassador rushed the parchment across the narrow sea to France, where Louis was impatiently ready to give his ratification.

The rest of the short holiday was spent in recreation. "Madame is here in perfect health. The King of England has sent for the Queen and the Duchess of York, and is doing all he can to enliven this dreary place, and make it agreeable to Madame." Colbert de Croissy's report did not disclose how Charles was entertaining his sister. A visit was paid to Canterbury. Yachting excursions were made round the coast. Charles gave his sister handsome presents of money and jewels. Was France not under bond to pay him two millions of crowns within the next few months!

He asked for a slight return. The mild round-faced Louise de Kerouaille had touched his heart. Would Henrietta leave her behind? Madame, to her credit, refused to countenance so equivocal an

* One small action stands to the credit of Charles. He resolutely insisted that the command of the English ships should never pass from English hands.

arrangement, and sent the girl back to her parents in Brittany. In no way can she be held responsible for the shameful intrigue which resulted in Louise's elevation as Duchess of Portsmouth. "Madame's death," wrote Bussy-Rabutin afterwards, "has been the cause of La Kerouaille's good fortune."

On 12th June Henrietta left Dover. Three times Charles rowed out to the ship to embrace his sister. She wept bitterly, and Colbert de Croissy marvelled at the emotion displayed by the members of the English royal family. He admitted that for the first time he realised how much royal personages could love each other. Waller, who had sung her praises as a child, delivered a parting ode.

That sun of beauty did among us rise,
 England first saw the light of your fair eyes ;
 In England, too, your early wit was shown ;
 Favour that language, which was then your own
 When, though a child, through guards you made your way,
 What fleet or army could an angel stay ?
 Thrice happy Britain ! if she could retain
 Whom she first bred within her ancient main.
 Our late burned London, in apparel new,
 Shook off her ashes, to have treated you ;
 But we must see our glory snatched away,
 And with warm tears increase the guilty sea ;
 No wind can favour us. Howe'er it blows,
 We must be wretched, and our dear treasure lose !
 Sighs will not let us half our sorrow tell,
 Fair, lovely, great and best of nymphs, farewell.

Had Waller been acquainted with Henrietta's business during her sojourn in England his song might have been different.

VIII

Philip's continued bad temper : Henrietta's sudden illness :
Suspicion of poison : The news at Versailles : The King's
anxiety : The dying woman : Bossuet's account of her
death.

WHEN the Princess landed in France her progress was a triumph. The object of her visit had not been disclosed — there was no desire to frighten the Dutch—but on every side she was treated with royal honours. She yearned for new battlefields and further diplomatic victories. Active statecraft was to her taste. She undoubtedly dreamed of an early declaration of war on the part of England against the United Provinces.

Unfortunately Philip had relapsed into a condition far worse than anything she had suffered from before. On no account could he be moved to meet his wife during her slow journey from the coast. When she approached Saint Germain on 18th June he rode a few miles out on the road. Her reception, writes Ralph Montagu, “was as cold and uncivil as can well be imagined ; and [he] has already declared to some of his confidants that since the King her brother is so kind to her, that he will never live well with her till by her credit she can bring back the Chevalier de Lorraine.”

She soon found time to write to Madame de Saint Chaumont. “I am not surprised at the joy

you have shown at my return from England," she said. "I found my journey very agreeable, and although convinced of my brother's friendship I found it greater than I had dared to hope. Also I found in all the things which depended upon him every pleasure I was able to desire. The King, on my return, displayed much goodwill, but as for Monsieur nothing equals his fury to find some means of complaint. He did me the honour to say that I am all-powerful, and that I am able to do as I like. By consequence if I do not recall the Chevalier it is because I do not wish to please him. Then he adds threats for the future. I have told him how little the recall of the Chevalier depends upon me, and that whilst you are in exile I do not care to do much. Instead of recognising the truth of this and softening, he takes the occasion to do you more damage with the King, and to render me bad services. All this, together with the letter you have written to my daughter—which they say was written secretly and marks the design you have of returning—added to the already unfavourable disposition of the King, produces a very bad effect. I have not yet had the time to justify you. But I will do it with all the care your friendship for me deserves. When I have destroyed the natural aversion, I will show that the reasons for it are false. I have many times blamed you for the tenderness you have shown for my daughter. In God's name give it up. She is a child incapable of feeling what she ought, and presently she will hate me. Content yourself to love the people who recognise your affection as I do, and who resent, as actively as I, the sorrow of not being able to recall you from your present state. I hope that you will rest persuaded of this, and that you will



HENRIETTA, DUCHESS
OF ORLEANS
After an enamel by Petitot



MARIE LOUISE OF ORLEANS,
QUEEN OF SPAIN, DAUGHTER
OF PHILIP AND HENRIETTA
OF ORLEANS
After a miniature in the Jones Collection

believe that I never lose a favourable opportunity of serving you and showing my tenderness. Since my return from England, the King has gone to Versailles. But Monsieur does not wish to go for fear that I may have the pleasure of being near the King."

She did not forget the Bishop of Valence. Write to him she could not. Indirectly a message was conveyed that she had happily succeeded in her journey, and that the King her brother had pledged his word to obtain a cardinal's hat for Cosnac. A hope was expressed that soon—as in the old days—she would be in the company of the Bishop and Madame de Saint-Chaumont. The priest had barely received the letter when a terrible event dashed all his expectations to the ground.

The evening she arrived at Saint Germain Madame was—in the words of Mademoiselle de Montpensier—"as beautiful as an angel." The short holiday in England appears to have re-established her health. She seemed pleased to have ended her travels, and every one (with the exception of Monsieur) welcomed her. The next day, being extremely fatigued, she remained in bed, and the Court visited her room. The King's greetings were of the heartiest description, and he gave her 10,000 pistoles to redeem the jewels she had been compelled to pawn. This act Philip resented, and his renewed anger distressed her greatly. When the "Grande Mademoiselle" entered she found the Duchess changed. This did not prevent a long family gossip. She told Mademoiselle that King Charles and the Duke of York sent all their best wishes. Catherine of Braganza was far from beautiful, but she was a good woman, so honest and agreeable that it was impossible not to like her. The Duchess of York

(another unhappy wife) had much merit. The gloom of Saint Germain however quickly damped Henrietta's spirits.

The lack of tact of Monsieur de Tonnay-Charente greatly contributed to Philip's wicked humour. Tonnay-Charente had accompanied the Duchess to England, and, returning to the Court some days earlier than his mistress, recounted the chief facts of her reception to Louis and his brother during their dinner. Forgetting Monsieur's objections to the journey and his notorious jealousy, he casually mentioned that the handsome and gallant young Duke of Monmouth had fallen desperately in love with the Princess. He then described the magnificence of the fêtes, and told the company that Monmouth had surpassed all the others in extravagance to please Madame. Philip began to look black, but Tonnay-Charente went lightly on with his unpalatable remarks. At last the King put an end to the disastrous conversation by rising from the table.

"Does this cavalier come from Madagascar, or is he French?" he inquired with sarcasm.

On Friday 20th June Louis left Saint Germain for Versailles, and, on seeing the King and Queen depart Madame commenced to cry. On the following Tuesday Philip insisted that she should take up residence in his own house at Saint-Cloud. Two days later they were with the King at Versailles. Despite her white looks she told Maria Theresa that she was feeling very well. She had resolved to change her manner of life, as she believed her health would be better. She was going to eat everything that was on the table without keeping to any particular diet. She asked the Queen to have the collation served quickly, for she feared Monsieur would

not stop, and she had not eaten that day. It was evident she was hungry. Philip, in passing through one of the rooms, found Henrietta in deep conversation with Louis. When he entered they stopped abruptly. He had always fiercely objected to the secrets which passed between his brother and his wife, and this discovery added fresh fuel to the smouldering fire. When they left Versailles later in the day he was raging, and she again in tears.

“Madame has death written across her face,” said Maria Theresa sententiously.

Her constitution had always been frail. She had been born in misery amidst the alarms of civil war. Her early experiences were days of the severest privation. “Everything in her betrayed the presumptive,” said a contemporary. Her sister Elizabeth, the prisoner of Carisbrooke, died of tuberculosis. Antoine Vallot, the King’s physician, said that for three or four years Henrietta had lived only by a miracle. Vallot’s professional record is so bad that one can pay little heed to his opinions. It was generally believed that he had killed the Queen Henrietta Maria with an overdose of opium, and his treatment of Madame’s son, the Duke de Valois, was not only ignorant but careless, resulting in the death of that child at the age of eighteen months. His patients were not to be envied. In the words of “Hudibras” it might well be said of seventeenth-century medicine that :

. . . Men are brought to worse distresses
By taking physic, than diseases ;
And therefore commonly recover
As soon as doctors give them over.

The opinion of the Court was that Madame’s health

—since her visit to England—had considerably improved.

The next day was Friday, 27th June. The heat being extreme she bathed in the Seine, against the advice of her own physician. Afterwards, on returning to the château of Saint Cloud, she complained of severe pains in her side, and Monsieur Yvelin ordered her to rest. On Saturday she received Montagu, the ambassador, and discussed the recent treaty at length. She also talked about her personal concerns, saying that it was impossible to remain on good terms with her husband. The entrance of Philip interrupted the conversation. The following morning, Sunday, she wrote a long letter to Anne de Gonzaga, the Princess Palatine. In its pages she opened her heart, and related her troubles very frankly.

SAINT CLOUD, 29 *June* 1670

“ It is only right that I should give you an account of a voyage which your skill rendered acceptable in the only quarter where it might have failed. I will admit that on my return I was almost persuaded that I should find everybody contented. But I found matters worse than ever. You know—for you told me yourself on behalf of Monsieur—that he wished three things from me. Firstly, that he should share the confidential relations existing between the King my brother and myself ; then, that I should arrange he should receive his son’s income ; lastly, that I should help the Chevalier de Lorraine. The King my brother—on the understanding that Monsieur would cease to behave in so bizarre a fashion as he has done over this journey—was good enough to agree to the first. Moreover he offered to receive the Chevalier de Lorraine in his kingdom until things are

quieter here. With regard to the pension, I have every hope of obtaining it, provided I can give an assurance that Monsieur will cease to play a comedy which has been performed too long in front of the public.

“ But you can quite understand that I am hardly able to ask for these things after Monsieur has done all he can to prevent me obtaining them. I must be assured of some domestic peace, and that he will not consider me responsible for everything that takes place in Europe. I have spoken to him about this, hardly doubting that it would be well received. But as there is no immediate probability of the Chevalier’s return, Monsieur has said that everything else is useless, and that I need not expect his good graces until I allow him to have the Chevalier back again. I confess I am extremely surprised at this proceeding, which is very different from what I expected. Monsieur wishes to enjoy the friendship of the King my brother. When I offer it to him he receives it as if he conferred an honour on the King. He rejects the idea of allowing the Chevalier to spend a time in England, as if such matters can be arranged in a quarter of an hour. The pension he treats as a trifle. If he thought over the business he could not take up such an attitude. I can only suppose he prefers to remain on bad terms with me. The King has been good enough to declare to him on his oath that I have had nothing to do with the exile of the Chevalier, and that his return in no way depends upon me. Although the King has never told a lie, Monsieur refuses to believe him, and I shall be in a very unhappy position if I cannot arrange the business before it is too late.

“ There, my dear cousin, you have the state of my

affairs. Monsieur has asked three things of me. I have been able to procure two and a half. He is angry because I cannot manage the whole, paying no attention to the offer of friendship from the King my brother, or to his own interests. Personally, I have done more than I expected. But, if I am unhappy enough to continue experiencing Monsieur's temper in all which concerns me, I declare, my dear cousin, I will give everything up. I will trouble no further about the pension, the return of the favourite, or the friendship of the King my brother. The first and the last are difficult to obtain—perhaps others might consider them of great consequence. It is easy to end the affair by keeping silent, a maxim Monsieur follows when I ask him for an explanation. As for the return of the Chevalier, if my credit were as strong as Monsieur imagines—I have already said it to you—nothing will ever make me give way to blows or force. Thus, as two of the necessary factors are useless to restore me to his graces, and as his idea of getting the third is impracticable, particularly as it depends upon the King's pleasure, the only course I can take is to await Monsieur's will. If he wishes me to act I will do it with joy. My only desire is to be on good terms with him. Otherwise I must bear his wicked treatment, against which I will never defend myself. I will give him no occasion to blame my conduct. His hatred is unreasonable, and I do not deserve it. I console myself with the hope that I shall receive more favourable consideration. You are able to do more than any one else, and I am convinced that Monsieur's interests and mine are equally dear to you. I trust that you will work to forward them.

“I have one thing more to tell you. A lost

opportunity does not always return. At the moment the prospect of receiving the pension is favourable, but otherwise the future is doubtful. Your pension from England will be paid. The King my brother has given me his word in regard to it, and those persons who have to attend to the arrangement will give every facility. If you were here we could work together to straighten your matters, but you know that I am imperfectly acquainted with them, and can only repeat what I have been told. If I can find other means of showing you my affection I will do it with the greatest pleasure in the world."

Better than any contemporary gossip does this letter reveal the worthlessness of Philip. He was determined to torture his wife in order to regain his beloved Lorraine. He dared not further affront Louis XIV, so he acted without mercy towards the unfortunate Princess who could not escape from him.

Madame de Lafayette arrived at Saint Cloud on Saturday evening about ten o'clock. The Princess was in the park. She complained of a pain in her side, said that she was far from well, and that her face showed it. The night was oppressively warm and close. They wandered under the trees, and sat for some time in the moonlight by the cool waters of the cascade. She did not return to the château until midnight.

She was about early on Sunday, and had an interview with her husband. Then she went to Mass, wrote some letters—amongst them must have been the one just quoted to Anne of Gonzaga—and chatted with Madame de Lafayette. She accused herself of bad-temper, although, writes her friend, she seemed, as usual, "naturally sweet, and little

capable of bitterness or anger." She was melancholy, and said that she was tired of the people who surrounded her. They grated on her nerves. Then, whilst referring to an accident which had lately befallen Madame de Lafayette, she exclaimed :

"It might have killed you ! Are you afraid to die ?" And she added reflectively : " Personally, I do not think that I am afraid to die."

She went to see her daughter, who was having her portrait painted by an English artist. She talked to Madame de Lafayette and the Duchess d'Epéron about England and her brother. These recollections pleased her, and her spirits became better. At dinner she seemed brighter. Afterwards she slept on some pillows scattered on the floor, according to her usual habit. Madame de Lafayette supported her head on a cushion, and watched her tenderly.

As she slept her friend noticed a curious change coming over her face. When she awoke she looked so ill that even Monsieur was surprised. She went into the salon and talked to the Auvergnat Boisfranc, who was treasurer to the household, and several times she told him that she had a severe pain in her side.

Monsieur was preparing to go to Paris—his daily habit. Madame left Boisfranc for Madame de Mecklembourg. At five o'clock she asked for a cup of iced chicory water. Madame de Gamaches brought two, one for the Duchess, and one for Madame de Lafayette. Madame de Gourdon, her lady-in-waiting, presented the cup to her. She sipped it, and almost immediately cried in an agonised tone :

"My side ! ah, what pain ! I am done for."

In speaking these words her face flushed. A moment after she turned lividly pale. Her eyes were

full of tears, and she asked to be held up as she could stand no longer. Her ladies carried her to her bed. Madame de Lafayette was astonished at her distress, knowing her to be one of the most patient of women. She declared that the pain was inconceivable, and she restlessly tossed from one side to the other. Her chief physician, Monsieur Esprit, was summoned. He diagnosed her complaint as one of the most ordinary ills of humankind and prescribed a simple remedy. She answered that her pain was more considerable than he was able to imagine.

“I am going to die. Find a priest.”

Monsieur stood by the bed. She embraced him.

“Alas, Monsieur,” she said, with an air of the utmost sweetness, “for a long while you have ceased to love me. You have been unjust to me. I have never done you any wrong.”

Philip was deeply touched, and the women in the room were mostly weeping. The whole drama had happened within half an hour.

Suddenly the Princess made a remark which struck her ladies with horror. She asked that the chicory water might be examined. It had been poisoned. Perhaps one bottle had been mistaken for another. But she was poisoned. She felt all the symptoms. She demanded an antidote.

Madame de Lafayette was standing by the bed next to Monsieur. At these dreadful words she turned and watched him closely. She tells us that she did not believe him capable of such a crime, yet she wished to see what effect such an accusation would have. He was not troubled, said that some of the water should be given to a dog, and sent for oil and other antidotes. One of her servants, Madame

Desbordes, who was devoted to her, said that she had mixed the water and tasted it. The Princess insisted upon the antidotes, which were given to her. Sainte-Foy, Monsieur's valet, brought some powder of viper. She swallowed the drug.

"I take it from your hands because I trust in you," she murmured to Sainte-Foy. Nothing altered her suspicion that she had been poisoned. Gradually she became worse, and, although she was quieter, she told the women standing round her bed that they were not to deceive themselves. She did not cry because she had little strength left, but her agony had not ceased. Her illness was without remedy. Certain of death, writes Madame de Lafayette, she resolved to meet it as if it were a thing of no consequence.

Philip became frightened. Her pulse had almost ceased to beat, and her hands and feet were cold. Monsieur Esprit blandly remarked that these were quite ordinary symptoms, and that he would answer for the patient.

"You said the same thing about Monsieur de Valois," cried the Duke in a rage. His eldest child had died a short while before. "You answered for the recovery of Monsieur de Valois. He died. You answer for Madame. She will die too."

The parish priest of Saint Cloud entered, and received her confession. Then she whispered a few words in her husband's ear. Her manner was extremely gentle towards him. Monsieur Esprit wished to bleed her.

"Let him do as he wishes," she replied. "Nothing matters, for nothing will save me."

Her sudden illness had now lasted three hours. Two famous doctors arrived at the palace. Vallot

was the King's physician, an old man of seventy-six. With him was Yvelin, her own physician, in whom she had much confidence. She told Yvelin that she was glad to see him. She had been poisoned, and he was to treat her on that supposition. He listened to her carefully, did not reveal to the onlookers his own ideas, but (in the words of Madame de Lafayette) acted like a man who had much hope and little sense of danger. With Vallot and Esprit he held a long consultation. Then they assured Monsieur "on their life" that Madame was in no danger. He went to the bed and repeated the verdict.

"I know better what is the matter with me than they do," was the tranquil answer. "There is no cure."

The Prince de Condé entered the room.

"I am dying," she said to him. Every one around the bed told her that she was far from that state. In fact she seemed easier. At half-past nine Vallot left them and returned to Versailles. The ladies remained at the bedside and chatted. They believed her to be out of danger. Monsieur had gone into another room. Madame de Lafayette and Madame d'Epéron suggested that the Prince had displayed so much feeling that he could not fail to behave better to her in the future. She paid little attention to them. More drugs were administered. They told her she was better.

"My pain is so acute that if I were not a Christian I would kill myself. I wish evil to no one, but I regret that my sufferings cannot be felt in order that you may understand what an agony I am in."

Yvelin and Esprit gave more remedies. She was lifted into a smaller bed. By the light of some candles and a torch Madame de Lafayette noticed

that she appeared worse. Monsieur asked if she was much inconvenienced.

“Ah! no, Monsieur,” was the answer. “Nothing troubles me any longer. I shall not be alive to-morrow morning, you will see.”

She was given a broth, but after swallowing it her agony became as acute as when she had taken the cup of chicory water.

At Versailles the news of her illness created consternation. Mademoiselle de Montpensier, in the evening, passing through a corridor leading to her room, met the Count d'Ayen.

“Madame is dying,” said he abruptly. “I am searching for Vallot. The King has commanded me to find him.”

Mademoiselle rushed to the Queen's rooms. She thought that the Count had spoken of Madame, the King's daughter. The child had been left behind at Saint Germain because she was not in good health. She found Maria Theresa dressing for a journey.

“Madame is dying,” cried the Queen. “And what do you think she is saying? She declares that she has been poisoned!”

“How horrible!” exclaimed Mademoiselle in despair, asking for further details.

“She was in the salon at Saint Cloud. She drank a cup of chicory water which her apothecary had brought her. A quarter of an hour afterwards she cried out that she was on fire. She was not able to endure it. Remedies were applied without effect. Now they have asked for Vallot, and I have sent him.”

Maria Theresa commenced to cry. The old ill-feeling between the two women had long since vanished, replaced by a warm regard. Remembering

her own griefs the neglected Queen had pity on her sister-in-law.

An urgent message came from Saint Cloud.

“Tell the Queen that if she wishes to see me she must come soon. If she delays I shall be dead.”

This summons was given to Maria Theresa as she was being rowed upon the lake at Versailles. She returned to the palace. Louis was away taking a cure of some natural waters. The Marshal de Bellefonds told the Queen that it was not fit for her to leave Versailles without the King. Maria Theresa, educated in Spain, had learned to sacrifice herself to the claims of etiquette. The Marshal's objection was fatal.

“What?” cried the “Grande Mademoiselle,” very indignant and always energetic. “You are prepared to let your sister-in-law die not a league away, and you will not go to see her. What will people say?”

Maria Theresa said she wished to go. The Marshal insisted that the action was not proper.

“What shall I do?” she kept on asking in a helpless way. “What shall I do?”

“Your Majesty,” answered Mademoiselle, “permit me to go.” She could not leave the palace without the Queen's permission.

Their embarrassment was ended by the appearance of Louis. He had sent several times to Saint Cloud for news. Each messenger brought back the same reply. Madame wished his Majesty to know that she was dying. Those who had seen her added that she looked very bad. The Duke de Créquy told the King that he had been with the Princess and he believed her to be in the greatest peril.

“Come, if you wish,” said the monarch to his wife and cousin.

The heavy coach—with the windows shut—started for Saint Cloud. It contained the King, the Queen, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, and the Countess de Soissons. The Queen talked about poisons and poisoning, and referred to her brother-in-law, Philip, with horror. On the way they met Vallot, and stopped to have the latest medical report. He told Louis that Madame’s illness was quite a simple matter. It was not at all dangerous, and would not last long. The last remark was undoubtedly true. Vallot had so high a reputation—no member of the royal family could die without his help—that they undoubtedly regretted their hasty journey in the night. They reached Saint Cloud as the clocks of that palace were striking eleven, prepared to hear that the patient had recovered.

Madame de Lafayette tells us that the presence of the King disconcerted the physicians. He took them aside and asked them what they thought of the case. The same men, who, three hours earlier, had pledged their life, now mumbled that there was little hope. Madame had better receive the Sacraments. Mademoiselle de Montpensier describes the sick-room.

Madame was on a little bed, placed by the side of the larger one. It was somewhat untidy, and she herself was slightly dishevelled, for her illness had come on so quickly that she had not yet been wholly undressed. Her chemise was open at the neck and arms, and they could notice how thin she was. Her face was very pale. She appeared to be dying.

“ You see the state I am in ! ” she said as they entered.

Every one wept ; the Queen, Mademoiselle, Olympe Mancini, and Mesdames de Montespan and La Vallière who had followed the King in a second coach. Monsieur, in tears, was repeating the final decision of the physicians to Madame de Lafayette. She was touched, and surprised, at his sensibility, which she evidently did not look for. Louis went to the bed.

“ You are losing the truest servant you will ever have,” said Henrietta.

“ You are not in extreme peril,” he replied, trying to reassure her. He was astonished at the firmness of her spirit, and he wished to console her.

“ You know quite well that I have never feared death,” she answered. “ But I have feared the loss of your good regard.”

They spoke together in such low voices that no one in the crowded room could hear them. Madame took the hand of the “ Grande Mademoiselle.”

“ You will lose a good friend,” she said. “ I am beginning to know you and to love you.” It took much to disturb the equanimity of Mademoiselle de Montpensier, but no one questioned her good heart any more than they could deny her eccentricity. She was too moved to reply.

The King spoke to Madame of God. He then returned to the doctors and argued with them. He told Madame de Lafayette that they did not know what they were doing, which was so obvious that it did not require a king to discover the fact. He added that he would try to persuade them to recover their lost intelligence. He went back to the bed.

“ I am not a doctor,” he cried to the dying woman.

“But I have just suggested thirty remedies to the doctors, and all they say is that we must wait.”

“It is necessary to die according to the proper form,” said Madame, with a faint display of wit.

Mademoiselle de Montpensier created a fresh diversion.

“You are not going to let a woman die without attempting a single remedy,” she exclaimed. She writes in her journal that they looked at each other without a word—the King, the Queen, the black Olympe, the two royal mistresses La Montespan and La Vallière, Condé and Turenne, the doctors, old De Gramont—father to the Count de Guiche—and the honest Tréville. In the background were massed the officers of the household, the ladies-in-waiting, the servants. There they talked and gossiped. Some went away to their tasks, others came in. Amidst the chatter one could even hear laughter. Truly a princess had to die “according to the proper form.” And it was not a decent form.

The “Grande Mademoiselle” retired into a corner of the room with Madame d’Epernon. She was troubled. Had she been in command the chamber would have been cleared in a minute.

“They speak no more of God to her than if she were a Huguenot. It is shameful. There are enough people here, but not one suggests it. In such a condition she can only be looked after by the Church.”

“She has asked for a confessor. The priest of Saint Cloud came. He is a man she did not know. She confessed in as little a while as we have been talking together.”

“That is not enough!” cried Mademoiselle.

Philip joined them.

“Monsieur! Don't you understand? She is dying. One must speak to her of God.”

“You are right. It is shameful,” said he.

“But where is her confessor?”

“He is a Capuchin—good enough to show as a proof that she has a confessor, but not good enough to wait on her at her death. We must try to find some one more important, some one whose name would look well in the *Gazette* as having assisted Madame at her end.” Frivolous or serious, Philip was generally thinking of the position he would occupy in the eyes of the world.

“I don't know one,” replied Mademoiselle. “You want a clever man, and a man of position. What about Bossuet, who has been named Bishop of Condom. He is clever and has rank. Madame has often spoken of him. He will do well.”

Monsieur went to ask his brother's advice.

“You ought to have thought of it before,” said Louis irritably. “Of course she must receive the Holy Sacraments.”

“I was waiting until you left,” explained Monsieur. “If you remain here you will have to accompany the Host back to the church, and it is too far for you to go in the night air as you are not very well.”

Louis said good-bye to her. She asked him not to weep.

“The first news you will have to-morrow will be my death.”

She said several things privately in his ear. She embraced Maria Theresa.

The Marshal de Gramont approached. She told him that he was losing a good friend. “I am going

to die, and at first I thought that I had been poisoned by mistake."

She never turned her mind to thoughts of the world, writes Madame de Lafayette. She did not utter a word about the cruelty of a destiny which was snatching her away in the prime of life. She did not ask her doctors if it was possible to save her. She remained peacefully awaiting her death, although her sufferings were acute. And she still considered that she was the victim of poison.

Whilst they were waiting for Bossuet, who had to be fetched from Paris, Nicolas Feuillet, a canon of Saint Cloud, came to the bedside. He was celebrated for the severity and freedom with which he addressed the highest at Court. Boileau called him the Reformer of the Universe, and his strict Jansenite doctrines were not loved by the frailer spirits of that age. Monsieur, who sometimes had moral scruples, one day during Lent asked him if he could eat an orange without breaking his fast.

"You may eat an ox if you like, Monsieur," was the rude answer; "but first pay your debts and lead the life of a Christian."

The Capuchin father had already been fatiguing the Princess with his long discourse. He was not a tactful man, and well described by Philip as only fit to ride in a coach with the Princess in order to prove to the public that she had a confessor.

"Let me speak to Monsieur Feuillet, my father," she said kindly, not wishing to snub him. "You will speak to me again in your turn."

The canon exhorted, and she made a general confession. The arrival of Ralph Montagu, the English ambassador, interrupted the religious solemnities. Although she had seen him only the previous day

there was much to say. She had many messages to send to her brother Charles. Then the ambassador asked her if she had been poisoned.

Their conversation had been in English, and Madame de Lafayette was not able to catch the whole of her answer. She told Montagu that Charles was never to hear the truth. Above all he was not to think of taking vengeance upon Louis who was not a guilty party. The word "poison" is common to both languages, and Canon Feuillet heard it. At once he broke into the conversation.

"Madame," he interrupted, "you must not think of anything but God to whom your life is a sacrifice."

She gave Montagu some instructions about her private papers. The parish priest arrived with the Host. Monsieur had left the room. She asked him to return, and, when he entered, embraced him. Monsieur Brayer, the most eminent physician of his time, was admitted. He had been sent from Paris by the King's orders. He was not able to relieve her, and, as she was receiving Extreme Unction, Bossuet entered.

The great preacher had recently been appointed to the bishopric of Condom, although he was not consecrated until the following September. As a fashionable pulpit orator he had conquered Paris and the Court, and unlike most fashionable preachers his reputation was not undeserved. There had been much friendship between him and Madame, and when he saw the dreadful state she was in he suddenly became very faint. She noticed it.

"I have not had you sent for to distress me but to console me," she said quietly.

"Hope, Madame, hope!" was his reply as he

dropped on his knees and placed a crucifix in her hands.

She was pleased to see him, and kept him for a while at the side of her bed. Whilst he was out of hearing for a few moments she whispered to one of her ladies :

“ When I am dead give to Monsieur de Condom the emerald ring that I have had made for him.”

Bossuet, in a letter written shortly after his return to Paris, says that he found her in full consciousness, speaking and acting without trouble or ostentation, without effort, and without violence. He remained with her for an hour. She became sleepy, and asked that she might rest. The Bishop placed the crucifix in her hand and she held it to her lips as long as she had strength.

“ Madame ! ” he cried. “ You believe in God. You hope in His mercy ! You love God ! ”

“ With all my heart, ” she whispered.

She could speak no more. Her mouth moved in a few slight convulsions. She was dead. It was half-past two on the Monday morning, not nine hours from the beginning of her seizure.

Bossuet closed her eyes. Philibert de La Mare wrote that he was attacked again by a passing syncope. Then he left the room to carry the news to Monsieur.

“ In this manner, ” wrote another Bishop, Daniel de Cosnac, “ the great and noble Princess passed away. She displayed no weakness or fear during those awful moments. All she said and did was natural and unaffected, and those who were with her knew that she spoke from the heart. France, in mourning for her, has been edified by her piety and amazed at her heroic courage.”

Bossuet, in describing the death scene, summed up her attitude in a phrase which cannot be translated. "Madame fut douce envers la mort, comme elle l'était envers tout le monde." Bussy-Rabutin, the gossip, the scandalmonger, the man of the world, could not withhold his admiration. "She died with heroic fortitude . . . as would some old greybeard who had passed his life in the desert in order to prepare himself for his last hour."

IX

Was Henrietta poisoned ? : The *post-mortem* : Qualifications of the surgeons : Saint-Simon's story : The foreign ambassadors : Anger of Charles II : Henrietta's funeral : Her character.

THE death of Henrietta of Orleans shocked Europe. "All the world is in lamentation," wrote an Englishman attached to the Embassy. Within three hours Montagu sent an express to London. The news was entirely unexpected at the English court. Charles burst into tears, and bitterly cursed his brother-in-law.

"Monsieur is a scoundrel!" he cried to Sir Thomas Armstrong, who had carried the dreadful message from Paris. Then, as he realised the astounding nature of Armstrong's suspicions, he added, with diplomatic reserve: "But you must not say a word to any one."

A letter from Colbert de Croissy to Lionne collected the hideous gossip of Whitehall. "The King of England remains inconsolable, and his grief is increased by the general impression which has got abroad that Madame was poisoned. Neither his Majesty nor any other member of the Royal Family, have expressed their belief in this extravagant report. But three personages at Court declare aloud that it is true—Prince Rupert, because he has a natural inclination to believe evil; the Duke of Buckingham, because he courts popularity; and Sir John Trevor,

because he is Dutch at heart, and consequently hates the French."

Colbert wrote these lines whilst an infuriated cockney mob was breaking windows and chasing foreigners. Unfortunately for his explanation the story was firmly believed in Paris as well as in London. From the moment of Henrietta's death the King himself was tormented by a thought which his Court shared in silence. He knew that public opinion was condemning his own brother as a murderer. He immediately assured the English ambassador that "if there were the least imagination that her death has been caused by poison, nothing should be wanting, either towards the discovery or the punishing so horrid a fact."

The protestations of Louis XIV were sincere. He acted with much energy, and did his utmost to arrive at the truth. Whether he obtained it is another matter. Despite all argument and commentary, the cause of Madame's death must remain indefinite—one of those mysteries of the past for historians to quarrel over. Absolute proof in favour of a natural death is unobtainable, for the medical evidence is tainted. There is more than a suspicion that the facts were distorted and suppressed. "For fifty years," writes Arthur de Boislisle, "the question has been studied with care . . . by impartial and serious writers, familiar with the documents of the reign of Louis XIV, or with the scientific problems." Historians and critics such as Monmerqué, Walckenaer, Littré, Pierre Clément, Paul Lacroix, François Ravaisson, the Count de Baillon, Jung, Jules Loiseleur, Jules Lair, Anatole France, and Chéreul have absorbed themselves in the problem. Walckenaer, Lacroix, Ravaisson, and Lair assert that

the Princess was poisoned. A modern physician, Dr. Legué, decides that corrosive sublimate caused her death. Littré, a man of letters with a medical training, considers that the primary cause was acute peritonitis the result of perforation of the stomach. Monsieur Funck-Brentano, in one of his brilliant studies of the Court of Louis XIV, after patiently analysing the medical evidence and setting aside all contemporary gossip, pronounces the same verdict. It could be received if the certificates of the autopsy were above question, and if the gossip of the period might safely be disregarded. But, although learned Guy Patin expressed his contempt of the rumours, they were so persistent and continued for so many years that we cannot treat them as wholly unworthy of mention.

The King ordered a post-mortem to be made without loss of time. The Venetian ambassador reported to the Doge that this unusual measure was forced by public opinion. In other words Louis recognised immediately that Philip and his associates were on their trial in front of Europe. The autopsy was held on the evening of the day of the death. Lionne told Colbert that there were over one hundred persons in the room. Sixteen French surgeons were present. And the English ambassador brought two more, one of his own nationality, Hugh Chamberlain, who by chance happened to be in Paris at the time, and another, Alexander Boscher, who was evidently a Dutchman. They were both attached as physicians to the household of the King of England.

As pathologists their knowledge was uncertain. Their qualifications were vague. Vallot, the first to sign the certificate, was physician to King Louis.

An old man (he died a few months later), his skill does not seem to have equalled his reputation. Guy Patin had already said with sarcastic force that the princes of France were unhappy in the selection of their doctors, and the remark applied with considerable truth to Vallot. Mazarin denounced him as an ignorant charlatan. Patin—who was dean of the medical school at Paris—had the same opinion. In one of his letters he refers to a quarrel between Vallot and Guénant. “They are two wicked beasts; if they would only devour each other the public would lose nothing.” Yet Vallot maintained his position at Court unchallenged until his death. Patin considered La Chambre, the second surgeon to sign the certificate, more highly. He was the son of the physician to Louis XIII, but had not his father’s skill. Daquin, another of the royal physicians to attend the autopsy, did not reach Patin’s professional standard. He was a Jew, son of a Jew of Avignon who had perjured himself in the trial of the Marquise d’Ancre. He had started his career as “garçon-apothicaire” to Anne of Austria, “a great charlatan—very deficient in science but rich in chemical and pharmaceutical tricks.” Patin consoled himself with the thought that the “tricks of the chemists and the impostures of the doctors last but a certain time, *sola virtus manet in æternum.*” Patin did not love Daquin. “The iniquity of the century has made him pass at Court for a doctor,” he writes disdainfully. He went so far as to accuse him of the murder of Mary, Princess of Orange, elder sister of Henrietta. But Daquin had much influence. Madame Vallot was aunt to Madame Daquin, and old Vallot pushed his nephew forward at Court. In “L’Amour Médecin” Molière burlesqued Daquin

under the name of Tomès. Boileau invented the term for Molière. It signified a blood-letter, and Daquin was notorious for his cupping.

François Blondel, who also attended the examination, was, according to Patin, very learned in Greek and Latin, the sworn enemy of charlatans and all who believed in the virtues of antimony. He was a man of courage and free speech, and not on the best of terms with his colleagues. Étienne Bachot was poet as well as physician. His thesis on hysteria created scandal. Patin does not refer in his voluminous letters to the other signatories.

Hugh Chamberlain, the Englishman, can hardly be described as a savant of exact knowledge. The son of a doctor, it is questionable whether he ever took a medical degree. He specialised in midwifery and "was regarded by his more orthodox professional brethren not unreasonably as a busy adventurous empiric."*

Hugh Chamberlain signed a personal certificate (now in the collection of State Papers) which followed the general lines of the French statement, but did not give a definite cause of death. Antoine Vallot, in addition to signing the general certificate,

* Hugh Chamberlain, however, was a man of considerable ability. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1681. In 1694 he published "A Proposal for the better securing of health, intended in the year 1689, and still ready to be humbly offered to the Consideration of the Honourable Houses of Parliament." He suggested that a small yearly assessment should be collected from every house, in order that each family might be professionally attended "much better and cheaper than at present with Visits, Advice, Medicine, and Surgery." His scheme was practically that of a National Health Insurance, and his name should not be forgotten in the year 1912. Other suggestions provided against the sale of bad food and adulterated drinks, and insisted upon the necessity of periodical cleansings of private houses and public streets.

issued a separate account, which opened with the words: "The more I consider the death of the late Duchess of Orleans, the more I find it surprising and astonishing." After recapitulating her state, as revealed by the examination, he might well express astonishment that she had lived so long. When he had been called into consultation at Saint Cloud, a few hours before the end, he had pronounced her illness to be a mere passing indisposition. This unfortunate diagnosis was not forgotten, and his account is a professional vindication. "Although I have had these four or five years a very bad opinion of her health, and have expected the misfortune that hath now befallen, yet should I never have believed the disease so great, in case I had not been present." He pronounced what we, in modern language, call peritonitis to be the cause of her "most sudden and violent death."

The second surgeon brought by the English ambassador did not sign the official certificate. The reason cannot be discovered. Alexander Boscher, describing himself as "surgeon to the King of England," issued a statement of his own, which agrees on the whole with the certificate signed by the majority. But he was extremely displeased at the manner in which the examination was carried out, "as if the surgeon's business were rather to hide the truth than to reveal it." He had many grave suspicions, and a private letter to Holland suggested that his official statement was not justified by his personal belief.

The other side of the story is to be found in the "Memoirs" of the Duke de Saint-Simon, and the "Correspondence" of Philip's second wife. Saint-Simon is very explicit. "The King, who had gone

to bed, rises, sends for Brissac, who was then amongst the guards and close at hand, commands him to choose six body-guards, trusty and secret, to go and take up Morel Simon, Madame's *maître d'hôtel*, and to bring him to the royal cabinet. This was done before the morning. When the King saw him he ordered Brissac and his first *valet-de-chambre* to retire, and assuming a most alarming aspect and tone :

“ ‘ My friend,’ said he to Morel, surveying him from head to foot, ‘ listen well to me. If you confess all, and tell me the truth about what I want to know from you, whatever you may have done I pardon you. It shall never be mentioned again. But beware how you hide the least thing, for, if you do, you are a dead man before you leave this place. Has not Madame been poisoned ? ’

“ ‘ Yes, Sire,’ replied Morel.

“ ‘ Who has poisoned her, and how ? ’ asked Louis.

Morel replied that it was the Chevalier de Lorraine, who had sent the poison to Beuvron and Effiat. Then the King, redoubling his assurances of favour and threatenings of death, said :

“ ‘ My brother ! Did he know of it ? ’

“ ‘ No, Sire. We were not fools enough to tell him. He cannot keep a secret. He would have ruined us.’

“ The King uttered a deep ‘ Ah ! ’ like a man oppressed who suddenly is able to breathe again.

“ ‘ That is all I wanted to know.’

“ Brissac was ordered to set Morel at liberty.”

Saint-Simon gave further details, as he heard them from Joly de Fleury, to whom Brissac had originally related them. “ Effiat, a man of bold spirit, Monsieur's first squire, and the Count de Beuvron, a pliable and gentle man, but one who wished to cut



THE CHEVALIER DE LORRAINE
After a contemporary engraving

a figure with Monsieur, with whom he held the office of Captain of the Guards, and greatly needed money to enrich himself, being a poor cadet of Normandy, had been very intimate with the Chevalier de Lorraine. His absence injured their affairs, and they feared another might take his place who would not assist them so well. Not one of the three had any hopes that the exile would end. The favour which they saw bestowed upon Madame, who even began to enter into state affairs, and whom the King had just sent on a mysterious journey to England, in which she had perfectly succeeded, and returned more triumphant than ever, made them tremble. She was born in June 1644, was in good health, and beloved by the King, so that they saw no chance of the return of the Chevalier de Lorraine.

“He had gone to cool his wrath in Italy or Rome. I know not which of the three first thought of it, but the Chevalier de Lorraine sent to his friends a poison, sure and prompt, by an express who probably did not himself know what he was carrying.

“Madame was at Saint Cloud, and for some time back had been accustomed to take a glass of chicory-water about seven o'clock in the evening to refresh herself. A page of her chamber had the care of preparing it, and put it with her glass in a cupboard in one of Madame's anterooms. This chicory-water was kept in a pitcher of earthenware or porcelain, with ordinary water by the side of it, to mix in case Madame found the chicory too bitter. The anteroom was the public passage to Madame's room, but no one ever stayed in it, because there were several. Effiat had discovered all that.

“On 29th June 1670, passing through this anteroom, he found his opportunity. He was alone, and

nobody had followed him. He turned back, went to the cupboard, and threw in his powder. Then, hearing some one coming, he took hold of the other pitcher. As he was putting it back, the page of the chamber, who had the care of the chicory-water, cried out, ran to him, and asked him sharply what he was doing. Effiat, without the slightest embarrassment, asked pardon, and said that he was dying with thirst. Knowing that water was there—he pointed to the pitcher of ordinary water—he had gone to drink. The boy grumbled, and the other, apologising and begging pardon, went to Madame's rooms and conversed with the other courtiers without the slightest emotion. What followed an hour afterwards is not to my subject, and has only made too much noise throughout Europe. Madame was dead the next day, 30th June, at three o'clock in the morning. The King was moved with the most lively grief. It would seem that he had some hints of the matter during the day, and that this page of the chamber did not keep his counsel. At any rate he had a notion that Simon, Madame's first *maître d'hôtel*, was in the secret, on account of his intimacy with Effiat in his youth."

This is not first-hand evidence. Saint-Simon was not born until 1675, and he wrote of events in which he had not been personally engaged. Chéruel suggests that the respected name of the magistrate, Joly de Fleury, was introduced to give verisimilitude to the tale—a far-fetched supposition for the Duke and the Procureur-général were on intimate terms. Arthur de Boislisle asserts that Saint-Simon received the gossip from the mouth of the second Duchess of Orleans. This is not improbable, for Saint-Simon was the close friend of her son, who was destined to

succeed his father as second Duke and to become famous as Regent of France during the minority of Louis XV. But Saint-Simon could not have relied wholly upon the conversation of the Princess Palatine. He knew everybody at the Court, and his opinion reflects the thought of his time.

The second Duchess of Orleans must have known the whole wretched story, in its most intimate details, before her marriage. Saint-Simon writes that Louis XIV took her aside before the nuptials, and assured her that Philip had not been guilty of the murder of his first wife. To the end of her life she never attempted to disguise her belief that her unfortunate predecessor had been poisoned. She refers to the subject more than once in her correspondence. As late as 1720, writing from Saint Cloud, nineteen years after the death of her husband, she declared that the first Madame was more sinned against than sinning.

“ She had to mix with the most wicked people, about whom I could tell much if I cared. Madame was very young, beautiful, agreeable and full of grace. She was surrounded by the greatest coquettes in the world, who sought only to get her into trouble and to make Monsieur quarrel with her. It is said that she was not handsome, but she had so much grace that everything became her. She was incapable of forgiving, and determined to drive away the Chevalier de Lorraine. In that she succeeded but she paid for it with her life. Lorraine sent the poison from Italy by a Provençal gentleman called Morel, and to reward the latter he was made chief *maître d'hôtel*. He robbed and thieved from me, and was made to sell his office, for which he got a high price. This Morel had the cleverness of a

devil, but believed neither in law nor gospel. He admitted to me that he believed in nothing. When he was dying he would not hear of God. 'Let my body alone. It's good for nothing now,' was his remark.

"It is quite true that Madame was poisoned, but it was done without Monsieur's knowledge. When these rascals conspired as to how they should make away with poor Madame, it was argued as to whether or not they should speak to Monsieur.

"'No,' said the Chevalier de Lorraine, 'do not let us tell him. He cannot hold his tongue. If he does not speak of it the first year he will get us hanged ten years after.' And then another said:

"'Be careful not to let Monsieur know. He might tell the King, and that would hang us all.'

"They made him believe that the Dutch poisoned Madame in a cup of chocolate. But this is the truth.

"Effiat did not poison the chicory-water, but he poisoned Madame's cup. This can be understood, for nobody drinks from our cups but ourselves. The cup was not brought out when it was asked for. They said it was mislaid. A *valet-de-chambre* whom I had, and who had been in the service of Madame (he is dead now), told me that in the morning, whilst Monsieur and Madame were at Mass, Effiat went to the buffet, found the cup, and rubbed it with some paper.

"The valet said to him: 'Monsieur, what are you doing here? Why are you touching Madame's cup?'

"He replied: 'I am extremely thirsty, and as the cup was dirty I am cleaning it with some paper.' That evening Madame asked for her chicory-water,

and, as soon as she drank it she cried out that she was poisoned. Those who were with her had drunk of the same water, but not from her cup. They were not taken ill. She was put to bed, and grew worse and worse, dying two hours after midnight in frightful suffering.

“Monsieur never troubled his wife about her gallantries with the King his brother. He himself told me the whole story of Madame’s life, and he would never have omitted this in silence had he believed in it. I think that in regard to this matter people have been unjust to Madame.”

Madame may very reasonably have been the informant of Saint-Simon. Her own contribution to the mystery is difficult to explain away, for it is obvious that she had discussed the affair not only with the members of her own circle but even with her husband. That her letters contain unsavoury references to most of her associates is true enough. Like Henrietta “she had to mix with the most wicked people” for whom she had a very wholesome disgust. But, with all her eccentricities, she was one of the few women of her time at Versailles who upheld a standard not only of morals—Madame de Maintenon did that in her own frigid way—but also of honesty and truth. One of the commentators upon her reference to the tragedy writes that she believed in the poisoning of Henrietta because she was obsessed by the idea of poison. But an age made notorious by the exploits of Madame de Brinvilliers and the gang brought to justice by the “Chambre Ardente” must be pardoned if it ascribed sudden death to more^r causes than apoplexy or peritonitis.

The story of Madame and Saint-Simon is corroborated in several details. It is impossible to discover

whether the chicory-water was served in a cup or a glass. Saint-Simon says the water was in a cup; Madame de La Fayette (an eye-witness) tells us it was poured out of a bottle. The Spanish ambassador reports that the drink was in a glass. The contemporary belief that the cup itself was impregnated with poison cannot be entertained. In the seventeenth century poisoners pretended that they could instil the toxic qualities of their drugs into the actual metal. The idea became so widespread that cups went out of fashion and glass became more generally used. Monsieur de Boislisle tries to prove that as the news of Henrietta's journey to England did not become public until April there was no time for Lorraine to send the poison from Italy. If Lorraine did forward poison he had nearly three months to make his arrangements. And there was no necessity to find the drug in Italy. There was enough poison in Paris to dispose of the whole of the Court.

Madame's health has also to be taken into consideration. She was undoubtedly frail, with a consumptive tendency. During the journey through Flanders she was extremely ill, but her sojourn at Dover acted as a restorative, and she returned to France a different woman. Was the plot against her life put into execution immediately she took up residence in her own palace? Madame de La Fayette notes that she complained immediately after Mass on the fatal Sunday morning. That author relates the history of her friend's last hours with minute accuracy and detail. But nowhere does she allow her pen to reveal the slightest indication of its writer's personal opinion as to the cause of death. She simply remarks that the princess "lost her life

in a manner which must always astonish those who will read this history."

The diplomatic correspondence does not help the inquirer, but it shows how anxious both French and English Ministers were to attribute the death to natural causes. Arlington wrote to Sir William Temple, English representative at the Hague :

"And in this I send you all the News I can . . . except that unhappy one of the loss of Madam ; which hath infinitely afflicted the King, and particularly all those that had the honour to know her at Dover. The embroilments that were in her Dometicks, and the suddenness of her Death, make the opinion easily take place with us that she was Poison'd. But the knowledge we have had since of the care taken to examine her Body, and the persuasion we understand his most Christian Majesty is in (whom it behoves to know this matter to the bottom) That she did not die of a violent Death, hath taken off the greatest part of our suspicions. And Monsieur *le Mareschal de Bellefonds*, who I hear is arriv'd this Evening, and is charged with giving the King a more particular account of this unhappy accident, and brings a compleat Narrative, underwritten by the ablest Physicians and Chirurgeons of Paris, of her Death, and of the dissection of her Body, will, as we suppose, entirely convince us, that we have nothing to lament herein, but the loss of this admirable Princess, without any odious Circumstances to make our Grief more insupportable."

Temple's reply, dated 15th July, is interesting. At the Hague, as elsewhere, the surgeons' certificate was received with suspicion. Indeed, the first despatch from Paris informed the ambassador that

“her body being opened in the presence of several persons and among them my Lord Ambassador they could not find the cause of so sudden a death.” His second letter to London amplified the information.

“I was very glad to find that the great measure of His Majesty’s grief upon Madame’s death was a little lessened by the satisfaction he had received that it had passed without *that odious circumstance* which was at first so generally thought to have attended it ; and of which I endeavour in my discourse here to allay the suspicions since I see that his Majesty is convinced ; though it is a very difficult matter to succeed in, after so general a possession, which has been much increased by the Princess Dowager’s curiosity, to ask her Physician’s opinions upon the relation transmitted hither to one of them from his brother, who is the Dutch Secretary at Paris ; and pretends it came from Dr. Chamberlain, though something different from what he transmitted into England. However it happened, it had certainly all the circumstances to aggravate the affliction to his Majesty ; which I am infinitely touched with, as well as with the sense of an accident in itself so deplorable ; but it is a necessary tribute we pay for the continuance of our own lives, to bewail the frequent and sometimes untimely deaths of our friends. *Et levius fit Patientia quicquid corrigere est nefas.*”

Montagu, the English ambassador in Paris, insisted that the glass or cup of chicory-water contained poison. On the 6th July he wrote to Lord Arlington : “I suppose by this time you may have with you the Maréchal de Bellefonds, who, besides his *condoléances*, will endeavour, I believe, to disabuse our Court of what the Court and people here

will never be disabused of, which is Madame's being poisoned, which, having so good an authority as her own saying it several times in her great pain, makes the report much more credited. But to me in particular, when I asked her several times, whether she thought herself poisoned, she would answer nothing; I believe, being willing to spare the addition of so great a trouble to the King, our master, which was the reason why, in my first letter, I made no mention of it, neither am I physician good enough to say she was poisoned, or she was not."

Monsieur and the blunt ambassador were open enemies. Upon the death of his wife Philip laid hands upon all the Princess's ready cash, which she had, through the ambassador, bequeathed to her servants. Montagu compelled the Duke to disgorge most of it, but he evidently kept all he could. More important was his action with regard to his wife's personal papers and correspondence. When the news came to Whitehall of his sister's death, Charles II immediately sent a messenger to Louis requesting the French King to take possession of all Henrietta's papers which included many private family letters. Louis found them in the care of Philip, and insisted upon their transference to the royal archives. But the Duke had already gone through them with the aid of Madame de Fiennes and other friends. "There were some in cypher, which trouble him extremely, but yet he pretends to guess at it," wrote Montagu. "And he complains extremely of the King, our master, for having a confidence with Madame, and treating things with her without his knowledge."

Montagu does not appear to have changed his opinion during that memorable summer. "The

Court and People here will never be disabused of (the belief) which is Madame's being poisoned," he writes in one letter to England. "As for my own particular, I have had so great a loss that I have no joy in this country, nor hopes of any in another." Again he remarks:

"There has been ever since Madame's death, as you may imagine, upon these occasions, various reports; that of her being poison'd prevailing above all the rest, which has disordered the Ministers here, as well as the King, to the greatest degree that can be. For my own particular, I have been so struck with it, that I have hardly had the heart to stir out since; which join'd with the reports of the town, how much the King our Master resented so horrid a fact, that he would not receive Monsieur's letter, and that he had commanded me home, made them conclude that the King our Master was dissatisfied with the Court, to the degree it was reported."

Charles II had, in the bitterness of his grief, received the French official envoy with marked coldness. When the Marshal de Bellefonds presented Philip's letter the English king refused to read it. "When do they intend to let the Chevalier de Lorraine back to Court?" asked Charles brusquely. The Marshal replied that he did not know, that it was not easy to divine the thoughts of his Most Christian Majesty on such a trifling subject, that none of the French King's servants would take the liberty of conversing about it, unless the King first broached the matter. Charles' attitude of anger did not last long. The Treaty of Dover had been signed, although the ink was almost wet upon the parchment, and Charles could not afford to flout

Louis. It was necessary to send a reply to Saint Germain, and the choice of a messenger excited cynical astonishment. Even Arlington could not hide his feelings. In writing to Temple he remarked that there was little news, except that Lady Castlemaine had been made a Duchess and the Duke of Buckingham appointed "to return the King our Master's Compliments to his most Christian Majesty in requital of Monsieur de Bellefonds; both which are surprising enough till men are a little acquainted with them." Surprising because Lady Castlemaine had supported a Spanish friendship, and Buckingham—despite his admiration of Henrietta—had been a zealous opponent of any alliance with France.

The day after Henrietta's death Louis XIV wrote to Charles.

"Brother,—The tender friendship which I had for my sister, was sufficiently known to you for you to conceive the state to which her death has brought me. In this weight of grief I may say, that the share I take in yours for the loss of one who was so dear to you as well as myself, increases the excess of my affliction. The only comfort of which I am capable is the confidence which remains with me that this disaster will make no change in our affections, and that yours will be continued towards me as fully as mine towards you." Apart from his personal grief Louis was haunted by the same fear which disturbed the mind of Colbert. Would the death of Henrietta upset the political scheme? "Must we abandon the great affair?" wrote Colbert de Croissy to Lionne. In his first letter to his Minister at the Hague Louis tells the Marquis de Pomponne of the sudden death, adding in cypher: "I fear that this misfortune may not be looked upon in the

place of your residence in the same view, and with the same sentiments with which I should desire it to be regarded." On 11th July his spirits returned, for he assured Pomponne that they might laugh at the efforts of the Dutch and the Spaniards. There would be no change in the political relationship between France and England.

When Buckingham arrived in France upon his official mission with a funereal message from Charles, the late Duchess was still unburied, awaiting the slow preparations for the state interment at Saint Denis. The envoy was welcomed with much festivity. One evening Lauzun invited the Duke and two of the Englishmen in his suite to supper. Three ladies were asked to join the party. The Marquise de La Vallière, sister-in-law to the Duchess de La Vallière; Madame de Thianges, sister to Madame de Montespan; and a third whose name is not given, sat down to table. The meal was extremely gay. Music was played during the courses. Suddenly a masked cavalier entered leading a masked lady on each arm. The three commenced to dance. Then Lauzun, and Buckingham, with their friends, joined in the impromptu ballet. When the cavalier unmasked the King stood before them. One of his laughing companions was Madame de Montespan, the other is not named. Louis asked Buckingham to accept as a present his jewelled sword. Its worth was estimated at more than twenty thousand crowns. Then the fête recontinued.

Montagu was soon reporting to Whitehall that the Chevalier de Lorraine had been permitted to return to the Court and to serve in the army. He considered the information so important that he wrote it in cypher.

“ If Madame were poisoned, as few people doubt, he is looked upon, by all France, to have done it ; and it is wondered at, by all France, That that King should have so little regard to the King of England our Master, considering how insolently he always carried himself to her when she was alive, as to permit his return. It is my duty to let you know this, to tell His Majesty. And if he thinks fit to speak to the French ambassador to do it vigorously. For I assure you it reflects here much upon him to suffer it.”

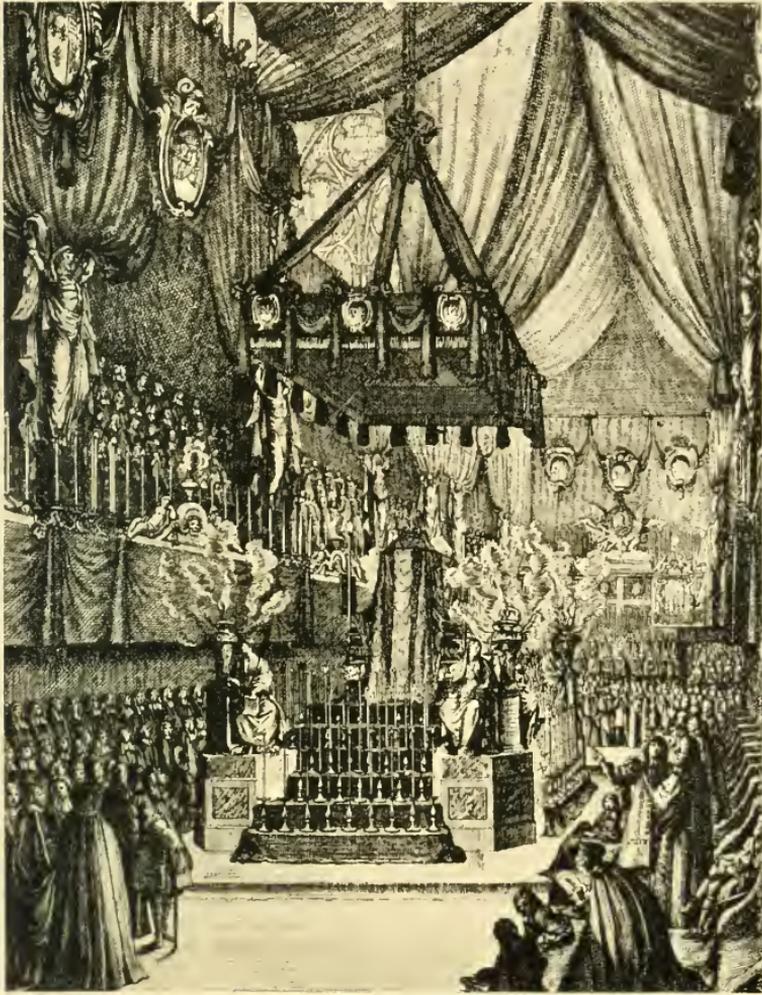
Nothing was done. Montagu did not know the secret provisions of the Treaty of Dover. French gold was already crossing the Channel.

Monsieur was delighting in the prospects of a brilliant State ceremonial.* The “ Grande Mademoiselle ” visited him the day after his wife’s death, and found him quite unaffected. He dressed his children in mourning violet, and arranged that they should receive formal visits of condolence, even Mademoiselle de Valois, who was ten months old, being compelled to receive the visitors in her nursery. Two weeks later he appeared at Saint Germain in the most elaborate mourning clothes. “ Monsieur is come from Rouille,” writes an English observer on the 16th July. “ I saw him yesterday at dinner with the King. The King seems much more

* Monsieur was not alone in this affectation of grief, which was a characteristic of the age. The “ Grande Mademoiselle ” had no love for her father, Gaston of Orleans, but, when he died, she was determined that the outward display of mourning should surpass all precedent. “ Everybody was clothed in black, even to the scullions, the servants’ servants, the trappings of the mules, the harness of my horses and packhorses. The first time we travelled nothing had ever been seen so beautiful as this great procession of black. It had an air of much magnificence and true grandeur.”

sensible of our loss than he do." Louis XIV was deeply distressed—for a week—and told Colbert that his affection for Madame was not equalled by the King of England. He commanded that Madame should be interred in the royal vaults at Saint Denis with the ceremony usually reserved for crowned heads. On the 4th July the body was removed to Saint Denis, but the arrangements were so elaborate that the actual funeral, at first fixed for the 25th July, did not take place until the 21st August. The whole of the Court assembled in the abbey church.

"On Thursday last," writes Francis Vernon, "was the solemnity of Madame's funeral at Saint Denis, extraordinarily pompous and magnificent. In that kind, nothing was wanting. All symptoms of a public sorrow and affection were met together. The Queen, which was an honour altogether new and unpractised in former funerals, was there in person. The King of Poland was there. All the Court in general, ladies as well as noblemen, assisted at the solemnity. The close mourners and those who made the reverences and offerings were the Prince de Condé, who led the Princess, the Duke d'Enghien, who handed the Duchess de Longueville, the little Prince de Conti, who led the Princess de Carignan. The Bishop of Condom preached with an eloquence something transported beyond his usual delicacy and sweetness. The hearse was extreme richly adorned. All the officers of her family, with great silence and mourning, cast the badges of their employment into her grave, and as her coffin was put in, there was a general weeping, a circumstance something unusual at these great ceremonies of the interment of princes, whose deaths, as their



FUNERAL OF HENRIETTA OF ORLEANS IN THE ABBEY OF
SAINT DENIS

Engraved by Le Pautre after Gisscy

lives, are made up rather of state and external shows."

There have been few royal funerals where the emotion of the spectators was so visible. Madame de Sévigné was much touched. The Mass was accompanied by the royal choir and an orchestra conducted by Lulli. "I cannot think," said she, "that there will be better music in heaven." Then came Bossuet's funeral sermon, preached by order of the King. "Vanitas vanitatum, et omnia vanitas" was the simple text of his greatest and most perfect oration, a masterpiece of classic literature and Christian eloquence. As he described the death of Henrietta a shudder ran through the church. At one moment he was so overcome that tears rolled down his cheeks. His congregation were overpowered by a sympathetic emotion, and wept with him.

Henrietta of England was never forgotten by her intimate friends. "There are sorrows," wrote Madame de La Fayette, "for which there are no consolations. They leave a shadow over the remainder of one's life." The bright little coterie which had gathered in the sun on the terraces of Saint Cloud broke up. Tréville, the witty conversationalist, entered the ascetic community of Port Royal. Turenne wished to become an Oratorian. Louis XIV forbade him. The state could not afford to miss his military skill. Madame d'Épernon became a Carmelite. These are signs of that weariness of life, that sense of the emptiness of existence, which came over the more intelligent members of the Court from time to time. Even those who remained in the world experienced a sharp shock. Madame de Sévigné tells Bussy-Rabutin of her horror at the tidings.

“With her we have lost all the joy, all the charm, and all the pleasures of the Court.”

The phrase is not so exaggerated as it appears. Bussy, a light-hearted soul, confessed that he was “afflicted to the last degree. . . . If anything is capable of detaching from the world those men who are most attached to it, it must be the reflections on this death.” A month later he told Gramont, “I can think of nothing but Madame’s death. It haunts me as if it happened yesterday.” Three years later Madame de La Fayette writes to Madame de Sévigné, on 30th June, that an anniversary is being kept. She is re-reading the letters of her friend. “It is three years since I saw Madame die. I can think of nothing else.” And in the same manner, years later, Bussy recalled the text of Bossuet’s sermon. Madame’s death, he remarked, was a calamity for France as well as a personal misfortune. “Not only was she loved and honoured by all, for the sake of her wit and charm, she was also the most generous and truest of friends. This death was of more value to me than many sermons. A princess, young, beautiful, and happy, who could die at the age of twenty-six with all the firmness and Christian faith of men who are old and weary of life—such an example is for the whole world. God gave me the grace to take it seriously to heart.”

The character of Henrietta of Orleans is liable to much misconstruction. She was the child of two royal houses famous for their powers of personal charm. She was the grand-daughter of Henri Quatre, as well as the great-granddaughter of Marie Stuart, and she inherited many of the qualities of their varied natures. The Stuarts generally secured the affection of their followers, if they did not always

retain their esteem. Henrietta of Orleans, from the instant she took her place in the Court of France, endeared herself to her many friends. Their expressions of adulation are not to be reckoned with the usual lip-service which all women of royal blood expected and received in the seventeenth century. This princess was truly loved, and the sincere affection she enjoyed is to some degree sufficient refutation of the calumnies which overshadowed her short career.

The children of Charles I possessed a natural charm and intellectual ability which have few parallels in history. Their trials seldom embittered them, and the girls displayed as fine a heroism as their brothers. Their mental capacity was possibly greater, and, had fate placed any one of them on the throne of England, they would hardly have allowed the crown to slip from their grasp as did James II. Of Mary, who became Princess of Orange, De Thou, the French ambassador, wrote: "If she apply herself to business as she seems to wish, it is certain that she is very capable of succeeding, having wit, judgment, and a great fund of secrecy and discretion." And this opinion was amply justified during the troublous years which followed the death of her husband.

Mary of Orange died in her thirtieth year, during the early days of the triumph of her brother's restoration. The child Elizabeth was but fifteen when she died in captivity at Carisbrooke. Her softness and gentleness (both marked characteristics of her younger sister Henrietta) towards her friends and her father's enemies obtained for her the name of "Temperance." Her wisdom as well as her learning were far beyond her age.

Henry, Duke of Gloucester, who died of small-pox at the age of twenty-one in the year of the Restoration, was probably finer in temperament and more evenly balanced than either Charles or James. Clarendon remarks that he was "a prince of extraordinary hopes, both from the comeliness and gracefulness of his person and the vivacity and vigour of his wit and understanding." Burnet, who never drew a portrait for the sake of mere flattery, delivered the same verdict. "He was active and loved business, was apt to have particular friendships, and had an insinuating temper which was generally very acceptable." Had the Duke of Gloucester lived the story of the Restoration would have been very different.

This family likeness is so marked that it may reasonably be asked if it was an inheritance from the paternal or maternal side. From Henrietta Maria certainly came personal bravery and lack of fear. But intellectual the unfortunate daughter of Henri IV certainly was not. The ability as well as the charm of her children were derived from the Stuarts. They were the gifts—as well as the curses—of that fascinating race. The character of Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, and sister to Charles I, was almost exactly reproduced in her nephews and nieces. The "Queen of Hearts" had courage, personal charm, mental vigour, and inexhaustible vivacity. The description applies word for word to Henrietta of Orleans.

The younger Princess passed through the same poverty which beset her brothers. Charles wandered through the Low Countries in rags, whilst she shivered in the fireless rooms of the Palais Royal. But Charles and James lost strength of purpose

in the ordeal, and she appreciably gained force. The young king, a vagrant without a throne, penniless and discredited, fathomed the seamiest depths of humanity. He knew his fellow men, their meanness, selfishness, cruelty, lack of honour, and continual self-seeking. The knowledge he gained turned him into a laughing philosopher, with slight belief in outward protestations or show of honesty. The whole of his insouciance was due to the fact that he had suffered. He reigned in the hearts of his poorer subjects simply because he had been an outcast and a beggar. James was cast in a more sombre mould, not so flippant as his brother and not so gifted. He was less of a Stuart, and inherited more of the bigotry and fanaticism of his mother. Henrietta was a true daughter of the northern race, and betrayed little trace of the French and Italian blood in her veins. She was a woman of high ideals, with much of the temperament of her martyred father.

Naturally she loved brightness and gaiety. Lightheartedness was a distinctive trait of these later Stuarts. One would ascribe it to the extraordinary blend of Scottish and Latin ancestors, if we did not find it in at least one child of James I and Anne of Denmark. Her levity was the deepest blot on her character. She does not appear to have had any strong affection for her children. When her first child was born she was so disappointed at having a daughter that she cried, "Let it be thrown into the river," and she allowed her mother to take complete charge of Mademoiselle. Her only son, the little Duke de Valois, died 8th December 1666. Before the month was over she gave a masked ball at the Palais Royal, and was engaged in continual

gaiety until the beginning of Lent. In this she but followed the custom of the Court. When the King's infant daughter died, 30th December 1662, no alteration was made in the King's arrangements. A court ballet was given before a week had elapsed, and this "Ballet des Arts" was repeated the day after the funeral. The mourning for Anne of Austria did not last more than two or three weeks. The Court of France was governed by a restless gaiety, an incessant search after pleasure. The fault is not so much that of Henrietta as of her period. And if we should harshly judge Louis XIV and his time we should at least remember the first decade of the twentieth century. There is not much difference, for history eternally repeats itself.

Her desire for a clever and brilliant circle was inherited from her father and grandfather. Queen Henrietta Maria was not a "bookish" princess, and Henri IV was a man of action rather than of the study. Henrietta of Orleans encouraged the poets who surrounded her court. She was godmother to Molière's daughter. He dedicated his plays to her, and endeavoured in several of his characters to mirror her perfections.

Her cruel fate was to be linked indissolubly to a degraded prince, who had sunk a mediocre intelligence in the meanest and most loathsome dissipation. From time to time hints are thrown out that she contemplated a divorce, but such a release was manifestly impossible. Gradually she developed into a more serious woman, and, as she grew older, she became readier to carry out her duty in the world. She never wholly disregarded the teaching of the nuns in the quiet convent at Chaillot. Had she copied the example of the society in which she

lived, and followed every passing inclination, she might still have pleaded many excuses. It cannot be pretended that during the early years of her marriage she acted with any degree of prudence. The contemporary gossip which coupled her name with those of De Guiche, Vardes, Buckingham, and half a dozen others, had some ground for its suspicions. Political rancour and court intrigue did the rest, until we get Burnet's appalling portrait: "The King's sister, the Duchess of Orleans, was thought the wittiest woman in France, but had no sort of virtue, and scarce retained common decency." Michelet's melodramatic history of France would have us give credence to all the slanders of Burnet, Andrew Marvell, and the other anti-monarchist writers of England, with the addition of fresh inventions from the fertile imagination of the French author.

Their calumnies are too exaggerated for our belief. They arise from two facts. Henrietta was extremely intelligent, and very much of a coquette. Essentially good women have been, are, and ever will be coquettes. The sin—if it be one—is a very little failing, and appreciably adds to the pleasure of existence. It arises from an unconquerable desire to exert a sway over the heart of man. If men never treated it seriously, coquetry might probably cease to exist—which would be a pity. It flourishes because men invariably treat it as one of the gravest of faults. They grow solemn and bad-tempered over exactly the one thing they should laugh at as a jest. They should remember that

She who trifles with all
Is less likely to fall
Than she who but trifles with one.

Gay's verse applies with truth to the case of Henrietta of Orleans.

She was young, and she preferred companions of a youthful spirit. She was witty, and she surrounded herself with men and women of gallantry and intelligence. Women of her character are generally judged harshly by philosophers—of both sexes—who are old from the moment they toddle out of their cradles. There will always be people in the world who insist that virtue must necessarily be dull. As a matter of fact the only dull thing in the world is vice, which they would soon discover if they had the courage for a voyage of discovery.

One truth remains certain. Henrietta never dropped to the level of her brother and her brother-in-law. She gloried in the open admiration of the men who surrounded her, but on her deathbed she assured her husband that she had never deceived him. Like her aunt of Bohemia, she wished to be thought a Queen of Hearts. She accepted the devotion of her admirers as a monarch accepts the homage of his subjects. The senseless jealousies of her faithless husband drove her into more than one malicious flirtation. History fails to prove the slightest real passion.

“I do not wish to have the air of knowing what can never be known,” writes Anatole France, in a chiselled phrase, “but, in truth, appearances are favourable to Madame, and, in what concerns her, the best to believe is also the most believable.”

X

Philip contemplates marriage : The Palatinate : Activity of Anne of Gonzaga : Elisabeth Charlotte : her thoughts on religion : Carl Ludwig's curious household : the horror of marriage : Character of the second Duchess : her children : Henrietta's daughters : Queen Marie Louise of Spain and her husband Charles II : The Duchess of Savoy : Her descendant legitimist heir to the English throne.

BEFORE Madame had been entombed at Saint Denis, Philip of Orleans was already considering his choice of a successor. He is said to have referred to the subject the day after the death of Henrietta of England. "Monsieur is in amours again," wrote the Englishman Vernon, early in August. "If he be not shortly married to Mademoiselle, all the world is in a mistake. He follows her, he courts her, he is at her toilette, and waits on her as she dresseth herself." Philip told his brother that it would be a good match. She was not likely to have children, in which case he would enjoy the whole of her fortune. Whether the proposal was definitely made is not clear, but the "Grande Mademoiselle" refused to consider her cousin as an eligible husband. His character was too notorious for any French princess to risk becoming his partner. So a wife was found for the Duke on the other side of the Rhine.

Carl Ludwig, Elector of the Palatinate, had a daughter aged eighteen. Elisabeth Charlotte,

familiarly known as "Liselotte," had been educated by her aunt Sophia, Electress of Hanover and granddaughter of James I of England, a true Stuart, who, in years to come, passed the succession to the crown of Great Britain to her son George. The household of Carl Ludwig was far from happy. The Elector was selfish and callous, the Electress jealous and bad-tempered. Politically this tiny German state was troubled by the ambitions of its neighbours, and a family alliance with the royal house of France appeared to be the easiest way out of the danger. Carl Ludwig snatched at the opportunity, particularly as little was asked in regard to marriage settlements.

Anne of Gonzaga, the bosom friend and correspondent of the now forgotten Henrietta, was busily negotiating the proposed marriage in the early autumn. She was travelling in Germany when the news came that the Princess was dead. Within a few days she had considered the possibility of promoting her niece Elisabeth Charlotte to the vacant ducal throne. On 14th July, 1670, she wrote to Carl Ludwig: "Those who think that Monsieur would be a very desirable match already write to me on the subject, which is somewhat premature." In October she returned to Paris. Louis XIV wished to see his brother married to the "Grande Mademoiselle," but the lady had declined, her refusal was definite, and Monsieur's wishes were uncertain. At last, after continued discussion and many rebuffs, for the brother to the King of France might well have expected a more brilliant *parti*, the princess was able to report that a marriage could be arranged. This was in August 1671. Monsieur was willing, and the King would give his consent. "The only obstacle is that of religion."

The French diplomatist Gourville refers in his memoirs to a visit the Electress Sophia once paid to Paris in company with her daughter Sophia Charlotte. The girl was of marriageable age, and the Frenchman asked what religion the young lady professed. The reply was that her parents had not yet decided upon her husband.

Such an obstacle was not likely to impede the marriage of Elisabeth Charlotte, who had been brought up as a rather free-thinking Protestant. The practice of religion was not a strong feature in any of the minor German courts. The reigning princes attended church as a matter of form, read comedies whilst prayers were being recited, and in some cases their wives made use of the quiet interval to conduct their correspondence. "Liselotte" joined the church of her future husband without hesitation, although her inclinations remained strongly Lutheran until the end of her life. At least she was no hypocrite. When she was an older woman she explained and justified her attitude. "It is deplorable that the priests so manage that the Christians are divided amongst themselves. The three Christian religions should form but one, if my advice were followed. One would not trouble about what people believed, but rather if they lived in conformity with the teaching of the Evangelists, and one would preach against those who lead bad lives. The Christians should be allowed to marry between themselves, and to go to church where they pleased. There would be then more harmony than exists at present." She refused to admit the existence of conversion from purely spiritual motives. In 1710 she says how astonished she is to learn of the conversion of the Duke of Brunswick to Catholicism. "The

reason you give cannot be the true one, for this conversion will not bring him in a penny." In 1704 she wrote : " I have not been able to perform the good work of fasting this Lent. I cannot endure fish, and I am quite convinced that we can do better deeds than by spoiling our stomachs in eating too much fish. Are you simple enough to believe that Catholics have none of the true bases of Christianity ? Believe me the aim of Christianity is the same in all Christians. The differences we find are only priests' jargon, which does not concern honest men. What does concern us as Christians is to be merciful, and to apply ourselves to charity and virtue. Preachers ought to recommend all that to Christians, and not to squabble as they do over a thousand difficult points as if they understood them. But this of course would diminish the authority of these gentlemen, and so they busy themselves with disputes, and not with what is more necessary and most essential."

The child of eighteen recognised that her future happiness was being sacrificed for selfish and political reasons. She consented to the match from a sense of duty towards her father, and also out of a feeling of patriotic devotion to the interests of the Palatinate. She imagined that at the Court of France she would be in a position of such power that she could preserve her native land from the terrible warfare which continually ravaged Europe. In this respect she failed. The Marquis de La Vallière told Prince Visconti that the later misfortunes of the Elector Palatine were chiefly due to the imprudence of his sister of Orleans.

She was well aware of an old feud between her father, the Elector, and Louvois. She was always loyal to her German family, and never attempted to

hide her feelings. When she saw the Minister of War walking at the head of the procession of the Knights of the Saint-Esprit on New Year's Day, 1673, she cried :

“Look at Louvois ! He has all the airs of a bourgeois. His decorations are not enough to conceal his true rank.”

The minister heard the remark. Notorious for his vindictive spirit, the unfortunate words were largely responsible for the invasion of the Palatinate in the following year. The Princess recognised her lack of success. In 1719, in reviewing the past, she wrote sadly : “I see but too plainly now that God did not will that I should accomplish any good in France, for, in spite of my efforts, I have never been able to be useful to my native country. It is true that when I came to France it was purely in obedience to my father, my uncle, and my aunt, the Electress of Hanover. My inclination did in nowise bring me here.”

Her father's curious household was not calculated to induce her to make a closer acquaintance with the joys of matrimony. In Carl Ludwig's palace at Heidelberg a wife and family had been installed on each floor, and, although he explained his action by a reference to the Old Testament, his domestic arrangements were the scandal of Germany even in that easy age. Elisabeth Charlotte wished to lead “the good life of celibacy.” Years after she spoke with considerable frankness. “When a woman gets it into her head that she wants a husband, it is mere folly. To be crippled is a misfortune, to have a husband is another.” Mademoiselle de Montpensier insisted that marriages based upon love could not possibly result in happiness, and the second Duchess

of Orleans cordially agreed with her. "It is a mistake when a love match succeeds. It is very rare. Love generally turns to hatred." She recognised however that marriage was inevitable for princesses. "Marriage is like death. The day and the hour of it are marked. No one escapes. As our Lord wills it, so it comes to pass."

This horror of matrimony was characteristic of the age. Perhaps Mademoiselle de Scudéry with her philosophical romances was partly responsible for the feeling. "I know," she wrote, "that there are many estimable men who merit all my esteem and who can retain a part of my friendship. But as soon as I regard them as husbands I regard them as masters, and so apt to become tyrants that I must hate them from that moment. And I thank the gods for giving me an inclination very much averse from matrimony."*

They worshipped freedom and friendship, and they believed that matrimony was the end of both—at least for the keener intelligences. "There is a taste in pure friendship which those who are born mediocre do not reach," said La Bruyère.

In October the princess commenced her journey to her new home. Heidelberg she never saw again. She was terribly upset, and told her aunt that after parting with her father she cried so much that her side became swollen. "From Strasbourg to Châlons, I did nothing but howl all night." And

* At the moment of writing, a journal devoted to the advanced women's movement states that "marriage can be dismissed with the remark that it is an institution whose dissolution is already at hand." The same prophecy was made two hundred years ago. However the wit of man has not yet found an efficient substitute. Perhaps woman's bright intellect will be more successful, for, after all, it is primarily a woman's question.

when she was recounting her early experiences in 1718 she remembered that during this mournful progress she was not able to eat and drink without effort.

At Metz she again abjured her former religion, and the marriage by proxy took place on the 16th November. The next day she met her husband for the first time, and Philip of Orleans was not over-pleased. When Monsieur saw her he ejaculated audibly : " Oh ! comment pourrai-je coucher avec elle ? " With admirable coolness she commenced to eat an olive, and said not a word. She discovered her husband to be " a little round man, who seemed mounted on stilts, so high were his heels, always adorned like a woman, covered with rings, bracelets, jewels everywhere, and a long wig brought forward and powdered, ribbons wherever they could be tied, highly perfumed, and in all things scrupulously clean. His nose was very big, eyes and mouth fine, the face full, but extremely long."

There was nothing to be said in favour of the bride. She admitted her ugliness. In a letter written a few years before her death she said : " I have all through my life made fun of my uncomeliness. I only laughed at it. His Grace, our father, and our late brother, often told me that I was ugly. I merely laughed, and did not make myself unhappy about it. My brother called me badger-nosed, which I took as a good joke." And again she wrote : " I have always considered myself ugly, even when I was young. I did not care to be seen, and I never desired any sort of ornament, for jewels and finery attract notice."

Elisabeth Charlotte had other qualities, perhaps of more value than simple beauty of feature. Madame

de Sévigné as usual reflects the current gossip. When she hears of the engagement she tells her daughter, Madame de Grignan: "You will know how overjoyed Monsieur is to think of being married with much ceremony. Alas! if instead of bringing a new Madame he could give us back the one we have lost." In another letter (December 30, 1672) she relates a formal visit to the newly constituted Court. "Yesterday I went to the Palais Royal, with Madame de Monaco, where I caught a cold fit to kill me. I wept there for Madame with all my heart. But I was surprised at the wit of this one, not that she is in the least agreeable, but she has much good sense, and is very obstinate and resolute."

Common sense was the keynote of a character thoroughly out of sympathy with the atmosphere which prevailed at the Court of Versailles. "She has the rusticity of a Swiss," wrote Saint-Simon, "but she is capable of tender and sincere friendship." He draws so careful a portrait that it can hardly be improved. "Madame is a princess of the olden time. She is attached to honour, virtue, rank, grandeur, and inexorable as to their observances. She is not without intellect, and what she understands she comprehends extremely well. She is a good and faithful friend, trusty, true, and upright, easy to prejudice and to shock, very difficult to bring back from prejudice, coarse and dangerous in her public outbursts. Quite German in her habits. Frank and indifferent to all propriety and delicacy for herself and for others. Sober, solitary, and full of fads. She loves dogs and horses, hunting and theatrical performances, all in the most passionate manner. She is never seen except in full dress, or in a man's wig and riding habit."



ELISABETH CHARLOTTE, SECOND WIFE OF PHILIP OF ORLEANS,
WITH HER TWO CHILDREN
After the painting by Mignard in the Presence Chamber, Windsor Castle

The second Duchess despised dress. "I don't see why men should consider it necessary to have so many costumes," she told a friend. "The only clothes I possess are the state robes and a hunting habit when I go riding. I have nothing else. I never possessed a dressing-gown, or a mantle, and my wardrobe contains but a single nightdress for morning and evening toilette."

By an irony of fate the effeminate Philip had married a woman whose tastes were wholly masculine. She laughed at her husband's absurd manners, but her sound common sense came to the rescue, and she patiently endured the many annoyances she was unable to remove. Her eldest son, Alexander Louis, Duke de Valois, died in the nursery. Philip, who was to succeed his father as second Duke of Orleans, and also to govern France as its Regent, was born in 1674. Two years later came Elisabeth Charlotte, Mademoiselle de Chartres, married in 1698 to the Duke of Lorraine. Madame found her happiness in her children, rather than in her husband.

To her credit let it be chronicled that she was an ideal stepmother to the daughters of Henrietta of England. She cared for them and guarded their interests as if they were her own children. The elder, Marie Louise, was not a prepossessing girl. She is described as being extremely beautiful, but the portraits that have come down to us reveal bad-temper more than any other characteristic. Even during her childhood, under the care of Madame de Saint-Chaumont, she seems to have quarrelled with her mother. The late Major Martin Hume sums her up as light-hearted and frankly pagan. If she inherited her mother's levity of manner, she certainly

did not carry on the family tradition of intellect and sound good sense.

Her marriage with Charles II of Spain was arranged by her uncle Louis XIV. She implored him on her knees not to send her to Madrid. She protested to her father. Both appeals were in vain. On the one hand her marriage was an affair of state, part of Louis' intricate plans to subjugate Spain. Her father rejoiced to see his daughter a Queen. It added to his importance in the world. The unfortunate girl—she was a little more than seventeen—was married by proxy at Fontainebleau on August 31, 1679, and entered her new kingdom during the following November. Whilst her future was in doubt she was distressed and in tears. When she realised that there was no chance of escape she threw prudence and dignity to the winds, determined to enjoy herself, no matter at what cost, while life remained.

Charles II of Spain was the only son of Philip IV, and his young wife Mariana of Austria. At the time of his marriage he was between fifteen and sixteen years of age, practically an imbecile. His health had always been feeble. Up to the age of ten he had been treated as an infant in arms. His chin was so large that he could scarcely masticate, his tongue so swollen that he could hardly speak. He had never been educated, and could read only with difficulty. He was the sole hope of a country which was in the lowest stage of degradation and national bankruptcy.

Marie Louise left the wittiest society in Europe for the company of this forbidding youth. We have a picture of him "running through the rooms from balcony to balcony like a child of six years old. And his conversation corresponds." The French princess

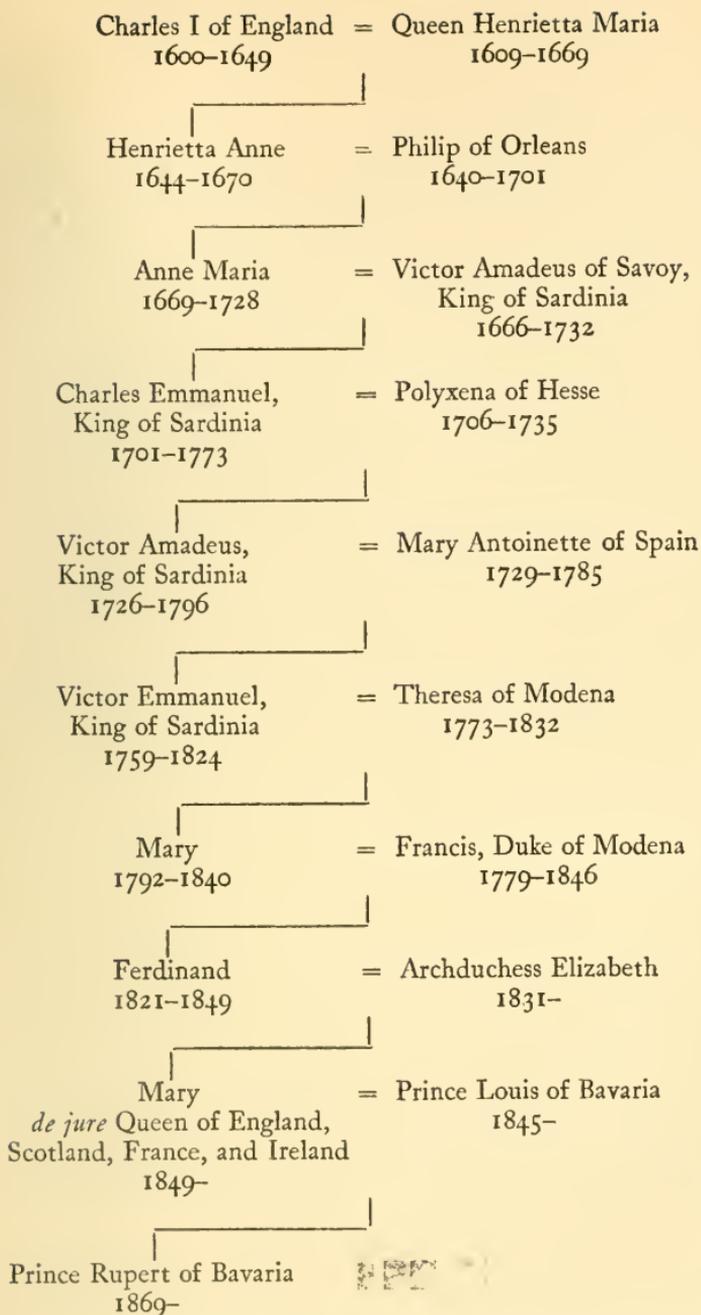


TABLE OF DESCENT OF PRINCE RUPERT OF BAVARIA,
"LEGITIMIST" HEIR TO THE ENGLISH THRONE

exchanged the most brilliant court in the world for a gloom, so thick, said Madame D'Aulnoy, that it could be seen, smelt, and touched. Men and women died daily in the streets of Madrid through starvation. Even the horses in the royal stables did not have enough to eat, so ruined was the exchequer. Marie Louise had been sacrificed, and in revenge she sacrificed Spain. Had she preserved her health Charles might have had a prince. She worshipped at the shrine of pleasure, she scandalised the nation over which she reigned. Early in 1689 she died, like her mother, in the course of a few hours. In Paris as well as in Madrid it was openly said that she had died of poison. But whether she died of peritonitis or poison she had thrown her life away, and there was nothing more to be said.

The second daughter of Henrietta, Anne Maria, Mademoiselle de Valois, was born August 26, 1669, and was but ten months old at the death of her mother. Fifteen years later she married Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, who afterwards became King of Sicily and Sardinia. Her personality is difficult to reconstruct, she left France before she was old enough to attract notice, and she does not appear to have ever returned. But English readers cannot fail to be interested in the princess through whom descends to the present day the royal line of the House of Stuart. As will be seen from the accompanying genealogical table, the English Legitimists salute her descendant, Rupert of Bavaria as the rightful heir to the throne of Britain.

XI

The only son : His "governors" and their fate : Attempt to appoint Effiat as "governor" : The "deputy-governors" : The Abbé Dubois succeeds Saint-Laurent as tutor : The character of Philip the younger : Intrigue to marry him to Mademoiselle de Blois : Elisabeth's Charlotte rage : Her son's behaviour in war and peace : His hobbies.

PHILIP THE SECOND, destined to succeed his father as Duke of Orleans, was born at Saint Cloud on 2nd August 1674. He was unquestionably the most brilliant member of his family, more gifted than his father or any of his successors. At his fortieth year fate rather than inclination placed him at the head of the state, and, as Regent of France, he proved his capacity in the conduct of the most obscure and intricate diplomacy. But he was unable to free himself from the traditional shame which overshadows the House of Orleans. The period of the Regency remains in history unparalleled for moral degradation. Every restraint was cast aside, and this saturnalia of society prepared in many ways for the Revolution. Philip inherited all his mother's honesty of thought, together with all his father's looseness of principle. If Philip the elder had any clear ideas on religion they must have been thoroughly permeated with superstition. Elisabeth Charlotte was so broad-minded as to be almost

agnostic. Their son, together with the majority of his friends, was practically an atheist.

Education makes the man, and the childhood of the younger Philip casts many sidelights into the home life of the first Duke of Orleans. He was not the eldest son. A brother had been born fourteen months earlier. "My little one is so strong, and so fat, that with all due respect, he resembles more a German, even a Westphalian, than a Frenchman," wrote the Duchess, a most enthusiastic mother, to her friends. The little Duke de Valois did not live to see his third birthday; a sudden fever carried him off and threw Madame into mourning. It was the second time within twelve years that a Duke de Valois had died, for the eldest child of Henrietta had been accorded the same title during his brief existence of five months. Monsieur believed Valois to be ill-omened; his eldest living son was eventually given the dukedom of Chartres, and by this name was known until his father's death. For a century Valois disappeared from the family history, to be revived by the prince who eventually became Louis Philip I, King of the French, Chartres being habitually used by the heir to the dukedom of Orleans.

Unlike the brother who had passed across the scene so quickly, Philip was a weakling, another example for the professors of Eugenics that a frail body does not always mean an inefficient brain. His legs were so feeble that he could scarcely stand, and at the age of four an attack of apoplexy permanently weakened his sight. His health did not improve until he was nearly twelve, and then he rapidly developed into a youth of strong constitution. His early training was deplorable.

"Monsieur was too fond of his children ever to

check them. Whenever he had reason to complain he came to me," wrote Madame. "I used to say: 'Are they not your children as well as mine, Monsieur? Why do you not correct them yourself?'"

"'I don't know how to scold,' he would reply. 'Besides, they are not at all afraid of me.'"

The remark was not only true but characteristic of the easy-living prince, who neglected all his duties towards his family. Elisabeth Charlotte, his wife, educated in a German school, accepted her responsibilities in a sterner spirit. She passionately loved her son, but she did not believe in sparing the rod to spoil the child, and she boasted in later years of the thrashings the Regent had received from her stout hands. Even her daughter, who married the Duke of Lorraine, did not escape wholesome punishment. "They remember it still," the old lady exclaimed with glee in 1710. If the result was unsatisfactory the fault could not be laid at her door.

According to custom the child was placed in the care of a "gouvernante." No better choice could have been made than Madame de Clérembault, a lady of much merit who was on the closest terms of intimacy with Madame. She was not allowed to retain her position for long. The appointment was of some distinction, and the Marquis d'Effiat, who still retained great power in the Duke's household, desired it for his wife. Monsieur was unable to resist his favourite's demand, and, to the bitter regret of Madame, the trusted friend received her dismissal. The history of the first household under Henrietta was being repeated.

In 1680 it was rumoured that the child would be transferred to the care of a governor, and the name of the Marquis de Sillery was mentioned. "I don't

believe it at all," wrote Madame de Sévigné. "It would be coarse to say why. There are so many reasons." Mademoiselle de Scudéry observed that men of such light manners ought never to pretend to such employment. Despite his notorious reputation the Marquis was duly appointed. His rank was high, and his family good. These qualifications were more desirable than simple merit. He had five successors. A fatality seemed to hang over the office, and the continual changes did not help the continuity of the boy's education. In 1683 the charge was given to a greater nobleman, the Duke de Navailles, whose wife had formerly looked after the maids of honour to Queen Maria Theresa. Twenty-three years previously the Duchess had been disgraced for attempting to check an amorous inclination of the King, and the Duke had gone with her into exile. Now he was pardoned.

He was not a man of deep intellect, and, at the age of sixty-two, had no personal desire to take up the new task. He explains the affair in his memoirs. "But when I saw the young prince who had been put into my hands I found his intelligence so advanced, and his disposition so charming, that my only dream was to devote every care to his education." He had little chance to carry his dreams into execution. Within twelve months he was dead and replaced by the Marshal d'Estrades. The new governor had distinguished himself as a soldier and as a diplomatist. He was old and ill, but he could not refuse the royal command. His authority was brief, for he died in 1686. The Duke de La Vieuville was more fortunate, but death carried him off in 1689. The appointment as governor to the Duke de Chartres appeared to be the quickest way to the

grave. The succession of deaths was the subject of much gossip, but it did not prevent incessant intrigue to obtain the coveted post.

“It would have been better,” wrote the Marquis de Souches, “if capable men had been selected rather than men of title.” The next aspirant was clearly unfitted to direct the education of any child. During 1689 the letters of Madame contain many references to the curious conspiracy. In May she writes: “I understand that Monsieur has the intention of making the Marquis d’Effiat governor to my son. He is my worst enemy, and will excite my son against me, as at the moment he is exciting Monsieur.” Three months after, the argument was unsettled. “I know, as does the whole of France, that this man is one of the most dissipated beings in the world.” In her letter she named Effiat’s principal vice. Monsieur told her that the accusation was out of date, for his favourite had reformed years ago. Madame retaliated by quoting an actual instance of recent wrong-doing. Monsieur shifted his ground by remarking that Madame de Maintenon strongly approved of Effiat’s appointment, and that she had obtained the King’s consent.

This aroused all Madame’s long-standing animosity against a woman she most bitterly hated.

“If that is so the omen is bad for you and for my son,” she cried. She recalled how well the Duke de Maine, son of Louis XIV by Madame de Montespan, had been cared for. “Madame de Maintenon loves the Duke de Maine as her own child, and has indeed educated him as if he were her son, so great is her affection. She wishes the Duke to surpass my son in virtue, and so she easily consents that Effiat should be the new governor.”

For the moment the discussion ceased. But when Madame was in Paris Monsieur sent her a long verbal message. Effiat was going to have the post whether she consented or no. If she agreed she could ask for any favour she desired. If she continued to refuse her consent her life would be made a misery to her. Elisabeth Charlotte was being dealt with on the same lines as the unhappy Henrietta.

Philip of Orleans had little tact, and less knowledge of his wife's temperament. She was a born fighter, and her acceptance of the callous proposition was not in the least likely. Delivered at extreme length, and with every sign of overflowing volubility, her answer was a decisive no. She reminded the messenger that for eighteen years her husband had caused her to suffer innumerable griefs and anxieties. She had learned to endure unhappiness, but never would she play the coward and sacrifice the well-being of her son merely to gain her own ease. She revealed the extraordinary fact that her household was ruled by the Chevalier de Lorraine, Madame de Grancey and the Marquis d'Effiat, who pushed their tyranny to such an extreme that even her servants were forced to pay them a tax on their wages.

The next day the Duke's secretary renewed the attack. His argument was novel and ingenious. He admitted that Effiat had not all the virtues, but his intelligence was good, and it would be difficult to find a better guide for a young prince. "You must remember, Madame, that the most dissipated mothers can often be seen educating their daughters in a really marvellous way. Having practised every wickedness themselves they know best how to avoid the vices."

The argument did not convince. The King had selected Fénelon, a man of virtue, to act as governor

to his own son, the Duke of Maine. Let him do the same for the Duke of Chartres. She wrote to the King. He did not reply to her letter. She wrote a second letter. "Be it true or false, the accusation that Effiat poisoned Monsieur's first wife constitutes a fine title of honour for him to have charge of my son." Four weeks later Louis suddenly spoke to her. He declared that it was a lie to assert that he had ever wished to see Effiat act as governor to his nephew. On the contrary he had attempted to persuade Monsieur to agree to another selection. Madame begged the King to appoint Monsieur de Béthune, ambassador to Poland. His presence, however, was needed in Warsaw, and the Marquis d'Arcy, who had also been an ambassador and soldier, was at last appointed.

According to Saint-Simon, the new governor was a nobleman of uncommon virtue, free from pedantry, thoroughly acquainted with the fashionable world, and, without ostentation, an extremely brave soldier. "The training of a King could safely be committed to him." His influence was good. He accompanied the prince on his first military campaign, and his pupil rendered him every credit, for Philip the younger did not lack the hereditary courage of the royal house. It was a pity the Marquis d'Arcy had not appeared earlier on the scene, for the Duke was now fifteen years of age, and his character and habits were to a certain extent already formed. His governors had followed each other so rapidly that his inclinations had already wandered into many doubtful paths. The deputy-governors had been unable to exercise much control. Monsieur de Fontenay was capable but old. His son, Monsieur de Nocé, was a pleasant but hardly an improving

companion, and during the Regency became one of the leading actors in the wild dissipations of the Palais Royal. De Fontenay was succeeded by De La Bertière, an honest soldier. The prince esteemed him, but did not obey his orders. The actual education of the prince was in the hands of a tutor named Saint-Laurent, a man of so little social rank that there was difficulty in giving him an official appointment in the household. He did his best, which was not much. He made the boy read several books composed by Bossuet for the benefit of the Grand Dauphin, the King's eldest legitimate son. He also taught him the history of France. Then, his health breaking down, for Saint-Laurent was not young, he looked round for help. A friend who was head of the College Saint-Michael recommended a ragged abbé, who had been acting as tutor to a tradesman's family living on the Pont Neuf, and had afterwards been employed by one or two more aristocratic families. Thus chance and fate allowed a penniless beggar to slip up the back stairs into the favour of a prince. He was so miserably poor that he had not even been able to pay for his degree at the University of Paris. It was the first appearance on the stage of history of Guillaume Dubois, an active spirit who did not cease to play his part until he had become Cardinal of Rome and Prime Minister of France. Perhaps the youthful Chartres would have been safer under the control of Effiat.

Dubois is one of the most extraordinary characters in a fascinating age. He was born in 1656 at Brives-la-Gaillarde in the Corrèze. The French adventurer pushing his way towards fortune, without morals and without honesty, generally came from the south. People who wished to flatter Dubois said

that his father was a doctor. His enemies insisted that he was the son of an apothecary, and that his boyhood was spent amidst the drugs in the shop. Dubois at the summit of his power affected to laugh at the gossip, but, judging from his remarks, it undoubtedly wounded him. "They think they annoy me with their eternal song of Brives-la-Gaillarde and the apothecary. One day I will exile some of them so that they can study at leisure my father's shop." It was said that he had risen out of the mud. Dubois could afford to smile at their envy. "They reproach me because I am not the son of a duke or a peer, and they call this being born in the mud."

The boy disliked his father's calling, and, at the age of twelve, he was sent to Paris to study at the College Saint Michael. He had no funds to draw upon, so, like many American graduates of to-day, he paid for his tuition by acting as servant to the head of the institution. Saint-Simon says that he acted as valet to the priest of Saint Eustache. His position was undoubtedly very humble. His intelligence and powers of application were quickly recognised, and from the moment he passed out of the college and started life by teaching the tradesman's family on the Pont Neuf he never looked back. Although he assumed the title of abbé he was not a priest, and did not take orders until he was made Archbishop of Cambrai. Scandal said that he had married a chambermaid from whom he parted, but scandal in this case was probably wrong. The youthful abbé was far too adroit to enter into matrimonial bonds which might hinder his future advancement, and chambermaids—in the seventeenth century—were rarely exacting to their admirers.

At first Dubois remained quietly in the background. His position in the household was by no means secure. He attempted unsuccessfully to ingratiate himself with Saint-Laurent, but the old pedagogue did not take kindly to his assistant, and told Madame that as soon as the Duke of Chartres had finished his studies Dubois would go, adding that he never allowed him to remain in company with the boy outside the specified hours of study. Having such an unpleasant opinion of the character of the abbé, Saint-Laurent's obvious duty was to remove the new tutor without delay. The elder man was weak in health, vacillating in temper, and unwilling to be troubled, whilst Dubois, despite his failings, was an excellent teacher. So it is not surprising that he remained at his post.

Exactly how he gained the affection of his pupil is not clear. He was eighteen years older, but particularly young in spirit. As a conversationalist he was noted for his wit. His conscience never troubled his peace of mind, and his actions were seldom restrained by moral scruples. As a companion the Duke of Chartres commenced to find him indispensable. He was on good terms with all those members of the household who might be able to advance his interests in the future. Madame discovered that he was entertaining—a quality which will carry a man far in a dull house. Dubois carefully concealed from her the fact that her enemies, the Chevalier de Lorraine and the Marquis d'Effiat, admitted him into their scabrous society. "He behaved like an honest man, and so I considered him to be," she wrote, "until the marriage of my son. Then I discovered him to be a rogue. If this abbé had been as good a Christian as he was clever he would

have been an excellent man. But he believed in nothing, and so became false and a scoundrel. He is learned, without a doubt, and has well taught my son. But I would like it better had he never seen him. Then this wretched marriage would never have taken place." Madame did not forgive Dubois for his part in an abominable family compact.

All this, however, was in the future. The Abbé Dubois continued his occupation as a deputy tutor of doubtful position, so unimportant that nobody troubled about the insignificant servant for an instant. Then came his chance. In 1687, almost without warning, Saint-Laurent died. Racine, in a letter to Boileau, remarked that he did not think the death would worry the powers at the Palais Royal with the exception of Madame. "One good man the less would not embarrass them." But the pupil had become attached to his master, and Racine relates the story. "For two days they dared not tell him of the death. Then Monsieur at last announced it. He screamed, and not only threw himself on his own bed, but also upon the bed of Saint-Laurent, which was in the same room. He called for him in a loud voice, as if he had been still living. Thus virtue, when it is real, has the power of making itself loved. I feel sure that the news will please you, not only as a tribute to the memory of Monsieur de Saint-Laurent, but also because of Monsieur de Chartres. God will that he may continue in such sentiments."

After an interval of some months Dubois formally succeeded to the vacancy. Socially his rank was not exalted enough for the position. But the Duke of Chartres implored his father and the King not to send the abbé away. The goodwill of Lorraine and Effiat had been gained, and in a mysterious fashion

Dubois received the approval of Madame de Maintenon. "This man of the people," grumbled Saint-Simon, who always insisted upon the privileges of the aristocracy, "pushed himself forward with the aid of Latin, Greek, belles-lettres, and a bright wit." He forgot to add a few weightier reasons, which however have not escaped his observation in the later pages of his memoirs. The abbé had a genius for intrigue, coupled with a thorough lack of scruple. He was a sceptic whose only faith was in himself, whose single doctrine was that of self-interest. "Avarice, dissipation, ambition, were his gods. Perfidy and flattery his means of advancement. He based his actions upon an absolute impiety. He held the opinion that probity and honour were chimeras and have no reality, with the leading principle that all means were good which led to the desired end."

The character of the Abbé Dubois has been the subject of much dispute, but there is no uncertainty as to the feelings of his contemporaries. Saint-Simon may have been unjust in his verdict, but he clearly reflected the general dislike and suspicion of the new courtier. "I will render him this justice," wrote Madame, many years later, in 1716, "he is a man of much capacity, he talks well, and he is good company, but he is as false and selfish as the devil. He is like a young fox, one can see deceit in his eyes."

At the accession of Dubois to the vacant tutorship the Duke of Chartres was fourteen, and, according to gossips, had already commenced a life which emulated in some of its worst aspects the manners of his father. Dubois was himself a man of dissipated habits, which he hypocritically concealed. He does not appear to have restrained his pupil. It is possible

that he shared his debauches. Diplomatically he strengthened his position with the various sections which struggled for mastery in the household of Monsieur. This he managed with such skill that finally he became so powerful that none could dare to throw him over.

Educationally he did his duty. In 1690 the Duke of Chartres was justly credited with superior intelligence as well as much amiability of character. The ambassador Spanheim, who represented the Elector of Brandenburg at the Court of Versailles, considered him to be "a prince very accomplished for his age . . . who has been well instructed." Contemporary gossip confirms this view. Dubois not only carefully taught him, but even allowed his pupil to undergo a public examination or "conference." The Marquis Dangeau said that he had so wisely answered all the questions propounded to him concerning Germany that the examiners were embarrassed. Books prepared by Dubois show how the pupil worked up his subject, and the manuscript dealing with the German States not only displays an intimate grasp of historical problems, but deals with the genealogies of the chief families in a most exhaustive fashion. Philip was the son of a German mother, and probably for this reason devoted additional time to the study of family trees.

Intelligent and amiable, he was also (according to Spanheim) "well made and of an agreeable person, with a noble and attractive air." Although he was not tall, his movements were graceful. Amongst the princes of the royal blood he stood forth pre-eminent. He was now doomed as the victim of a miserable intrigue.

Madame de Maintenon, who had spent so much

of her life superintending the education of the children of Madame de Montespan, did not relax her energies on their behalf when she grasped complete power over the weakening will of Louis XIV.

To the horror of the French aristocracy, and the disgust of the whole of Europe, the King formally legitimated his natural sons and daughters. Then it became necessary to find them suitable partners, not an easy matter, for their claims—as well as the royal rank they afterwards assumed—were by no means unhesitatingly accorded by princes who considered themselves of purer blood. Bastards they remained in common gossip until the end of the story. The eldest son, the Duke of Maine, was married in 1692 to Mademoiselle de Condé. Madame de Maintenon selected the husband for the eldest daughter years before the child was ready to marry. Madame Palatine was awakened to a sense of coming danger as early as 1688. She writes to a correspondent that she had been told in confidence why the King has suddenly become so amiable to the Marquis d'Effiat and the Chevalier de Lorraine. They have promised to influence Monsieur with the suggestion that the children of Madame de Montespan should marry their cousins, the children of the Duke of Orleans. The news threw her into consternation. She could not discuss it frankly with her husband, for every word she said he carried to the King. Effiat had been promised a dukedom, whilst Lorraine would receive a large sum in cash if the plan succeeded. She, poor woman, expected nothing but exile as an answer to her protests.

No princess ever had a sterner conviction of the sacredness of royalty. A "mésalliance" was the single crime she could never forgive. She agreed

with the late Queen Henrietta Maria of England, who said that she would rather tear her daughter to pieces than see her marry out of the blood-royal. The idea that she would have to salute the natural child of the king as daughter-in-law inconceivably shocked her. But for nearly four years nothing occurred. She was almost led to believe that the blow would never fall. Then Madame de Maintenon exerted all her force, and the thing was done. The business was cleverly handled. The Chevalier de Lorraine and his brother were deputed to gain the consent of Monsieur. They made an excellent bargain, for one of them was to be decorated with the Order of the Saint Esprit in payment for his services. The peace-loving Duke was easily won over. The victim was approached through his tutor the Abbé Dubois. He was only seventeen and—like the remainder of the royal family—frightened with the dread of exciting the King's anger. His mother says that he was threatened with imprisonment. This is unlikely, although it is clear that he detested the proposed engagement. Again vague rumours reached the ears of Madame, and she exacted a promise from her son that in no event would he give his formal consent. But she was fighting against an unscrupulous woman, as well as a monarch who was determined to have his will obeyed. The Duke of Chartres was unexpectedly summoned to an audience with the King. When he arrived in the cabinet he found his father already present. Louis XIV received his nephew with an unaccustomed graciousness. It is time you were settled, he explained to the youth. "We cannot marry you to a foreign princess of equal rank. The present war forbids such an alliance. The princesses

of royal blood, your cousins, are unsuitable on the score of age. We have therefore chosen for you our own daughter, and thus you will have a double claim upon us, that of son-in-law as well as that of nephew. But remember that we wish you to make a free choice, and in no way do we want to place any restraint upon your inclinations."

The boy lost his self-control.

"What is your answer?" asked the King.

"But the consent of my parents?" he stammered.

"Quite right of you to think of it," said Louis, in approbation. "You father and mother are not likely however to oppose my desires. Is not that the case, Monsieur?"

Monsieur agreed, and the marriage was considered as settled. The news was announced to Madame, and the King asked her what she thought.

"When your Majesty speaks to me as the master, and that is your attitude now, I can do nothing but obey," was her curt response.

She controlled her rage for the moment, but when it broke out her fury surpassed all expectations. At first her anger turned against her husband and son. She refused to listen to their explanations, and locked them out of her rooms. Saint-Simon tells the story in his usual incisive manner. During the earlier part of the evening she walked up and down the long galleries of Versailles, eagerly and loudly discussing the situation with her close friend Madame de Château-Thiers. Her movements were at all times ungainly, for she was stout and rough. Now she must have appeared grotesque. She took long strides, excitedly waving the handkerchief in her hand, violently gesticulating, and freely weeping.

The members of the Court watched her silently in astonishment. Every one kept out of the way of her sweeping promenade across the room, and only dared to pass in order to reach the door.

Saint-Simon then gives a vivid picture of Monsieur the same evening, playing at lansquenet with the Dauphin. As usual the heir to the crown appeared perfectly at his ease. He was reputed to be the idlest man in France. Gifted with a minimum of brains, the only rules of life which guided his existence were never to do anything, and never to be disturbed by anybody. Monsieur, however, could not enshrine himself within such an envelope of unconcern. He looked as if he were thoroughly ashamed of himself, and Saint-Simon noted that he did not recover his composure for a month. In the same room were the Duke of Chartres and Mademoiselle de Blois. The youth appeared extremely worried, the girl very sad. The air was charged with an indefinite apprehension, but the Chevalier de Lorraine and his party did not attempt to conceal their joy at the success of the scheme they had so successfully engineered.

The day finished with the King's supper, and the excitement increased. "I wished to lose nothing," wrote Saint-Simon, for there was general anticipation of open recrimination in the royal family. The King sat down, his features serene and impassive. The Duke of Chartres took a seat near his mother, but Madame Palatine refused to look at him or her husband. Her eyes were so full of tears that the drops rolled continuously down her cheeks. Her son's eyes were also red and inflamed, and like her he touched little food. The King offered his sister-in-law every dish which passed before him, and each dish she

refused almost rudely. Louis paid no heed to these signs of temper, and continued his polite attentions.

At the close of this solemn but interesting meal a move was made from the table. The King bowed to Madame in a most ceremonious and respectful manner. Whilst he was thus engaged she swung round on her heels so adroitly that when he lifted his head he found her back turned upon him.

The following day the whole Court attended upon Monsieur, Madame, and the Duke of Chartres. Not a word was spoken. Each person made a reverence and passed on in silence. Then the chattering crowd re-formed in one of the long galleries to await the rising of the King's council. As Madame arrived for the morning Mass in the chapel the Duke of Chartres advanced according to his usual custom to kiss her hand. In the presence of a hundred onlookers she struck her son a resounding smack on the cheek.

Within a few hours the King publicly announced the enormous "dot" he intended to settle on his daughter. He paid a formal visit to Monsieur and Madame, and the preparations for the ceremony were pushed forward with the utmost rapidity upon a scale of royal magnificence. Appointments were made to the household of the bride, although these offices were at first difficult to fill. The King would only select members of the oldest aristocracy, who resented serving a princess of illegitimate birth. By judicious bargaining these scruples were overcome. The marriage was officially announced on January 11, 1692, the betrothal took place at Versailles at six o'clock on the following February 17, and on the 18th, the Monday after Easter Day, the marriage was celebrated in the royal chapel by the Cardinal de Bouillon.



“MONSIEUR” PHILIP OF ORLEANS
After a contemporary engraving

Nothing soothed Madame, not even the presence at the wedding banquet of the King and Queen of England, two exiled monarchs for whom she had much respect and affection. Mary of Modena presented the bride with part of her trousseau, and escorted the new duchess to her chamber. King James acted in a similar capacity to the bridegroom. There was murmuring against his courtesy. It was thought that the attentions of a king who was invariably unlucky could hardly bring good fortune to the newly married.

The Duke of Chartres was now at the head of an independent establishment, free from the vicious influences which surrounded his father, as well as from the well-meaning but rough affection of his mother. So angry was he over the marriage into which he had been trapped that he immediately threw himself into a course of unconcealed dissipation, his chief reason being that this, more than anything else, would irritate the King. The Duchess was not altogether blameless. In the short interval between the announcement of the marriage and the ceremony she told a friend: "I don't care whether he loves me or not. I only care that he marries me." There were no hypocritical professions of love or even of affection from either party. If Philip the younger ever loved any woman it was Madame de Séry, Countess d'Argenton, and even she did not hold her ambiguous place in his heart without challenge.

During the earlier years of his marriage he displayed a strong inclination towards a military career. "I must admit," wrote Madame in 1695, "that my son loves war, and those who see him on duty say that he shows much application, and that he is learning his business well." When he went on his first campaign

with the Marquis d'Arcy, that old soldier allowed him to take part in hand-to-hand fighting. At Steinkirk, in 1692, the prince was wounded, a ball penetrating his left arm. At Nerwinde he charged five times at the head of the cavalry, and advanced so far into the body of the enemy that at one moment it was believed that he had been taken prisoner. As an officer on active service it was evident that he possessed all the qualities which go to form a good general. He threw himself with ardour into the daily routine of the camp, his orders were clear and decisive, in battle he was cool-headed and he was gifted with considerable foresight. During the Italian actions of 1706 he increased his reputation, and in Spain he conducted a brilliant campaign to a highly satisfactory conclusion. Unfortunately, as in the case of his father, this prince was becoming too popular. He was casting a shadow upon the King's children and grand-children. Although Louis XIV could not altogether dispense with his services, he was disinclined to allow him unlimited chances of distinction.

Madame Palatine sympathised with her son's interest in the art of war, a fit occupation for princes. His other occupations troubled her. He loved music, and had more than an amateur's knowledge of the divine art. Painting engrossed him. "My son has a strong genius for everything concerning painting," she writes, hardly knowing whether to express admiration or anger. "Coypel, who has been his master, says that the artists ought to be pleased that he is so great a prince, for if he were an ordinary man he would surpass them all." Although this sounds like the exaggerated flattery of a sycophant, it was not altogether untrue. Coypel's praise probably

induced Philip to set up a studio at Versailles. "My son is working hard for you at the moment," writes the indefatigable Madame. "He is painting a picture for you. The subject is borrowed from the Fables. It serves him as a pretext to go early to Paris to paint. But between us it may be said that there is a young girl of seventeen in question, an actress, very well-mannered, who, from what I can hear, comes to see him. If this child sits as a model for his *Antigone* the picture will be very charming." Although as a rule Madame was extremely severe in her references to the morality of the young aristocracy of France, she was evidently quite content to know that her gifted son was amusing himself in no worse company than that of a paint-brush and a pretty actress.

Had the prince concentrated his energies he might in one direction have gained some reputation. But the fact that not one of his canvases appears to have escaped destruction slightly discounts their talent. The authorship of the etchings after his drawings has evoked discussion. A clever engraver can do much with feeble draughtsmanship. A prince either receives too much credit or not enough, and Philip's artistic output has been the subject of as much sarcastic comment as the tiny drawings of Madame de Pompadour. Perhaps a lack of sincere appreciation drove the prince into fresh paths. In many respects he was as active as his mother, who chronicled his doings from day to day in her letters. One month he is composing an opera. Now he is making elaborate researches into old music, and discovers that the Lutheran hymn *Von Gott will ich nicht lassen* is based upon a ballet of the time of Charles VII. The laboratory which he set up in the Palais Royal

was in use until the end of his life. For a period he worked unremittingly with a Saxon chemist, the friend of Liebnitz. History does not relate the exact result of his laborious researches, but he was a clever distiller of perfumes, with which he used to drench his clothes in an overpowering manner. This taste for scent he shared with his father. In a more serious mood he engaged in the study of philosophy, which he attempted to explain to his mother. "I don't understand a word of it," she wrote, although her son was noted for the clarity of his thought and the eloquence of his conversation. "I confess my ignorance. He knows a few more things than men of his condition are usually acquainted with. And he is ten times better when he is talking about serious matters than when he is playing the fool." She was no prejudiced judge.

That brings us to the blacker side of his curiously mixed character. Philip the younger was a true Orleans. He had lived in his father's unhealthy circle, dominated by such men as Lorraine and Effiat, until their vice had saturated his soul. He could not have had a worse exemplar than the amiable, weak, depraved man he was to succeed in the dukedom. A series of aged governors, few of whom exerted the slightest authority, allowed the impressionable days of youth to develop without trammels of the slightest description. Then came Dubois, a sceptic who believed neither in God nor man. Before Philip's marriage his reputation was bad; after, it became rapidly worse. When he was forty he was notorious as the most dissolute prince in Europe. "My son affects no privacy in his amours," wrote the meticulous Madame, who never slurred over or wished to suppress any unpleasant truth. "He goes to

his mistresses with drums beating and colours flying, but without the least gallantry." Again and again she refers to the Duke's unbridled life. She was a conscientious reader of the Bible. Each day had its appointed chapter, and she found many analogies in Holy Writ. "My son reminds me of the old patriarchs. He is much like King David. He has courage and wit, is a musician, small in size, amiable, and ready to fall in love with every woman. So long as they are good-humoured, very saucy, and able to eat and drink a great deal, he troubles very little about their looks." In another letter she murmurs confidentially: "Let it be said, between ourselves, that my son is not a man of fashion. But he is a true fool with regard to the women."

In his private life Philip the Second was no improvement upon Philip the First. And Monsieur—when he considered the matter, which was seldom—laid the fault very unjustly at the feet of his wife.

XII

Monsieur's activity as a military commander : His disappointments : The troubles of Elisabeth Charlotte : Louis XIV and his brother quarrel : A scene at Marly : Monsieur has a stroke of apoplexy : His death : behaviour of the royal family : The close of an age : Madame de Maintenon's despairing reflection.

IN the diplomatic correspondence of the last thirty years of the seventeenth century there are many pen-portraits of Monsieur. The accounts of the Venetian ambassador and the envoy from the Elector of Brandenburg agree with the gossip of English travellers and the memoir writers. Philip was an amiable prince with expensive tastes and not enough money. He was interested in building. He ruined his pocket at the gaming table. He was governed by Lorraine and Effiat. His only desire was for peace. Occasionally a trifling ambition blazed like the flame of a match—and did not last longer. There was no definite place for him in the State, and he became wholly subservient to the wishes of the King his brother.

Contarini, the Venetian representative, wrote in 1676: "The Duke of Orleans is all for moderation and peace. He dreams only to second the good pleasure of the King, and to give to that royal personage reasons for satisfaction." Seven years later, when Contarini had been succeeded by

Foscarini, the report is the same. "His existence is soft and idle. His taste for splendour is greater than his means. He is naturally peaceable and formed by long habit to a resigned subordination to the absolute will of the King." The Chevalier de Lorraine was master of the household, and Madame suffered many secret dis gusts. The discord between the royal pair was suppressed but not extinguished.

At first Philip was allowed to see considerable military service. In 1672 he commanded the French army in Holland, and captured the towns of Orsoi and Zutphen. In 1673 he was present at the siege of Maestricht, and in the following years accompanied the King during the eastern campaigns. In 1676 he reduced Bouchain, and in 1677 his crowning accomplishment was the Battle of Cassel, the capture of St. Omer, and the passage of the Rhine. The Marshal d'Humières, who commanded the right wing of the army under the duke, told Primi Visconti that he led the attack on the Dutch some hours before Monsieur moved, because the prince was so long adjusting his wig in front of his glass. "It is true that Monsieur dressed himself, and made his toilette throughout the campaign, as if he were going to a ball. With painted face he remained indolent under fire, and did not move from the most perilous positions. His bravery was quite natural, and he ignored the presence of death. Yet his manners were those of a woman. He was always powdering himself. He decked himself with ribbons and jewels, and he never wore a hat so as not to upset his wig." As he was short he wore shoes with heels so high that he might as well have walked on stilts. Indeed it was wonderful that he was able to walk at all. There is not any doubt that he was fearless in the presence

of danger. It was the one characteristic his education had not been able to efface.

Whilst this campaign was in progress, Louis XIV was detained at the siege of Cambrai. Monsieur defeated the Prince of Orange at the Battle of Cassel, and then took Saint Omer, to the extreme joy of the Parisian mob, for this prince was always a favourite with the common people. The Court, on the contrary, would have preferred the loss of the battle rather than the victory of Monsieur. The King was annoyed, and it was suggested that he would have given a fabulous sum to have had the glory of crossing the Rhine in person. Whilst he had been wasting his time in sieges Philip had carried off all the laurels. Monsieur was not given a similar chance of serving his country, and, although he was present at the taking of Mons and Namur in 1691 and 1692 respectively, his military career may be said to have ended with the campaign which he conducted with too much success. In 1693 Louis XIV placed himself at the head of his army, and left Philip at home as lieutenant-general of France. Famine attacked Brittany, and we have a curious vignette of Monsieur and the Chevalier de Lorraine making a triumphal progress through the province, throwing handfuls of silver from the carriage to the starving peasants. But this was merely an interval. He had his annoyances. The marriage of his son to Mademoiselle de Blois did not trouble him, although it enraged his wife and shocked society. Far more irritating was the manner in which his claim to the throne of Spain was passed over in favour of his brother's grandson, Philip of Anjou.

No attention was given by Louis to his angry remonstrances, and he had the mortification of seeing

the Duke of Anjou accept a crown which should have rested upon his own head. Characteristically he eased his wounded soul with an oyster supper. On the night when it was evident that the King had pushed him aside he ordered two hundred English "natives." Madame enjoyed fifty. Mademoiselle de Chartres took a similar portion. He accounted for the remaining hundred. On the whole perhaps the oysters were a more satisfactory bargain than the Spanish crown.

The letters of Elisabeth Charlotte to her friends in Germany prove that her earlier illusions had long since vanished. She was touched to the heart by the wars which ravaged her native land. Her husband's infidelities were treated with more equanimity as a matter of course. With her brother-in-law the King she remained upon terms of affection, until the rise of Madame de Maintenon. For that lady she could find no name sufficiently coarse. Madame de Maintenon was a cold-blooded woman who followed her purpose undisturbed by the hot-headed German princess. She married Mademoiselle de Blois to the Duke of Chartres, and when the moment arrived she crushed Madame without mercy.

Maria Theresa, the Queen, died at Versailles 30th July 1683, and Madame must have felt her loss acutely, for she was out of sympathy with the younger women of the royal family. The Queen had gradually relinquished her position, and her death passed almost unnoticed. She was "a true saint," and there was no room for saints at Versailles. The King paid her all the honours of her station, but his interests were elsewhere. She passed half her time at prayers, and she revived the old Spanish custom of attaching semi-witted dwarfs to her circle. One she

called "my heart"; another, "poor boy"; a third, "my son." There were half a dozen in all. Then she surrounded herself with a number of small dogs, which were treated (says Primi-Visconti) with more care than the dwarfs. They even had a coach and footmen to take them for their daily outing. The poor Queen spent every evening from eight to ten at cards—preferably *hombre*—but she was so stupid that Madame d'Elbeuf, who was not rich, found that the Queen's losses made a pleasant addition to her income.

Madame's ladies of honour became such a nursery (to quote Visconti again) for the King's mistresses that there were several attempts on the part of Madame de Montespan to suppress them entirely. This was but one of the thousand trials to which she was subject. "The Court is a region where joys are visible but false, and vexations hidden but real," wrote La Bruyère, and Madame realised the truth of the epigram. "Do you remember how gay I used to be during my youth?" she wrote to an old friend in 1697. "Well, all that has passed. I have not laughed once during the last six weeks. Only the theatre amuses me." And a month later she explains: "If you knew all that took place here you would not be surprised that I am no longer gay. Another in my place would have been dead of *chagrin* long ago. But all I do is to grow fat."

Her earlier opinion upon marriage remained unaltered. "A person who wishes to stop laughing should get married in France." "Marriage has become for me an object of horror." "Celibacy is the best state, and the best of men are not worth a curse." She hunted until she was unable to mount a horse, then she devoted herself to letter-writing

and the theatre. "In the midst of this great Court I live as if in a solitude, and there are few persons with whom I have much to do," she wrote from Saint-Cloud in 1698. "I spend long days entirely alone in my room, where I occupy myself with reading and writing. If any one pays me a visit I see them for but a moment. I speak of the rain and the beautiful weather, or I talk about the news of the day. Then I take refuge in my retreat. Four days a week I devote to my correspondence. On Monday I write to Savoy, on Friday to Modena, on Thursdays and Sundays I write very long letters to my aunt in Hanover. From six to eight I go out in the carriage with Monsieur and my ladies. Three times a week I go to Paris, and every day I write to my friends who live there. I go hunting once or twice a week. Thus I pass my time."

Monsieur spent little of his leisure with the duchess, and she did not object to the arrangement. As he grew older he devoted hours to the pleasures of the table, thus following the example of his mother, Anne of Austria, and of his brother. Indeed he surpassed their exploits, and was eating not only at meals but nearly all day, whilst the drawers of his cabinets and his pockets were always full of sweets.

The gradual parting of Philip and his German wife can be traced in her letters to the Duchess of Hanover. In December 1672, a few months after her marriage, she writes enthusiastically that "Monsieur is the best man in the world," but in six years her note is different and she refers to the cabal which surrounded and ruled her husband, the Chevalier de Lorraine, the Marquis d'Effiat, Madame de Grancey, and Madame Gourdon. In 1682 she reports that the chevalier has succeeded in all his plots against

her. In October of the same year a letter written by the Duchess Sophia mentions "news from Paris relating to a fresh disagreement between Monsieur and Madame, she saying in a loud voice that she will be poisoned as the late Madame was poisoned."

The "cabal" pushed matters to an extreme length, for they dared to attack her character, telling her husband that her manners were light. This accusation the King swept away with scorn. "We all know during the ten years you have been at Court that nobody could be less of a coquette," he declared. Considerable bitterness remained. In November 1682 the duchess writes to Germany: "God is a witness that I have never said an unkind word to Monsieur. On the contrary I have been on my guard to say nothing to displease him, and when he has hurt me by wounding allusions I have kept silent." Four years after the position was unchanged. "Monsieur is horribly dissipated. He has only one care, and that is to beg gifts from the King for his favourites. As to obtaining something for his children he does not trouble. I am obliged to live on the defensive." In the spring of 1687 the prince was ill. "You are mistaken if you think that my anxieties and the care that I have taken of him during his illness have made him more tender. Not at all. Hardly had he recovered than I again felt his hatred."

Her patience was remarkable. On 7th March 1696 she writes from Versailles: "Monsieur passes his days and nights in dissipation, whilst his wife and children have hardly the necessities of life. His last favourite, the Marquis de la Carte, has received 10,000 crowns from him to buy Flemish linen, whilst I am obliged to mend everything with infinite care."

He attempted to deprave his children. "God be thanked," cries Madame, "my daughter has not the slightest inclination towards gallantry."

With age Philip did not improve. "In front of other people Monsieur behaves decently towards me, but at home he makes me suffer." He did not attempt to conceal his feelings. "Monsieur has sold and pledged everything, so that if he dies there will be nothing left. Monsieur says openly, and he does not hide it from his daughter or from me, that as he is commencing to grow old he has little time to lose, and he will make use of everything and save nothing, so that he may be able to amuse himself to his last gasp. Those who survive him will have to look out for themselves. He loves himself more than he cares for his children. That is why, as long as he lives, he will concern himself about his own affairs. And he does as he says."

Yet, amidst all this wretchedness, this patient princess does not appear to have harboured malice. The household was always short of money. Monsieur squandered his income in many directions, and the Chevalier de Lorraine was ready to grasp every coin to add to his wealth. Philip never had enough rooms in his palaces, and was continually building. The rooms ready, he could not furnish them for lack of means. His passion for ceremonious etiquette did not aid economy. His vanity increased. When his coach arrived at the Palais Royal from Versailles or Saint-Cloud he was greeted with the sound of cymbals. He recklessly gave extravagant presents to his favourites.

A letter dated 26th June 1699, reveals the good heart of Madame. "It is certain," she writes, "that if Monsieur were not so feeble, and if the

wicked men he cares for did not deceive him so, he would be the best man in the world." He still retained a little of her affection. His amiability of temper disarmed those with whom he lived. They were compelled to like him, even if they were unable to esteem him. But he was rapidly ageing. Madame recognised his increasing feebleness which he would not bow to. Over sixty, his habits were still irregular. "I seldom see Monsieur here," she wrote from Marly early in 1701. "We do not dine together. He plays cards all day long, and at night we are each in our own room. Monsieur has the weakness to imagine that when he is overlooked at cards he has ill-luck. So I never assist at his games. He has frightened us very much by having a quartan fever or ague. This is the day it is due to return, but, thanks to God, he feels nothing of it yet, and he is in the salon playing cards."

The end was rapidly approaching. Monsieur was worried by his confessor, a Jesuit, Pierre du Trévou, who warned the prince that if he did not change his ways he would have to find another director. He did not mince his words. "You are old, worn out by pleasure, fat, thick-necked, and according to every sign you will die of apoplexy—and soon." This was a frightful shock to a man who was attached to life, and feared the devil. He became a trifle depressed, and not so talkative as usual. Then followed a bitter quarrel with Louis XIV.

He had always been afraid of his brother, and the attitude had been so much a matter of custom that Louis expected it. But although Monsieur was not keenly interested in the careers of his children, the King's behaviour towards the Duke of Chartres was a personal affront. His life had been ruined to add

to the personal glory of "Le Roi Soleil." Now it was becoming evident that his son was to be treated in the same way. There had already been one quarrel about the non-employment of the Duke of Chartres in the army. Louis reproached his brother for not exerting sufficient authority over his son. Monsieur burst into a fierce rage.

"Would your own son be treated in this fashion at the same age?" he cried. "He is tired of idling along the galleries of Versailles. Remember how you married him. There is not a gentleman in France who has not got a better chance. His brothers-in-law are overwhelmed with rank and position without reason. I am deeply grieved to see my only son despitefully abandoned to debauched and bad company, because no occupation can be found for him."

The King was thunderstruck. Never before had Philip spoken to him in this way, and the burning words show that Monsieur was not blind to his own degradation. Peace was patched up between the brothers. Effiat, Lorraine, and Villeroy advised Monsieur not to push the quarrel with the King. They dined together, but not so frequently as before. Monsieur was irritable in his conversation. And nothing was done for the Duke of Chartres.

Saint-Simon says that the two men had hitherto been very friendly towards each other. They had lived as brothers. If Monsieur or Madame had a pain in their finger Louis at once went to see them. But ill-feeling between men of a certain age is frequently more bitter than the quarrels of youth. Philip was sixty-one, and Louis two years older. The irritation instead of decreasing became stronger. For six weeks Madame had been suffering from

double fever, which she treated in the German way—no remedies and no physicians. The King believed that she had instigated Monsieur's outbreak, and did not trouble to visit his sister-in-law. This public lack of consideration again angered Monsieur, for the Duchess de Bourgogne had reported at Versailles that Madame was in considerable pain.

On Wednesday, 8th June, Monsieur visited the King at his little summer retreat at Marly. According to the usual rule he entered the King's study at the close of the Council of State, a deliberation he had seldom been allowed to share in. Louis was annoyed at the behaviour of his son-in-law. A fresh scandal was the subject of rumour. For ten years he had forgiven the Duke of Chartres, who had openly lived with La Florence, a dancer from the Opera, and later with an actress known as Desmares. Now he was courting Mademoiselle de la Boissière de Séry, a lady-in-waiting to his mother.

For the second time Louis upbraided his brother, in cold and dry language, for neglecting to control his son. He reminded his brother that the young duke was his son-in-law. Louis assumed the rôle of an indignant father-in-law.

"My daughter has been too patient with him," he continued. "And at least he ought not to drag all these women in front of her eyes."

Nothing was better calculated to arouse Monsieur's slumbering animosity. He invited the King to remember how his own Queen had been compelled to ride in the same coach with La Vallière and La Montespan, a sight so strange that on their journeys through France the country people pressed to the windows to see "the three Queens." He reminded the King of the days when he showed himself to his

subjects with La Vallière on his right and La Montespan on his left. He recalled a thousand scandalous demonstrations in Flanders, in Alsace, in all the provinces of France.

The shaft was double-edged, and Louis was unable to reply.

With less wisdom Monsieur pushed his advantage, and, bluntly remarking that the King had not kept any of the agreements made at the time of Mademoiselle de Blois' marriage, added that these unfulfilled promises had alone induced him to give his consent to his son's marriage with a bastard.

The insult was deadly. Nothing wounded the King more than a slight directed against his natural children. He forgot all the dignity which had become a tradition. The two men wildly shouted at each other across the table. The argument developed to such a pitch that a chamberlain entered, and warned the King that his words were audible in the ante-room.

They lowered their voices, but continued the dispute. Monsieur was excited and voluble. His son had a right to amuse himself as a consolation. Now he saw with what truth it had been predicted that the Duke would have all the dishonour and shame of such a marriage without any of the profit.

Louis answered with a threat. The war would necessitate financial retrenchment. Since Philip and his son were so little willing to follow his wishes they might expect considerable changes in their pensions.

A servant entered to announce that the meat was on the table.

Louis XIV prided himself upon never showing the slightest trace of anger in public. During the dinner in the tiny château his countenance was impassive.

Philip however could not disguise his agitation. His face was highly inflamed, and his eyes sparkled with rage. Some of his friends said that he ought to be bled without loss of time. But he had not lost his appetite, although during the day he had his usual meals together with several cups of chocolate, and much fruit, confectionery, and preserved sweets.

After the meal the party separated. The Duchess de Bourgogne and many ladies went to Saint Germain to visit the King and Queen of England, the exiled James II and Queen Mary. The King also returned to Saint Germain, and Monsieur seems to have taken the same route on his way to his own palace of Saint Cloud.

“At nine o'clock,” wrote Madame, “Monsieur left my room in perfect health, gay and laughing. At half-past ten I was called, and found him unconscious.”

The stroke had fallen as he sat at supper in the midst of the ladies of Saint Cloud. Madame could not join them, as she was still suffering from the effects of the continued fever.

“I am going to supper,” he cried to her. “I am not like you. I have a keen appetite.”

As he was pouring out some wine for Madame de Bouillon he commenced to stutter. They thought he was speaking Spanish, and laughingly asked him to translate his remarks into French. Suddenly he dropped senseless into the arms of his son.

Madame de Ventadour rushed to Madame's room. She was very frightened.

“Monsieur is ill.”

Madame joined her husband. He was sensible and tried to speak. With difficulty she understood the words :

“ You are not well. Go back to your room.”

Whilst physicians were aroused, a messenger was sent to the King begging his presence. Louis, believing that an attempt was being made to work upon his feelings, paid no attention to the news and went to bed. The action was not unnatural, for a message came announcing that Monsieur was much better, and Madame de Maintenon restrained him from visiting her old enemy. It was not until three o'clock the next morning, in answer to a note from the Duke of Chartres stating that Monsieur could last but a few hours, that he left with most of his attendants for Saint Cloud. Madame had remained all night by the side of her husband, who showed no sign of returning consciousness. The death chamber was crowded with men and women little touched by the dreadful solemnity of the scene. When the Jesuit priest implored the comatose prince to recognise him the onlookers sniggered.

“ Monsieur, do you not know your confessor ? Do you not recognise the good little Père du Treveux who speaks to you ? ”

The priest was really comic in his gestures and his dismay. Louis XIV heard mass at Saint Cloud, and faithful to his custom of never being present at a deathbed, returned with his suite to Marly at eight o'clock. With the King departed most of Monsieur's servants. The ladies attached to the household were troubled about their future, and openly discussed their prospects in the presence of the dying man. The Duchess de la Ferté, whose daughter had married the last favourite, the Marquis de la Carte, was not so unhappy as the Duchess de Châtillon, who, although official mistress of the robes to Madame, was at open enmity with the princess. At

mid-day Monsieur died in the presence of his valets and cooks. At one o'clock Fagon, the royal physician walked into the King's room at Marly.

“ Well, Monsieur Fagon ! My brother is dead ? ”

“ Yes, sire. No remedy was of any avail.”

Louis wept for some while. They suggested that he should dine in private with Madame de Maintenon. He had never given way to a passing weakness, and he refused. He would dine as usual amidst the men and women of his circle. During the short meal tears rolled down his cheeks, and when he rose from the table he shut himself up with Madame de Maintenon until seven in the evening, when he walked through the gardens of the château. Already he had been arranging the funeral ceremonies and instructing his ministers. Supper was served an hour late, at eleven instead of ten. That was the only difference the death of Monsieur made in the Royal household. Then the King went to bed.

Elisabeth Charlotte was in her own rooms when her husband died.

“ No convent ! I will not go into a convent ! Don't talk to me about a convent ! ” was her despairing cry when the news came. The palace of Saint Cloud would at once pass into the possession of her son. Under her marriage settlement she would have two alternatives, the dower-house at Montargis or a convent. She was dreadfully afraid that Madame de Maintenon would advise the King to insist upon the second course, which would effectually remove her from the Court. She mounted in her coach and set out for Versailles.

Louis XIV was shocked at the death of his brother. But sorrow depresses the spirits, and a king must look after his own health.



FRANÇOISE D'AUBIGNÉ, MADAME DE MAINTENON
1635-1719

After a painting on vellum in the Jones Collection

“ I must accustom myself to the idea that I shall never see Monsieur again,” he said several times.

After a visit from his nephew the Duke of Chartres he threw aside all melancholy. At noon on the day following the death of his brother he was in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon and the Duchess de Bourgogne singing the music of an opera. An hour later he was asking the Duchess de Bourgogne why she looked so sad. His example soon spread. At two o'clock the Duke de Bourgogne—who was by marriage a grandson of the dead prince—proposed a game of cards.

“ Cards ? ” replied the Duke de Montfort, much astonished. “ How can you think of such a thing ? Monsieur is not yet cold ! ”

“ Pardon me,” answered the Duke. “ I can think of it with ease. The King does not want any one to be bored at Marly. He has ordered me to make you all play, and in case you are afraid to be the first I will commence, and set the example.”

A party was made up, and in a short while the whole company was busily engaged around the tables.

At the same time the widowed Madame was engaged in regularising her position. She interviewed the King, and appealed to him for help. He opened the conversation by asking to which convent she intended to retire. She replied that instead of living in a convent she would prefer to take up a residence at Versailles, close to her brother-in-law. This flattered Louis, but before he could give his consent it was necessary to make peace between the duchess and Madame de Maintenon.

The princess had never concealed her hatred for the woman who practically ruled France. Apart from her personal dislike she did not forget that the

widow of the poet Scarron was not of royal blood, could hardly claim indeed to be of noble birth. In her letters she accused her rival of every crime, and refused to forget the part Madame de Maintenon had played in arranging the marriage of the Duke of Chartres and Mademoiselle de Blois. It was admittedly unwise to send personal reflections through the post. Two weeks before the death of Monsieur she had written: "Every letter which enters or leaves France is opened. I know it very well, but I do not trouble myself about it, and I write everything which comes into my mind."

Madame de Maintenon was well served, and she was exactly acquainted with the sentiments of the duchess as well as the replies of her German correspondents. When the King commanded a reconciliation she listened grimly and in silence to all the protestations of goodwill which came from the princess. Then she produced a particularly outrageous letter which Madame had recently addressed to the Electress of Hanover. Without entering into details she simply held the document before the eyes of Elisabeth Charlotte, and asked her if she recognised the handwriting. Thunderstruck, Madame realised that she had been defeated, and that her only hope for the future was to sue for mercy. With many tears, and for the first time in her life, she abjectly humiliated herself and asked for pardon.

"In my sad situation I greatly need something to amuse me," she wrote seven weeks after the death of Philip. "Everything is forbidden to me except a promenade. My chief consolation is the goodwill of the King, which he continually shows. He comes to see me, and takes me out with him. Saturday was the day of Monsieur's funeral, and, although I was

not present I wept very much as you are able to imagine."

Philip of Orleans was mourned by his family although he had been a bad father and a bad husband. The Duchess de Bourgogne, his grandchild, had inherited the love he had for her mother the Duchess of Savoy. Between father and son there had been a tender relationship. Even Madame admitted that during the last three years of his life he had changed.

The Court missed him. He had always been a prince of pleasure, a director of social gaiety, an arranger of balls and amusements. "His humour is concerned only with pleasure," wrote the envoy Spanheim in 1690. He was the final judge in any dispute as to precedence or etiquette. He lived in Saint Cloud, a palace of incomparable attractions, surrounded by a crowd of brilliant and unprincipled women, a horde of grasping and dissolute men. "He was the first woman of his time," cried a cynical wit, and the phrase will do well for an epitaph.

Monsieur was quickly forgotten. This is the common fate of princes, and even the light-hearted Duchess de Bourgogne realised the unpleasant fact.

"To-day I am a much-loved princess," she murmured on her deathbed. "To-morrow I shall be nothing at all. After to-morrow I shall be forgotten."

The death of Philip of Orleans closed an age. A rapid change came over French society during the early years of the eighteenth century. Gloom slowly enveloped the dull Court, hanging like a sable cloud above the palace of Versailles. The bright clothes disappeared, and black became the appropriate wear.

Madame de Maintenon ruled, and pleasure had to make way for prayer-books. The chapel was crowded—but only when the King went to mass. Hypocrisy is a rank weed. Open vice is healthier than flaunted virtue. France, morally, socially, and politically was in a state of decay.

Madame, now Dowager Duchess of Orleans, lived for nearly a quarter of a century, daily writing interminable letters until the pen dropped from her trembling fingers. She gossiped about everybody and everything, yet in that mass of documents there are not more than four references to her late husband. Louis himself had fourteen years to reign. One by one his contemporaries dropped out. He became obstinate, irritable, senile, feebly struggling to retain the legendary dignity and magnificence of "Le Roi Soleil." He sat for hours idly gazing into the fire, and muttering under his asthmatic breath. With whom did he talk? What did he see? Perhaps through the violet flames he could trace a thousand bright scenes—sunlit days amidst the rocks and trees of Fontainebleau, triumphal processions through the gabled streets of the Low Countries. The glowing embers broke into a score of smiling faces—the beautiful nieces of Mazarin, Louise de La Vallière, Henrietta of England, Athenaïs de Montespan, Maria Theresa of Spain, Anne of Austria, his only brother, Philip of Orleans. They had all vanished. Some were waiting in the cold vaults of Saint Denis. He was the last, and his resting-place could not remain long empty.

"My God, how sad life is," wrote Madame de Maintenon, reflecting the atmosphere of her surroundings. "I pass my days without other consolation than the thought that Death will end it all."

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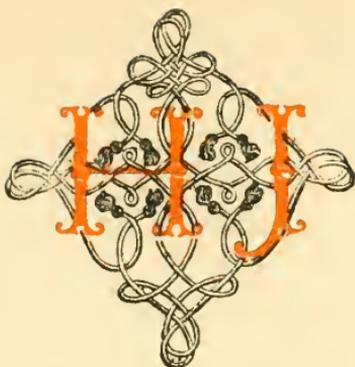
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