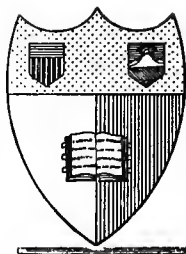


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EMMANUEL-PHILIBERT.

PAR

ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

NEW YORK:

1854.

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in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

EMMANUEL-PHILIBERT;

OR,

THE EUROPEAN WARS OF THE XVITH CENTURY.

BY

ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

NEW YORK:
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY,
346 & 348 BROADWAY.
LONDON: 16 LITTLE BRITAIN.

M.DCCC.LIV.

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A D V E R T I S E M E N T .

THE present work is the second volume of the new series of French writers issued simultaneously in this country and in Europe. It is the intention that this shall be followed by other important new works of Dumas, Lamartine, Victor Hugo, and others of the most popular French authors. The many warm commendations which the first volume has received, leads the publishers to the conclusion that the enterprise is appreciated by the public.¹

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EMMANUEL-PHILIBERT.



CHAPTER I.

LEONE — LEONA.

What might have been seen between twelve and two o'clock on the 5th of May, 1555
from the highest tower in Hesdin-Fert.

OUR story, kind and confiding reader, begins three centuries back, on the 5th of May, 1555. Without further preface we will, with your permission, plunge at once into that period, and imagine that by one gigantic stride we have retrograded from the present day to this same 5th of May aforesaid.

At that time Henry II. reigned in France; Mary Tudor, or Bloody Mary, in England, and the Emperor Charles V. governed Spain, Germany, Flanders, Italy, and the Indies—that is, reigned over one sixth of the known world.

The scene of our story opens in the neighborhood of the small town of Hesdin-Fert, which Emmanuel-Philibert, prince of Piedmont, is rebuilding on the site of the town of Hesdin-le-Vieux, besieged, taken, and razed by his armies the preceding year. In those days, this part of ancient

France was called the province of Artois, but it now bears the name of the department of the Pas-de-Calais.

The province of Artois had belonged but for a short period to the kingdom of France, to which it had been united in 1180, by Philippe Augustus, the conqueror of St. Jean d'Acre and Bouvines. Given by St. Louis, in 1237, to his brother Robert, Artois then fell into the hands of three women—Mahand, Jeanne I., and Jeanne II., and thence into three different houses. After this, being then in the possession of Margaret, sister of Jeanne II. and daughter of Jeanne I., it was transferred with herself to Louis Comte de Mâle. A daughter of this Comte de Mâle brought as a dowry Artois, together with Flanders and Nevers, into the house of Burgundy. Finally at the death of Charles the Bold, Mary of Burgundy, the last of that proud and towering race, the heiress of her father's enormous possessions, united, by her marriage with Maximilian, the son of Frederick III., both wealth, territory, and name to the House of Austria; and there, as a stream in the ocean, the name and House of Burgundy were for ever swallowed up in the House of Austria.

Artois, a rich and fertile province, was a great loss to France, a possession well worth contending for, as, for the last three years, with various success, had been doing, Henri II. and Charles V.—Charles to retain it, and Henry to regain it.

During this war, in which the son had encountered his father's old enemy, and which was destined to have both its Marignan and its Pavia for Henry II., as the former war with Charles V. had had for Francis I., fortune had capriciously smiled and frowned on both powers alternately.

France had put to flight the army of Charles V. before Metz—had obliged him to raise the siege of that town; and

the victorious troops, following up their advantages, had taken Marienbourg, Bouvines, and Dinant. On the other hand, the emperor, enraged at this defeat, had taken Théroouanne and Hesdin—destroying the one by fire, and razing the other to the ground.

The victory obtained by Henry II. at Metz may, without exaggeration, be compared to the signal and celebrated victory of Marignan, obtained by Francis I. An army of fifty thousand men and fourteen thousand cavalry disappeared, as by enchantment—vanished like a vapor—before the courage of the French, directed by Francis, Duc de Guise, and assisted by disease and famine. There remained nothing to record its existence, but ten thousand dead bodies, two thousand tents, and one hundred and twenty pieces of artillery.

The imperial troops were panic struck, and so helpless and discouraged, that those who fled did not attempt to defend their lives. A Spanish captain, pursued and hotly pressed by the Duc Charles de Bourbon, turned boldly round to him, and without any effort to escape, said :

“ If you are a prince, if you are a general, or merely a simple knight, and you fight for glory and renown, seek some other opportunity—to-day you have none but enemies too weak to resist you, too indifferent even to make an effort to save their lives.”

Charles de Bourbon sheathed his sword, and the Spanish captain and his followers pursued their way in safety.

Charles V. did not imitate this noble and generous conduct. No sooner did he gain possession of Théroouanne, than he abandoned it to pillage, and ordered it to be razed to its very foundations, sparing neither the monasteries nor the churches. Fearful lest one stone should remain on another, the vindictive emperor summoned to his aid the in

habitants of Flanders and Artois, so that in a few days, by means of pikes and crowbars, the whole town disappeared, like Sagontis under the feet of Hannibal—like Carthage at the word of Scipio. Hesdin had shared the fate of Théroutanne.

Just at this period of the war, Emmanuel-Philibert was appointed commander of the imperial troops in the Low Countries. He came too late to arrest the work of destruction, but he immediately set about repairing it.

In a few months a new town arose within a quarter of a mile of the ruins of the old town of Hesdin. Situated in the marshes of the Mesnil, and on the banks of the river of La Panche, this town was so admirably fortified and constructed, as to excite, one hundred and fifty years later, the admiration of the celebrated Vanban, notwithstanding the progress which had been made during a century and a half in the art of fortification.

The founder of this new city added to its former name that of Fert, in memory of its origin. Now the word Fert was simply formed from the initials F. E. R. T., which stood for *Fortitudo ejus Rhodum tenuit* (*His courage saved Rhodes*). This inscription had been given after the siege of Rhodes, to an ancestor of Emmannel-Philibert, Amedeus the Great, twelfth count of Savoy, with the white cross, by the Emperor of Germany, and was thus an appropriate commemoration of the founder of the new city.

Nor was this the only miracle achieved by the young general, to whom Charles V. had now confided his armies. By enforcing the most rigid discipline amongst the troops, he had so relieved the country from plunder and oppression, that the unhappy people began to breathe again, and the country to assume an aspect of cultivation and prosperity.

The young general was as severe with the officers as

with the soldiers; the former he placed in arrest, having previously degraded them in the sight of the whole army, and disarmed them; whilst the latter, taken in the act of marauding, were immediately hung.

So that, hostilities having ceased, the inhabitants of Artois experienced, during the winter of 1555, the blessings of peace and plenty. There were occasionally some slight excursions made by the French, who held Abbeville, Douvens, and Montreuil-sur-mer, followed by the burning of some castle, the pillaging of some farm, or the robbing of some rich monastery; and occasional acts of aggression, too, were committed by the vagabonds, freebooters, and gypsies who followed the imperial armies. But Emmanuel-Philibert gave such vigorous chase to the enemy, and administered such inexorable justice in his own troops, that such catastrophes became each day of rarer occurrence.

Such, then, was the moral and political position of Hesdin-Fert, at the period of which we are speaking; but, in order to complete the picture, it will be necessary to describe the appearance of the country as it then was, before the industry, progress, and civilization of the last centuries had given it the appearance it has at the present day.

Let us, then, mount the highest tower in Hesdin-Fert, and turning our back to the sea, look on to the semicircle before us, from the foot of that chain of hills, behind which is Bethune, and following that same chain of mountains, attain the town of Douvens.

From our tower we behold, straight before us, the thick forest of St. Pol-sur-Ternoise, which, descending to the banks of the Canche, ascends, like a green mantle thrown over it, the opposite hill, and descending on the other side, waves its branches over the waters of the Scarp.

To the left, we see from our tower the small towns of

Herchin and Fruges, enveloped in thick clouds of smoke, indicating that notwithstanding the advanced state of the spring, their chilly inhabitants had not yet given up the genial winter fire.

In advance of these two small towns, like a sentinel afraid of venturing beyond the outposts, rises a charming little edifice, presenting the simplicity of a farm-house, with somewhat of the nobler proportions of a mansion or chateau. This habitation is called *Le Parcq*. From its gates various roads lead to the surrounding villages, indicating frequent communication between the one and the other.

But the plain, extending from these villages to Hesdin, was the most interesting point for the spectator from the tower—not from any picturesque disposition of the landscape, but because it contained the encampment of the armies of Charles V., presenting as it were a second town, composed of tents instead of houses.

In the centre of this canvas city, like Notre Dame in the centre of Paris, like the Palace of the Popes at Avignon, like a three-masted frigate in the midst of the foaming, white-crested waves, arose the imperial tent of the Emperor, Charles V.

From this tent floated four banners, one of which would alone suffice for the most craving ambition—First, the standard of the German Empire; then, the royal standard of Spain; then the banner of Rome, and the flag of Lombardy.

Four times had this valiant and victorious emperor been crowned king of four kingdoms—at Toledo with the diamond crown of Spain and the Indies; at Aix-la-Chapelle with the silver crown of the German empire; at Bologna, the golden crown of Rome had made him King of the Romans; and at Milan the iron crown had made him King of Lombardy.

Vain had been the opposition of the Pope, who, armed with the decree of Pope Stephen, opposed the taking of the golden diadem from the Vatican. Vain had been the decree of the Emperor Charlemagne, that the crown of Lombardy should not be taken from Monza. Charles V. chose to be crowned at Bologna and Milan, and to Bologna and Milan were the diadems brought: "for," said the conqueror of Francis I., Solyman and Luther, "I never run after crowns—they always come to me."

Then, above all these mighty banners, floated, higher and mightier still, the banner designed by his own ambition, on which were portrayed the pillars of Hercules—no longer emblems of the boundaries of the old world, but emblems of the gates of the world beyond. Under this, the boundless and defiant ambition of the Emperor had written the Latin motto, *Plus ultra*—thus aggrandized by its mutilation.

Near the imperial tent arose the tent of the general-in-chief, Emmanuel-Philibert—distinguished from the others by the two banners of his house, the white cross of the House of Savoy, with the letters F. E. R. T., which we have already described, and his own private heraldic bearings, a hand raised to heaven, grasping a trophy of lances, swords and pistols, with this device: *Spoliatis arma supersunt* (*To the despoiled, arms still are left*).

The rest of the camp was divided into four parts. In the midst flowed the river over which three bridges had been thrown.

One portion of the camp belonged to the Germans, another to the Spaniards, and another to the English. The remaining portion of the camp was the arsenal, renewed since the defeat of Metz, and now augmented by the cannon taken from the French at the siege of Thérouanne and Hesdin—

making in all one hundred and twenty pieces of cannon, and fifteen mortars.

On all the pieces of artillery taken from the enemy, Charles V. had had engraved his favorite words of *Plus ultra*.

Behind the cannon were ranged the wagons containing the powder, guarded by sentinels armed only with swords and pikes, lest one spark should by chance fall from gun or pistol and ignite these slumbering volcanoes.

In all the tented streets of this canvas city, circulated groups of men of all nations—the heavy German, the proud Spaniard, and the phlegmatic Englishman. In the wind fluttered pennons and banners of every color, all was activity life and spirit; whilst on the other side of the plain, waved in the bright sunlight the long green grass, the fruit-covered trees, and the frail field flowers; calmly grazed the cattle, and the shepherd's pipe was borne on the breeze.

Having now described what was to be seen on the 5th of May, 1555, from the highest tower of Hesdin-Fert, let us proceed to tell what was going on, but what no eye could perceive.

CHAPTER II.

THE ADVENTURERS.

WHAT no eye could see excepting ours, which pierces every thing, was what was going on in a grotto situated in the thickest and darkest portion of the forest of Saint Pol-sur-Ternoise. Before this grotto was a sentinel lying flat on the ground in order to catch the first sound of approaching footsteps, and it is whilst this sentinel is turning his head away to follow the bounding of some deer that have crossed the thicket, that we take the opportunity of striding over him and slipping in. Here in this grotto are assembled eight men, all differing in age, complexion, temperament, and costume, though from their being all armed, and from their accoutrement, it might be inferred that they all followed the career of arms.

Seated at a heavy stone table, one of these individuals, with ink-stained fingers, is writing on a rough, ill-prepared paper, whilst another holds, with the immobility of a candelabrum, a blazing pine torch, whose flame, besides lighting himself and the scribe at the table, illuminates the whole grotto, throwing uncertain flashes over the faces of the remaining six grouped around the grotto.

He who writes has small, intelligent features, with something of a cunning expression. Sometimes he pauses, as he

dips his pen into the horn inkstand, or draws from the nib of his pen some hair imbibed from the rude paper.

Sometimes, too, he leans his head on his hand, or strokes his chin as if reflecting. It is evident that he is engaged in some business interesting not only to himself, but important to the whole company, for the attention of all seems concentrated on this one man.

Three, however, out of the eight appear less pre-occupied than the others. The first of these is a handsome young man, of about five and twenty. He is dressed with great elegance, wearing a buff leather jerkin over a tunic of somewhat faded garnet velvet. The jerkin, strong enough to form a defence against sword or bullet, does not cover the arm, but allows the velvet sleeve—slashed in the last fashion—to be fully displayed. His ample green hose, slashed in the same fashion, are thrust into boots of buff leather, long enough to protect the thigh on horseback, but pliant enough to be gracefully folded over the knee for ordinary wear. With one hand this youth is carelessly curling his moustache, whilst with the other he smooths with a pocket comb the waving curls of his unusually long hair, humming at the same time a rondo of Clement Marot's.

Near him is a man of apparently thirty-six years of age, although the numerous scars which mark his face render it difficult to discover his right age. His arm and the portion of his chest which are uncovered reveal as many scars as are visible on the face, and he is even now binding up a wound which has laid bare a portion of the finger bone. Holding the bandage in his teeth, he is slowly and calmly winding it round the wound, with as much tranquillity and indifference as though he had been operating on the trunk of an oak, instead of on one of his own limbs.

The third is a tall, thin man, of about forty years of age :

his sallow and ascetic look harmonizes well with the attitude of devotion he has assumed in one corner of the grotto. There, on his knees, rolling his rosary rapidly through his fingers, he is reciting a dozen *aves* and as many *paters*, pausing only every now and then to beat his breast with a blow, that sounds as though given by a hammer on an empty barrel, and to exclaim *mea culpa!* after which he resumes the rosary, the *aves*, and the *paters*, with as much rapidity and gusto as before.

The three who yet remain to be described are not less important than those with whom we are already acquainted, and possess, each and all, traits of character and features entirely their own.

The first of these leans on the table by the writer, watching with intense curiosity the ins and outs of the pen, occasionally giving vent to some shrewd observation, denoting at once profound good sense and profound egotism. He has reached forty-five, and from under his bushy light eyebrows flashes a quick and bright blue eye. On the ground, near the foot of the stone table, reclines another of these worthies. He is busily engaged in sharpening on a stone the point of his dagger, now rusty and blunted. He helped the operation of the stone by a plenteous supply of saliva, and appeared thoroughly intent on his work; occasionally, however, when something said by the scribe did not quite meet his views, he would rise, and holding down the paper with the point of his dagger, would discuss the subject with much animation, never letting go his hold till the end of his argument, after which he would resume the polishing of his pretty plaything, which, thanks to his efforts, promised soon to be equal to new.

Lastly, stands, lost in thought, one whom we ought to except from those who appeared but slightly interested, and

also from those who appeared deeply interested in the proceedings of the secretary, for he did not appear to know any body, or to care for any thing around him. He stood with his arms crossed, leaning against the wall of the grotto, gazing at the grotesque and ever changing figures made by the flashing of the torch on the vault above him. He was a dreamer and a poet, careless, heedless and abstracted; all that was not steel, leather, or brass in his dress, was torn and soiled: there he stood in the midst of all, as though he was seeking the solution of some problem, or completing some composition in the *ottava rima* of Dante, or the *terza rima* of Tasso.

As for the scribe, he is by birth a Norman, and having in early youth studied the law, our friend, Procope by name, interlarded his conversation with various citations from the old Latin laws and from the code of Charlemagne. Whoever entered into an engagement, or signed a contract with Procope, was sure of a law-suit; but those who would be satisfied with his word of honor might be sure that he would keep it,—according to his own interpretation, it is true, which it cannot be disguised was not always in unison with the received notions of right and wrong. We will give one illustration of Procope's code of honor, the one indeed which ultimately obliged him to adopt the course of life in which we now find him. One day a nobleman of the court of Francis I. called on Procope, and proposed him a share in a magnificent enterprise. This enterprise consisted in arresting, on his way to the Louvre, one of the royal treasurers, who was, on a certain evening, to proceed there with a thousand crowns. The nobleman being a nobleman, decided that he should, of course, have half, and that the other half should be divided between Procope and his three companions, leaving a sum of one hundred and twenty-five

crowns apiece. On the night in question, the duke—for it was a duke—proceeded according to agreement to wait the result at the Place Royale, whilst Procope and his companions proceeded to the Louvre, and most politely relieved the treasurer of his funds.

The job being accomplished, the companions of Procope took a fancy to the whole of the sum, and proposed that instead of proceeding to the Place Royale to divide with the duke, they should quietly adjourn to the Place Notre Dame and make four equal shares of the whole. But Procope waxed wonderfully indignant; reminded them of his promise to the duke, and vowed it should be fulfilled. "*Distingua-mus, however,*" added Procope, "when the duke has been faithfully paid and all the conditions fulfilled, I see nothing that should prevent us from hiding ourselves in the cemetery of St. Jean, and, taking from the duke as we did from the treasurer, the gold he will have in his pockets. The Seine is as near the cemetery," added Procope, "as it is to the Louvre, so that probably the treasurer and the duke will be enabled, if this last job is done as neatly as the first, to float down together to the nets at St. Cloud. By this means we shall have two hundred and fifty instead of one hundred and twenty-five crowns, which we might enjoy without remorse, seeing we should have religiously fulfilled all our promises."

This proposal was, of course, enthusiastically accepted, and executed on the instant; only in their eagerness to throw the duke into the Seine they forgot to ascertain whether he had ceased to breathe, so that, revived by the coolness of his sudden immersion, the duke, instead of going to St. Cloud, as Procope had anticipated, went to the nearest quay, and from thence to the Châtelet, where he had an immediate and momentous interview with the prefect of the

Seine, M. d'Estourville. To this official personage the duke, being in full possession of his faculties, gave so detailed a description of the four bandits, that Procope, spite of his love of lawsuits and his profound knowledge of the law itself, judged it expedient to decamp and so to make sure of his life at any rate.

Each of the accomplices had taken a different direction. Procope had turned his steps northward, and thus it was that we find him occupied, at the request of those around him, in preparing an act of association of which we shall presently hear more.

He who holds the torch is called Heinrich Scharfenstein. A fervent follower of Luther, the persecutions of Charles V. against the Huguenots had driven him with his nephew into the ranks of the French army. His nephew, Franz, has followed the fortunes and conditions of his uncle. These men, both of colossal stature, seemed animated by the same soul and the same mind, ever thinking and acting in unison, and deeming every thing for the best, going unswervingly on the tenor of their way relying only on themselves and each other.

When they found an obstacle in their path, instead of seeking some means like Cleopatra to move her ships from the Mediterranean into the Red Sea, or for a lever as Titus did to remove the gigantic blocks of granite from the circus Flavius, our two giants uniting their arms and linking their heads together transport by one regular and spontaneous effort the object, however massive, from the place where it was to the place where it ought to be.

When there is a wall to be scaled, our Titans require no ladder whether of wood or ropes; but simply mounting one on the shoulders of the other, attain to a height of some

eighteen or twenty feet, sufficient to reach the top of a wall or the balcony of a house.

In battle they pursue the same system. One administers the blows, whilst the other, following close in his footsteps, despoils the enemies as fast as they are felled by his companion. When one is tired of fighting, he gives the battle-axe or the sword to his comrade, and they change places with each other, and so they keep invariably together.

Their strength is much admired and more esteemed than their brains; they are capital fighters, but poor talkers; this is wherefore one has been placed as a sentinel outside, whilst the other, within the grotto, has been converted into a torch-bearer.

The young fellow with the curly moustache and flowing hair called Yvonnet, is by birth a Parisian, and is at heart a thorough Frenchman. To the physical advantages we have already enumerated, must be added hands and feet of extraordinary beauty, of which he is not a little vain. In times of peace he is full of ailments like the Sybarite: he complains of a plait in a rose-leaf; he is indolent, full of idle fancies, sensitive and nervous as a young girl. Like a young girl too he dreads a spider, fears a toad, and swears at the sight of a mouse. Nothing but a desperate love adventure can take him out in the night, for above all he dreads silence and darkness.

To do him justice, however, he has always some desperate love adventure on hand. But even with this incentive he always reaches the place of rendezvous half dead with agitation and terror, so that he requires, to recover him, as many kisses and caresses from his mistress as Leander did from Hero when he issued all shivering and dripping from the waves of the Dardanelles. But let the trumpet

sound and the banners wave, and what a sudden transformation is here. No more fancies, no more follies, no more swoonings; Yvonnet rushes to the thickest of the fight; is the first to scale the walls or lead a forlorn hope. The battle over he carefully washes his face, curls his moustache, combs his hair, and returns to what we see him now—a handsome and listless fop.

The individual who is binding up his wound answers to the name of Malemort; melancholy and morose by nature, this man has but one passion, a passion for fighting. It has hitherto proved a most unhappy one, for no sooner does he rush into the battle than he is sure to catch some terrible wound which disables him and lays him growling on his back, where he lies howling, not with suffering, but with rage; that he can no longer join in the fun. Luckily his bones and his flesh knit and heal easily, for the wound he is now binding up is the twenty-fifth, one more than Cæsar had received; but Malemort hopes he may receive five and twenty more before he gets that which will at length end his fighting for ever.

The meagre personage counting his beads is named Lactance. A bigoted and ardent Catholic, Lactance suffers tortures from the vicinity and companionship of two such heretics as the Scharfensteins. Obligated by the career he has adopted to wage war and to exterminate his Christian brothers, there is no penance he does not go through, no prayer he does not say, in order to compensate for his misdeeds. Under his doublet he wears, next the skin, a coat of mail; this, in time of battle, he puts outside, where it does good service; then, when worn under, it becomes a *cilicc*, and considerably helps its wearer in working out his salvation.

It is a good fortune to fall by the hand of this man, for

he says a requiem and *de profundis* for every one he kills. At this moment, being behiudhand with his three last victims, one of whom was an Englishman and a heretic, he is saying his aves and paters faster than ever in order to square his accounts with Heaven, leaving the material interests to be discussed by his friends.

Leaning on the table, watching and discussing every item of the contract drawn up by Procope, is Maldent, born at Noyon of a Mancean father and Picardienne mother. He has had a youth full of adventures, but having sowed his wild oats he is now very fond of looking to the main chance, and of discussing points of law and equity with Procope. Both sharp practitioners, such discussions lead to nothing, of course; for with these two it is diamond cut diamond, neither one ceding an inch to the other, and both being up to each other's tricks.

Although possessing neither the colossal strength of the Scharfensteins, the bold valor of Yvonnet, nor the blind impetuosity of Malemort, Maldent is a man of courage and one to be relied on in an emergency.

As for our friend who is sharpening his dagger, Pilletrousse by name, he is nothing more than a hired bravo, a true condottiere, selling himself to the highest bidder, and fighting manfully for those who pay him best. Now, however, he has determined to set up business for himself, and fights, pillages, and spoils on his own account. With all his faults Pilletrousse has a noble and generous heart, and a great affection for his countrymen, the natives of Provence; these may apply to him in sickness, in sorrow, or in poverty, they are sure of finding care, money and consolation; nay more, Pilletrousse feels grateful when a countryman accepts his services, for he is the most unselfish of human beings.

Our poet's name is Fracasse; unlike Yvounet he prefers

the cloudy night to the brilliant day, and loves to wander beneath the star-lit heavens in soft communion with his dreams; even in the thickest of the fight, a sounding elarion, a passing eloud, would make him pause with suspended sword, soaring from the earth into the ethereal regions of poetic fancy, till some heavy blow aimed at the abstracted poet brings him back to stern reality, and then he fights, not to avenge the blow, but to punish the ruthless invader of his bright poetie dreams. Fracasse was born in Italy, but he serves under the banners of the French monarch, Henry II.

And now, having brought all our actors together, several of whom the readers of *Ascanio* and of the *Two Dianas* will recognize as old friends, we will proceed to inform our readers what motive had assembled all these valiant men at arms in the grotto, and what was the mysterious paper which occupied so much of Procope's time and attention.

CHAPTER III.

In which the reader becomes better acquainted with the heroes introduced in the last chapter.

EARLY on this same 5th of May, 1555, a party of four men, apparently belonging to the garrison at Doulens, had stolen out of the town at early dawn, when the gates of the town were first opened.

These four men were closely wrapped in large cloaks, which the coolness of the morning air fully warranted, but which might also be supposed to be worn to conceal the arms they wore beneath. One of the four, apparently familiar with the road, led the way, conducting them along the river and on the outskirts of the wood. They soon reached the entrance of the grotto in the forest of St. Pol-sur-Ternoise.

At the entrance of this grotto he paused, and bidding his comrades wait for him outside, he entered alone. Advancing, the guide looked carefully around, and his comrades heard their companion's voice loudly calling within. But three distinct echoes having alone replied, their guide signed to those without to enter, and together they at last, though with some difficulty, penetrated into the deepest recesses of the grotto.

“ Ah ! ” exclaimed he who had acted as leader, drawing a deep breath, “ *Tandem ad terminum camus !* ”

“ Which means— ” asked one of his friends with a strong accent of Picardy patois.

“ Which means, my dear Maldent, that we are at the end of our journey. ”

“ I *peg* your *parton*, Herr *Brocobe*, put I have not quite understand, ” said another of the adventurers, with an accent unmistakably German.

“ No, ” rejoined another, speaking with the same accent, “ we have not quite understand. ”

“ Why the devil should you understand ! ” ejaculated Procope, whom probably our readers have recognized in the *Brocobe* of Franz Scharfenstein, that being the way in which his Teutonic tongue turned his French name. “ Why the devil should you understand ? we understand, Maldent and I, all about it, and that’s quite sufficient, I should think. ”

“ Ya, ” responded the two Germans.

“ However, ” continued Procope, patronizingly, “ while we drink a horn and eat a mouthful, I will explain my plans to you both. ”

“ Ya, let us *trink*, mine got, *Brocobe*, and you can explain your *blans*. ”

Drawing three huge stones near together for seats, the three followers prepared to imbibe their meal and to listen to their chief, who, extending himself at full length on the ground where he had first spread his cloak, signed to the two Scharfensteins to open the wallets they carried.

For some minutes nothing was heard but the noise of four pair of hungry jaws, whose usually voracious appetite had been considerably increased by the keen morning air.

Maldent was the first to speak : turning towards Procope he said,

“ Now for it, old boy.”

“ Well, this is the plan. *Ecce res judicande.*”

“ Hold your tongue, Heinrich !” shouted Maldent.

“ I did not speak,” replied Heinrich.

“ I thought you did,” said Maldent.

“ And so did I,” said Procope, “ but it must have been the echo—to proceed then : about a quarter of a league from here there is a snug little farm.”

“ A farm ?” said Maldent ; “ you promised us a castle.”

“ Call it a castle, if you please,” said Procope.

“ Call it what you please,” observed Heinrich Scharfenstein, “ we don’t care, if there is a good booty to be got out of him.”

“ Well said, old fellow !” exclaimed Procope, “ and now to continue—In this castle or farm, for it is both, there live but the master of the house, and two servants male and female. In the offices, however, which are very near the principal building, there are several laboring men, together with the steward.”

“ How many in all ?”

“ About ten or eleven people.”

“ We can manage ten or eleven peoples, mine dear Brocobe, my nephew and me, ch Franz ?”

“ Ya,” replied Franz, laconically.

“ All right then, we must hide ourselves here until night-fall. Then, when it is quite dark, when all is still, I will show you a snug little road, which will lead you straight to the foot of the garden wall. Once there, one of the Scharfensteins must get on the shoulders of the other, and so climb the wall, let himself down on the other side, and open the door for us—”

“ And for us !” shouted a voice behind the adventurers, in a tone which made even the Scharfensteins start.

“ Treachery !” exclaimed Procope, bounding to his feet.

“ Treachery !” repeated Maldent, trying to look into the darkness.

“ Der Teufel !” roared the two Scharfensteins, drawing their swords.

“ Swords, eh !” repeated the same voice, “ a fight ! we’re ready here, Lactance, Fracasse, Malemort—”

“ Stop a bit !” shouted Procope, who recognized the voice of the speaker though he could not see his face. “ Stop a bit, Pilletrousse ; it will always be time enough to fight, let’s see if we can’t come to an understanding.”

“ Let’s fight first, and come to an understanding afterwards,” interrupted another voice.

“ Keep quiet, Malemort,” said Pilletrousse, “ let’s hear Procope’s proposition, shall we ? What say you, Lactance ? what say you, Fracasse ?”

“ If,” replied Lactance, “ the proposition will save the spilling of blood, I’m agreeable to the proposition.”

“ It would have been very poetical to fight in the dark ; but, however, reality before poetry. Let’s hear the proposition.”

“ Let’s fight,” persisted Malemort.

“ Look to your wound, Malemort ; we are three against one, and that, as Procope will tell you, is a majority which carries the day.”

Malemort gave a deep groan of discontent, whilst Lactance and Maldent proceeded to strike a light, and to ignite two of the pine torches with which both parties were provided.

The grotto thus illuminated, showed at one end, Pilletrousse, Lactance, Fracasse and Malemort.

Pilletrousse stood a little in advance of this group, in order to restrain the ardor of Malemort, who was eager to

rush at his adversaries. Lactance held the torch by his side, whilst Fracasse, like Agis at the tomb of Leonidas, was on his knees fastening up his sandals in expectation of battle.

Opposite to this group stood the two Scharfensteins, one of whom held a torch, whilst the other grasped his sword ; behind them were Maldent and Procope, both ready for peace or war, but evidently inclining towards the former.

The pale light of day struggling through the narrow entrance of the grotto, strove to rival the blood-red glare of the torches ; and, altogether, the adventurers formed a picturesque tableau which would have made the fortune of a modern melo-drama.

The adventurers were all known to each other, and from having seen each other actively at work on the field of battle, knew fully how to appreciate the adversaries each would have to encounter. Procope at a glance took in the chances of war, and advancing in the space between the two groups, said in a most courteous tone :

“ Gentlemen, now that we see each other, we see that we are four against four. But, considering that on our side we have these two gentlemen, the Scharfensteins, I think we may consider ourselves as being eight against four.”

At this ill-judged piece of rhodomontade not only did the four opponents unite in one universal shout of indignation, but simultaneously they drew their swords.

“ Gentlemen,” said Procope, quickly perceiving the blunder he had made, “ gentlemen, I do not mean to say by this, that we are sure of victory ; far from it, even though we were really eight, when we have such adversaries to combat as Messrs. Pilletrousse, Malemort, Lactance and Fracasse.”

This amendment appeared to calm the irritation excited by the former speech, for Malemort alone continued to growl.

“ Now,” continued Procope, “ I proceed to observe that the idea of this enterprise is entirely mine ; that I suggested the habitation called the Parcq to these gentlemen ; that I was proceeding to carry it out ; nay, that we have already left Doulens at an early hour, and have got thus far on our expedition already. Now Pilettrousse, I appeal to you, does not an enterprise necessarily belong to the one who first thinks of it, and who first plans to carry it out ? *Dixi.*”

Pilettrousse began to laugh, while Laçtance shook his torch, and Malemort shouted, “ A fight, a fight !”

“ What makes you laugh ?” said Procope, disdainingly to notice any but the chief of the opponent party.

“ I am laughing, Procope,” replied Pilettrousse, “ at the profound air of confidence with which you set forth your rights.”

“ You recognize, then, that they are rights,” rejoined Procope eagerly.

“ I recognize that the enterprise belongs, of right, to those who first undertook it, who first thought of it. Now, the idea of getting possession of the Parcq first entered your head yesterday, did it not ? Well, we thought of it the day before. You came from Doulens this morning, to carry your plan into execution, did you not ? Well, we left Montreuil-sur-mer last night for the same object. You meant to attack the place in the middle of the night, we mean to get it this evening. You were beginning to explain your plans, ours are all settled. You see, therefore, my good friend, that by your own showing, the thing of right belongs to us. *Dixi,*” added Pilettrousse, imitating the pompous manner in which Procope had pronounced that word.

“ Ay ! but who knows whether you are speaking the truth ?”

"I give you my word, as a gentleman."

"I should like better security."

"On the word of a highwayman, then."

"Hum!" ejaculated Procope, imprudently.

This was too much for Malemort and his party to bear.

"War! war! a fight!" exclaimed they all in a breath.

"War! war! a fight!" repeated Procope with his party; and this time, all being of the same mind, swords and daggers were brandished in every hand.

At this juncture, from under a heap of dried leaves, serving probably as a bed to the anchorite who once had inhabited the grotto, there sprang into the midst of the group a young and elegant cavalier. Extending his arms between the two belligerent parties, like Hersilia between the Romans and the Sabines, he exclaimed:

"Put up your weapons, gentlemen; I undertake to set this matter right."

All eyes were turned on the speaker, and no sooner had they looked at him, than all eight voices exclaimed, "Yvonne!"

"Where the devil do you come from?" asked Procope and Pilletrousse in a breath.

"I'll tell you all about it," replied Yvonne, "but first put up those gleaming swords; you know the sight of steel makes me nervous."

Every body obeyed except Malemort, who growled and flourished his sword.

"It's of no use, comrade," said Yvonne to him, "I won't speak as long as there is a sword unsheathed."

"The devil's in it," said Malemort, doggedly obeying, "one can't get a decent chance of cutting a man's throat nowadays. However, here goes;" and so with a deep sigh he thrust his sword into the scabbard.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONTRACT.

SATISFIED with the appearance of peace, Yvonnet turned towards Procope and Pilletrousse, and replied to these questions thus :

“ I came, if you must know, my friends, from under those dried leaves in the corner. I had hidden myself there when I saw Pilletrousse, Lactance, and Malemort and Fracasse enter, and, as you may suppose, I didn't feel much inclined to come out, when I saw an addition to the party, in the persons of Procope, Maldent, and the Scharfensteins.”

“ But what were you doing here in this grotto at that time of night ? for it was not daylight when we got here ; ” inquired Pilletrousse.

“ Oh ! that's a secret,” replied Yvonnet. “ I'll tell it you if you behave yourselves, but not yet. Let's begin with the beginning, if you please.”

“ Go on, then,” said Procope.

“ So you came here, Pilletrousse, I find, with the intention of making a little excursion into the Parcq ? ”

“ We did,” said Pilletrousse.

“ And you also, Procope, had the same intentions ? ”

“ We had,” replied Procope.

“ And you were going to fight about your rights, were you,—and to settle who was first, were you not ? ”

“ Well, the others wouldn't give in, you know,” said Procope.

“ Of course we wouldn't,” said Pilletrousse.

“ And so you would actually have massacred each other ! For shame, gentlemen, for shame, Lactance—you who have so much charity, did not your conscience reproach you ? ”

“ Of course it did.”

“ Well then ? ”

“ After the fight, I intended to pray for the dead, Yvonnet,—indeed I did.”

“ A nice salvo to your conscience, Lactance.”

“ What could I do, Yvonnet ? ”

“ Why, just what I'm doing,—throw yourself between the combatants, *inter gladios et enses*, as Procope would have it, and say to them :—Comrades, if there's enough for four, there's enough for eight, and if there isn't enough in this expedition, we will undertake another and another, till there is enough. Zounds ! gentlemen, we are brothers ; let us reserve our hate and our weapons for our enemies, but amongst ourselves—fie ! gentlemen, fie !—why divide into twos and fours, when, together, we can achieve so much ? Heaven, who tells us to love one another, will smile on our association, and send us success. That's what you ought to have said, Lactance.”

“ So I might,” said Lactance, striking his breast, “ *mea culpa, mea maxima culpa !* ” and, extinguishing his torch, he fell on his knees and began to pray.

“ Well, I have said it for you, Lactance, and, what's more, I saw that Heaven not only will, but has smiled on our association, and that I bring you already a reward for your brotherly love.”

“ You, Yvonnet ? ”

“ I, Procope, I, comrades, who had the idea of this expedition long before you all.”

“ You had already conceived the intention of penetrating into the habitation we all covet ? ”

“ More than the intention,” said Yvonnet, curling his moustache ; “ by means of a delicious little chambermaid, who adores me, I have already been inside the castle.”

“ Nonsense.”

“ True, I assure you. I came straight from the castle here, tired to death ; and hating, as you know, all nocturnal expeditions, I lay down here to rest, meditating on my plans, and determined to propose this expedition to the first of you that should fall in my way ; and so I was just dozing off, when in came Piletrousse with his friends, and a little while afterwards, Procope and his party, all bent on the same expedition. Now, having heard your arguments on both sides,—arguments which, but for my timely arrival, would have ended in the extermination of you all—now, suppose, instead of fighting, we all enter into a partnership ; suppose, instead of getting in by force, we get into the place by stratagem ; suppose, instead of breaking down the doors, I get them opened for you ; suppose, that instead of hunting about the house for all the valuables, I take you straight up to the places where plate, jewels, and money, are all kept. What do you say to that, eh, comrades ? Isn't mine the best plan, after all ; particularly when I tell you that I shall want no other reward than an equal share with the rest in the plunder, whatever it may be ? ”

There was a general murmur of approbation ; all gathered round Yvonnet ; the Scharfensteins almost squeezed his hand to a jelly, and Lactance turned his eyes in ecstasy

to Heaven ; Malemort alone seemed discontented, for he murmured :

“ The devil’s in it ; one can’t get a chance to cut a man’s throat nowadays.”

“ Well, then, since you all approve,” said Yvonnet, anxious to complete the negotiation, “ let’s set to work. We are here, nine fine fellows, who fear neither God nor the devil.”

“ Oh ! we fear God,” said Lactance, greatly shocked.

“ Well, we don’t fear the devil, at any rate, Lactance, and, therefore, chance having assembled us ”—

“ Providence,” suggested Lactance.

“ Providence, if you like it better,” said Yvonnet, “ and Providence, too, has sent us a man who, of all others, is calculated to set all things in order,—I mean that distinguished lawyer, Master Procope, who, I see, has most providentially pen and ink suspended from his belt, and who, most probably and providentially, has in his pocket a sheet or two of law paper, bearing the stamp of our most gracious sovereign, Henri II.

“ By Jove !” said Procope, “ you have guessed right ; I have got some law paper in my pocket.”

“ Quick, then, set to work, and here, some of you, keep sentinel at the mouth of the cave.”

“ I,” said Malemort, “ I will be sentinel, and I promise you all, to make short work of all who fall in my way, English, Spanish, or German,—no matter what they may be, I will soon make dead men of them all, if they come within my reach.”

“ That’s exactly what I don’t want,” exclaimed Yvonnet. “ Remember that we are within ear-shot of his imperial majesty, Charles V., and of his highness, Emmanuel-Philibert, and that they don’t joke on this subject. No, no, we

must kill only at the very last extremity, nor even attempt any violence, if we can help it, for wounded people shout like the devil, and if once we give the alarm, and bring soldiers here, why it will be all up with us. Let one of the Scharfensteins take the post of sentinel; they are Germans, and if we are surprised by the troops, why he can say that he belongs to the Duc d'Arenberg, or to the Count de Waldeck."

"To the Count von Waldeck is gut," said Scharfenstein, the elder.

"Not so badly reasoned, most noble giant, the Count de Waldeck being himself a marauder,—isn't that what you mean to say?"

"Ya."

"And, being a marauder, it would not be astonishing to find one of his followers in the wood."

"Mein Got, not astonishing."

"All right, my fine fellow, only take care you do not fall in the way of the Count of Savoy; you know he will have no mercy."

"Mein Got," said Heinrich, "the Count did hang two soldiers only but last night."

"Three," said Franz.

"Well, which of you is going?"

"I," exclaimed both uncle and nephew.

"Not both, the other must stay here."

"*Franz has gut eyes and gut ears,*" said Heinrich; "*he must be our zentinel.*"

"Look out, Franz, my boy; remember if the Count of Savoy takes you, he'll hang you, to a dead certainty."

"Never fear, never fear," said Franz, as he left the grotto.

"And what am I to do?" said Heinrich.

“ Oh, you must hold this torch,” said Yvonnet, “ and mind you do not move, or you’ll make Procope blunder.”

“ I won’t move more than a rock.”

And so Procope sat down to draw up the contract in which he was engaged when we first made his acquaintance, surrounded by the other adventurers, on the morning of the 5th of May, 1555.

It was no difficult matter to satisfy every body, though to their credit must it be spoken, all the amendments proposed had been full of sense and moderation; proving, as some have said, that a code of laws drawn up by a set of men who had violated them all, would be by far the most efficient of all codes.

At length, just as Yvonnet’s watch, for rare as was a watch in those days, Yvonnet had contrived to get one, pointed to half-past three, P. M., Procope, putting down his pen with an air of great satisfaction, exclaimed :

“ I have done, and I think what is more, done it well.
Exegi monumentum.”

At these words, Heinrich Scharfenstein, who had been immovably holding the torch for the last three hours and twenty minutes, stretched out his arm, somewhat numbed by having been so long in the same attitude. Yvonnet stopped humming, but went on curling his moustache; Malemort tied up his wound; Lactance discontinued his *pater nosters*; Maldent for the first time took his eye off of Procope, and withdrew from the table; Pilletrousse put up his dagger, satisfied with its temper and brilliancy, and Fracasse, having found the last lines of a sonnet he had been puzzling over for the last month, came back to the interests of the nether world.

All now were present, with the exception of Franz, who, leaving his interests in his uncle’s hands, was still keeping

diligent watch over his companions, and over himself, determined as he was not to fall into the hands of the inexorable Emmanuel-Philibert.

"Gentlemen," said Procope, looking with considerable satisfaction at the circle round him, "gentlemen, are we all here?"

"All," responded the circle, in chorus.

"Are you each and all ready to hear this present act of association or partnership into which we are each and all to enter?"

"Proceed."

"Well, then, gentlemen, 'We, the undersigned—'"

"I beg pardon," said Lactance, "I cannot sign, for I cannot write."

"That don't matter, you can put a cross you know, that will do as well."

"As well, brother," said Lactance. "Why it will make the engagement all the more sacred."

"We the undersigned, Jean Chrysostom Procope—"

"I like your impudence," interrupted Yvonnet, "you've begun with yourself."

"I was obliged to begin with somebody, you know—"

"Go on," growled Maldent.

"Jean Chrysostom Procope, ex-attorney-at-law at the tribunals Caen, Rouen, Cherbourg, and Volognes—"

"By the mass, I am not astonished that this act has taken you so many hours to draw up, if you're going on with titles and qualifications in this style for all of us; I'm only surprised that it ever got done at all."

"Oh," replied Procope, "I have designated you all by the same title, only as you had done me the honor to depute me to draw up this most important act, I thought it no more than right that you should know all about me—"

“Go on,” howled Malemort, “go on, or we shall never come to the fighting part of the plan, the only one I care for.”

“‘And Honoré Joseph Maldent, Vietor Felix Yvonne, Cyrille Nepomucene Lactance, Caesar Hannibal Malemort, Martin Pilletrousse, Vittorio Albani Fracasse, and Heinrich and Franz Scharfenstein, all captains in the service of his Majesty, Henri II.—’”

A murmur of satisfaction testified how flattered the whole party were by this flattering title, which each of course fully considered he merited.

“‘It has been decided,’” proceeded Procope, after a pause.

“Excuse me, but where’s the date?” interrupted Maldent.

“At the end, to be sure. You know Justinian says it is as well at the end as at the beginning—

“‘*Omne actum, quo tempore scriptum sit, indicato, seu initio seu fine—*’”

“What an abominable jargon,” said Fracasse, cutting short Procope’s citation, “and how far it is from the Latin of Virgil and Horace. Only listen!

“‘*Mala me Galatea petit lasciva puella,
Et fugit ad salices, et se capit.*’”

“Hold your tongue, Fracasse.”

“You may tell me to hold my tongue, if you please,” said Fracasse; “that does not prevent my saying that though Justinian was an emperor, I have infinitely more respect for Homer and Virgil, and that I would rather have written the Eclogues, the Iliad, and even the *Æneid*, than all your emperors’ digests, or pandects, or indeed all the ‘*corpus juris civilis.*’”

This learned discussion threatened to take a serious turn, when it was suddenly interrupted by a stifled cry proceeding from the entrance of the cave. All eyes were instantly directed towards the aperture, before which, hiding the light of the sun, and not yet within reach of the red glare of the torch, stood a sort of unformed mass, which, however, soon advanced into the circle of light, disclosing the gigantic form of Franz Scharfenstein holding a woman in his arms.

"Gomrades," said Franz, "I found a womans, and I brought her in. What shall I do with her now?"

"Let her go, my boy," said Pilletrousse; "she won't eat us, you may be sure."

"Oh no, poor leetle ting," said Franz, putting down his burden, as he had been desired, "but I could *eat her*, *she is one tid-bid*"—and with a chuckle Franz withdrew, leaving his prize standing in the middle of the circle.

The prize was a young and pretty girl, who from her dress appeared to belong to that estimable class called ladies' maids; she appeared considerably astonished at finding herself in such unexpected company, and looked round the circle with a mixture of fright, disdain, and curiosity, that was quite pleasant to behold. When her eyes rested on Yvonnet, her expression instantly changed into one of joy and satisfaction.

"Oh, Monsieur Yvonnet, oh, I'm so glad!" and with one spring the young girl rushed to Yvonnet, and threw her arms round his neck.

"What, Gertrude!" exclaimed Yvonnet; then putting his arms round her, he turned to his associates, and said:

"This is lucky, gentlemen; we shall have the latest news from the *Parcq*, for this fair lady is just come from there."

Now as the news brought by Gertrude interested every body, the adventurers forgot for an instant the important act Procope was reading to them; and drawing round Mademoiselle Gertrude, awaited in silence what she had to say.

CHAPTER V.

THE COUNT DE WALDECK.

IT WAS some time before Gertrude could recover herself sufficiently to speak coherently, and when she did at last begin her narrative, she was so frequently interrupted that we prefer giving its substance in our own words, rather than in hers.

About two hours after Yvonnet had taken leave of Gertrude, just as she was about to rise from her bed and obey the third summons to attend upon her mistress, Phillipin, the bailiff's son, a youth of about seventeen, had suddenly rushed into his lady's room, exclaiming, that a troop of horsemen, who, from their yellow and black scarfs, they presumed belonged to the army of Charles V., had taken the bailiff prisoner as he was working in the fields, and were now advancing towards the house. Phillipin, who luckily had escaped, now came post-haste to warn his mistress.

The lady rose, and hastening to the window, she perceived the troop advancing towards the house, and beheld the farmer with a cord round his neck marching in front of the commanders.

The lady, however, was not greatly alarmed. She knew the strict regulations with regard to private pillaging, enforced by Emmanuel Philibert; she perceived, too, that the

chiefs of the troop had coronets on their helmets and armorial bearings on their breastplates, and this, together with the imperial insignia they all wore, reassured her. Dressing herself hastily, she proceeded down stairs, and opening the door awaited the arrival of the troop, not as enemies but as honored guests.

As for Gertrude, her fear was so great at the sight of these men, that instead of following her mistress as she ought to have done, she remained behind, and, trembling with agitation, threw herself into Phillipin's arms.

Now of late mademoiselle Gertrude had been very cold and cruel to Phillipin, and Phillipin had determined that if ever he should have an opportunity he would pay her off; but somehow Gertrude looked so pretty, and clung so tenderly to him, that Phillipin relented, soothed her, supported her, and promised to conceal her in a safe place, where he also promised to come and bring her news of what was going on.

Gertrude expressed her gratitude.

Phillipin, taking her down the back stairs, conducted her across the garden to a sort of outhouse where his father kept his implements of agriculture, his tools and odd ends of iron, etc.

Although safely bestowed, Gertrude would, however, very much have liked to detain Phillipin as a protector; but then she would have no means of ascertaining what was going on at the chateau; so her curiosity getting the better of her fears, she allowed Phillipin to lock her in, and then to depart.

Now that she was alone, Gertrude applied all her faculties to analyzing the various sounds which reached her; as far as she could judge, the neighing of the horses, and the shouts of the cavaliers, seemed not to have left the imme-

diate vicinity of the chateau. Gertrude grew so anxious and impatient that she several times regretted having allowed Phillipin to lock her in, thinking that danger would be preferable to the suspense and excitement in which she was doomed to remain.

At length a key was cautiously thrust in the lock, the door was slowly opened, and Phillipin made his appearance.

“ Well ? ” eagerly inquired Gertrude.

“ Well,” replied Phillipin, “ the baroness was right, they are noble cavaliers—but, holy virgin, how they swear ! you would think they were heathens.”

“ Good heavens ! Phillipin, how you frighten me ! ”

“ You would have been frightened if you had heard them, I promise you. Our chaplain was so shocked that he ventured to remonstrate with them, and what do you think they said ? ”

“ I do not know, but something very wicked no doubt.”

“ Why, they told the chaplain that if he didn't hold his tongue they would hang him by the feet to the bell in the chapel and make him say mass with his head downwards, and that if he missed one word, their chaplain, a fellow with a long moustache, and who swears like the best of them, should beat it into him.”

“ Oh, they cannot be noblemen or gentlemen.”

“ But they are real noblemen, I promise you, and proud of their nobility and their names, notwithstanding the way they behave. The commander, a man of about fifty, is the Count de Waldeck, holding high rank in the armies of his majesty Charles V. ; the two other officers are the legitimate and the bastard sons of the count, young men of twenty-five and nineteen.

“ The eldest son is a handsome young fellow, pale, with

a gentle look, of whom there are some hopes ; but the bastard, evidently the favorite of his father, is a great ugly fellow, with red hair, and eyes like a hawk. You should have seen how he looked at the baroness ; it was enough to make one shudder."

"How dreadful!" said Gertrude, somewhat curious to know whether any look could make her shudder.

"And now I'll go back and get some more news, Mlle Gertrude."

"Take care of yourself, Phillipin," said Gertrude, tenderly.

"Oh, there's no fear of me," replied Phillipin, with a low laugh, "I never come into the presence of the brigands without a bottle in each hand, and as I know how to choose the wine, and take care to come often, they are quite fond of me."

With these words Phillipin disappeared, locking the door carefully after him, leaving Gertrude to meditate on the terrible position of the baroness, pursued as she was by the terrible eyes of the bastard of Waldeck.

Presently Phillipin returned, but looking this time completely scared.

"Such doings! The count and his sons have compelled the poor baroness to give them all the jewels, plate, and money she possessed; and then, when the poor woman had fancied the worst was over, the brigands had taken her, and binding her hand and foot to her own bedpost, had declared that unless in two hours a ransom of two hundred rose nobles was not forthcoming, they would consider her their prisoner and burn the castle to the ground."

Gertrude expressed great sympathy and sorrow for her poor mistress, but as she had no money to lend her, she became curious to know all the details of this terrible history;

more especially she was anxious to know what the bastard of Waldeck was doing in all this.

Phillipin replied to her inquiries on this point, that the bastard was quietly getting drunk, in the midst of a most terrible orgie with his father and his companions, excepting, however, the Viscount de Waldeck, who appeared perfectly dignified and unmoved in the midst of all.

Now Mlle. Gertrude witnessed the sack of Th rouanne, but she had no idea of an orgie, and her curiosity was thoroughly excited.

Phillipin's highly-colored description of it only served to increase her desire to be an eye-witness of so curious a spectacle, and she entreated her protector to let her out, if only for a few minutes.

Phillipin, however, would not hear of such a thing, but once more locking her in, rushed back for further intelligence to the chateau.

Gertrude, whose imagination had been fired by Phillipin's description, walked impatiently up and down her narrow cell, resolved, on Phillipin's next visit, to rush out, and, proceeding to the chateau, to become a spectatress of the scene he had so graphically described; no sooner, therefore, did she hear the key turn in the lock, than she rushed to the door, determined to pass him before he had time to oppose her flight; but the sight of Phillipin, pale, with distended eyes, and the perspiration standing on his brow, made her pause in affright.

The youth spoke not, but seizing her by the arm, he dragged her out of her hiding-place and ran with her towards the door, which opened from the garden into the open country.

This he opened, and carefully closed after him, as if in fear of pursuit; then he continued his flight, dragging the

astounded Gertrude after him, until exhausted and overcome, he sank to the earth, exclaiming in a stifled voice,

“ Dead, assassinated, murdered ! ”

Gertrude listened with horror to these words of Phillipin, which, incoherent as they were, revealed so much ; she was roused from her stupor by the sound of horsemen approaching, she turned and beheld what she fancied to be several of the Waldeck troop galloping rapidly towards where she stood.

A wild terror seized her. Phillipin lay at her feet insensible and could not protect her ; she thought of the grotto, of Yvonnnet whom she hoped to find there ; she was within sight of the forest, her enemies were close upon her ; so with one pang of regret, at abandoning Phillipin, Gertrude bounded off at her swiftest speed, and fled into the depths of the forest.

Once under its protecting shadows, she turned and saw the horsemen come up to where Phillipin lay ; she saw them lift him from the ground, and then, finding he was unable to stand, she beheld one of the cavaliers place him before him on his saddle, and with the other horseman ride towards the camp.

Then Gertrude strove to find the grotto ; but fright had taken away her presence of mind ; she wandered about for more than an hour, until at last, chance brought her to the place she was seeking, within arm's length of Franz Scharfstein.

Franz, as we have seen, had carried her off, and bringing her into the cave, had deposited her in the midst of the group of adventurers, to whom Gertrude related the narrative of the events we have just laid before our readers.

Great was the indignation of the adventurers, not, it must be confessed, at the cruelty of the Count de Waldeck,

but that he should have preceded them in a pillage they themselves had resolved on.

They unanimously determined that a sortie should immediately be made, both in the direction of the camp, and in the direction of the chateau. It was determined, however, first to send scouts in both directions, lest the whole troop sallying forth at once should attract too much attention.

Yvonnet, who was as agile as a stag and as stealthy as a fox, offered to scour the forest, a proposition which was greeted by loud cries and lamentations from Gertrude.

She soon, however, perceived that both time and place were ill chosen for a love scene, and being really a girl of great good sense, soon understood that any superfluous manifestation of feeling might be attended with considerable danger to herself. She therefore listened to Yvonnet's remonstrances, who explained to her that the mistress of an adventurer had no right to possess the nerves of a fine lady, and so, confiding her to the care of Fracasse, her lover left her.

Yvonnet was not more than ten minutes absent; he reported the forest to be perfectly free from all intruders, and declared all safe for a sally.

Thus encouraged, and excited by curiosity and a thirst for a share in the plunder, the adventurers formed themselves into a troop, and all having ascertained that their arms were in good condition, they sallied joyfully forth from the cave, headed by Yvonnet, leaving the famous contract to the care of the gnomes.

CHAPTER VI.

JUSTICE AND RETRIBUTION.

PROTECTED and concealed by the high trees of the forest, which extended across the plain, the adventurers proceeded to the deep trench which divided the domains of the chateau from the open country, and whence diverged the roads leading, one to the neighboring villages, and the other to the Emperor's camp.

The place was well chosen for a halt and for taking an observation, for the trees of the forest had been spared from the axe for centuries, and spread their thick branches around, affording at once shelter and safety.

Yvonnet ascertained at a glance, that from the higher branches of these protecting oaks, he could see all over the plain, and thus ascertain the position of the enemy.

Borrowing a leaf from Fracasse's pocket-book—the only one unencumbered with poetical effusions—Yvonnet mounted on the shoulders of Franz Scharfenstein, and soon, with the grace and agility of a young monkey, reached the highest point of one of the outspreading branches.

Here Yvonnet looked on all sides, and appeared evidently much astonished at what he beheld.

“What do you see?” shouted many anxious voices, Gertrude’s amongst the rest.

But Yvonnet merely replied by signs, and continued to look out. At length, taking the leaf of Fracasse’s tablets, he wrote upon it, and rolling it between his fingers so that the wind should not carry it off, threw it down to his anxious companions.

All hands were stretched to receive it, but it was Franz Scharfenstein who caught it.

“Here, gentlemen,” said he, “here, Monsieur Brocobe, do you read it, I cannot read French, you know.”

Procope, as eager as the rest, opened the paper and read :

“The castle of the Parcq is on fire,—”

“The Count de Waldeck, his two sons at the head of their troop, are proceeding towards the Emperor’s camp. They are within two hundred feet of the place where we stand. This is on the right hand. On my left a little troop is making its way from the camp towards the Parcq. This troop consists of a captain with his squire, a page, and four soldiers. As near as I can judge, the captain is no other than the illustrious Emmanuel-Philibert in person.

“These two troops are at equal distance from each other, one to the right and the other to the left, divided by the wood which comes off gradually down to a point. They will both meet when they least expect it.

“If, as is probable, the Duke has been informed of what has been going on, by Phillipin, there will be fine work.

“Look out, comrades ; it is the Duke himself.”

This was all Yvonnet had written ; but it was impossible to put more important events into fewer words.

The adventurers, anxious to see the spectacle of which Yvonnet had furnished them the programme, and which he

was so well placed to see, eagerly advanced to the verge of the forest.

Leaving the Count de Waldeck and his troop, with whom we are already acquainted, to proceed quietly on their way, we will, with the reader's permission, turn our attention towards the Duke's little cortège, and introduce him to the hero of our history; for at the head of this small escort, as Yvonne had declared, was Emmanuel-Philibert, generalissimo of the Imperial armies in the Low Countries.

He was always easily recognized, from a habit he had of carrying his helmet suspended from his saddle-bow—never by any chance, either in sunshine or in rain, and not often even in battle, wearing it on his head. This apparent insensibility to wind, weather, and danger, had obtained for him the name of the *Iron-head* (*Tête de fer*).

Emmanuel-Philibert, at this period, was in his twenty-seventh year. He was scarcely above the middle height, but his well-knit and finely-proportioned frame, indicated great personal strength. His clear blue eye had an expression at once soft and piercing; his forehead was high and well developed; the features of his face were all regular and expressive; his eyebrows, hair, and beard, of a rich chestnut brown, harmonized well with the tone of his complexion. He wore his hair cut very short, whilst his beard, according to the fashion of the day, was long and pointed. His neck, like the descendant of a race which had from generation to generation worn heavy helmets, was short and thick, and somewhat deep set in the shoulders.

The Duke's voice was peculiarly mellow, soft, and low; even when his eyes sparkled in anger, it was never raised above its usual pitch, though its expression and accentuation filled those around with awe and dread, when, with flashing eyes, he addressed the objects of his ire. But the Duke's

usual demeanor was dignified and calm—the habitual expression of his face benevolent and serene.

The squire who rode by the Duke's side was a young man of about the same age, and of exactly the same height as the Duke. His visor was raised, and revealed a fine handsome face, full of youth and vigor, though somewhat tanned by fatigue and exposure. His sparkling blue eye, the nostrils dilated like those of the lion, his flowing hair and crisp beard, of the color of the tawny mane of the king of the forest, indicated excessive personal courage, as well as great personal vigor. Fastened to his saddle-bow was one of those long cross-handled swords, of which Francis I. broke three at the battle of Marignan. These swords, from their extraordinary length, could only be used from over the shoulder, or wielded otherwise than by both hands at once.

On the other side of the saddle he carried one of those tremendous battle-axes now no longer in use, which, besides the sharp axe, presented also a large triangular mass of iron, full of spikes and terminating in a sharp point, so that this one arm could at once fell like an axe, stab like a dagger, or brain like a tomahawk.

On the left of the Duke came his page, a youth of about eighteen. His hair, dark as the raven's wing, had those deep purple hues so rare in what is usually called black hair. He wore it as Holbein and Raphael have painted it in their pictures. His eyes, shaded by long silken lashes, had that glance so wild and melting, whose ever-changing hues are peculiar to the Sicilians and the Arabs; whilst his clear white skin looked like a pure Carrara marble upon which an Italian sun had rested long and lovingly, enriching but not marring its tone. He rode a small Arab horse, caparisoned only by a leopard skin, with golden claws and

rich enamel eyes. His small and delicate hands suited well the silken rein with which he guided his graceful charger.

He was simply but elegantly attired. Over a tunic of crimson satin, slashed with white, he wore a black velvet tunic fastened round the waist by a thick gold cord. His full hose were thrust into buckskin boots, which well defined the elegant form of his small foot. A small black velvet cap, with a scarlet feather, fastened by a diamond brooch, completed this costume.

The Duke and his companions, followed by the four soldiers, continued to advance at the same steady pace, the Duke's silence and severity of look alone indicating the importance of their mission; and soon, as Yvonnet had foreseen, the two troops, having reached the point where the forest dwindled into nothing, stood suddenly revealed to each other. Strange to say, it was the most numerous of the two, impelled by surprise and fear, which came to a stand still.

As for the Duke, without any signs of outward emotion, he continued to advance towards the Count de Waldeck and his two sons.

Within ten paces of the Count, the Duke signed to his followers to halt, whilst he alone approached to where the Viscount de Waldeck stood.

The three noblemen saluted their commander with the usual military salute, to which the Duke replied by a slight inclination of the head; and, turning to the Viscount, with that voice which in itself was music, he said,—

“Viscount Waldeck, you are a brave and noble gentleman, after my own heart, such as I am proud to see in the service of his Majesty the Emperor. I have long been seeking an opportunity of testifying my approbation of your great and loyal conduct. This opportunity has now arrived

I have just received intelligence that the troops I ordered to be levied on the left banks of the Rhine are now assembled at Spires; I name you their commander."

"Your highness," began the young man, blushing.

"Here is your commission," continued the Duke, "signed and sealed by me. Take it, and instantly proceed to headquarters. We shall probably soon commence hostilities; there is not a moment to be lost. Go, Viscount, and may heaven prosper you!"

It was a great and signal favor, thus bestowed on the young soldier; so, without further delay, he proceeded to take leave of his father. Then, turning towards Emmanuel, he said,—

"My lord, you are indeed a representative of God's justice on earth—prompt to reward and to punish. You have placed a high trust in me—your trust shall be justified."

With these words the young viscount bowed low, and putting spurs to his horse, disappeared round the angle of the forest.

There was a pause, during which Emmanuel-Philibert followed the young viscount with his eyes as far as he could see him. When he was out of sight, he turned to the Count de Waldeck, and looking sternly at him, said in his deep voice, whose changed tone sent a thrill to the heart:

"And now, Count de Waldeck, 'tis with you I have to speak."

"Allow me first," said the Count, "to thank your Highness for the signal favor bestowed on my son."

"There is no need to thank me; your son deserved this distinction. It is but justice; and you know me, Count. I, as your son said, am prompt to reward and prompt to

punish. Therefore, having fulfilled my obligations towards your son, I say to you, count—give me your sword ! ”

The count started, and in a tone which indicated that he would not promptly comply with such a command, he exclaimed—

“ My sword, my lord ! and wherefore should I give up my sword ? ”

“ You have heard, count, my proclamation concerning all pillaging, trespass, and marauding. You know that all guilty of these crimes are, if they are in the ranks, punished by flogging and death ; if in command, by arrest and imprisonment. You, count, spite of these proclamations, have been guilty of violence and robbery : you have forcibly entered the chateau of the Pareq ; you have seized and carried off all the jewels, gold and plate, belonging to the lady of the castle. Count, you are a marauder and a pillager. I demand your sword.”

The Count de Waldeck shuddered at these words ; but, as we have said, the duke’s voice, never loud or rough, gave no indications of anger, but to those who knew him well. He felt that some terrible retribution was at hand.

“ And is it for so slight an offence,” replied the count, “ that your highness asks a gentleman to give up his sword ? ”

“ Ay ; but you know, count, that this is not all ; but, for the honor of the nobility of Germany, I would have spared you the recital of your other misdeeds. But, since you think so lightly of burglary and theft, I will recall your crimes. Did you not, after robbing the noble lady of the castle, bind her hand and foot, and demand a ransom from her—a ransom which you knew to be impossible, because you had taken from her all ? Did you not, in order to frighten her, set fire to the adjacent farm ? See, its black-

ened ruins are even now smoking. Count de Waldeck, you are an incendiary; I demand your sword!"

The count ground his teeth, for he began to understand the concentrated rage of the duke.

"Your highness appears to be wonderfully well informed."

"I know all, count; I know that you have deserved the gibbet."

"My lord!" exclaimed Waldeck, in a tone of defiance.

"Beware, sir count, what you say! for you are in the presence of your judge—your judge, sir count, who knows how the noble woman whose courage had not quailed before danger and death, trembled before the insults of your bastard son; how, when he seized her in his arms, she implored the pity of the viscount, and that, not heeding his remonstrances, the bastard, throwing his prisoner, fainting and still bound, on her bed, drew his sword against his brother, and that, hand to hand, they fought. Then it was, sir count, that you interfered, for you knew how long they had hated each other, and how mortal would be the combat. 'Hold,' said you, 'the fairest woman that ever lived is not worth one drop of a soldier's blood. I will decide the dispute at once—put up your swords!' Passing between the two adversaries, you approached the prisoner, and then, instead of raising her and loosening the cords which bound her,—drawing your dagger, you plunged it into her bosom. Dare not deny it, sir count, for your dagger is yet wet with gore, and your hands are even now stained with blood. Base assassin, give up your sword!"

"It is easy for your highness to command, but it will not be easy for you to obtain the sword of a nobleman. All sovereign prince as you are, or were, alone I would worst

you, much more so now, that I am backed by forty brave soldiers, and have my son by my side."

"Then, sir count, if you refuse to give me your sword, I shall be forced to take it."

With these words, Emmanuel-Philibert put his spurs into his horse, and was in an instant at the count's side.

The count, too closely pressed to be able to draw his sword, eagerly sought for his pistols in the holsters of his saddle, but Emmanuel-Philibert had been quicker in his movements, for he already held one cocked in his hand. Before either the bastard or the count could offer any resistance, Emmanuel-Philibert, with the calm and unerring hand of retributive justice, took his aim, pulled the trigger, and shot the count through the head.

The count uttered a faint cry, threw his arms wildly before him, then his feet losing their hold of the stirrups, his body fell heavily to the earth.

Justice was satisfied. Prompt to reward, prompt to punish,—like a second Providence, Emmanuel had fulfilled his mission, with the noble-hearted son and the guilty father.

During the whole of this interview, the bastard, covered with armor from head to foot, had remained erect and motionless, like an iron statue; but when he heard the report of the pistol, and almost simultaneously beheld his father fall, a loud cry of rage and horror escaped through his iron visor. Turning to his followers, he exclaimed in German:

"Comrades! comrades! forward! come on!—death to the Duke Emmanuel!"

But the wary Rhetans did not move.

"What! not revenge your chief, who loved you like a father,—who gave you gold and wine,—who fought with you, side by side! Then 'tis I will avenge him—thus!"

Blind with rage and grief, the bastard, raising his heavy

sword in both hands, rushed on the duke; but, before he could reach him, two of his own followers seized his bridle reins, whilst another grappled with him and strove to drag him from the saddle.

The duke, with feelings not unmixed with pity, looked on this desperate struggle of the bastard, whose father lay dead at his feet. The soldiers soon overpowered their single adversary, and having disarmed him, they turned towards the Duke, exclaiming :

“What shall we do with him, my lord?”

“Set him free,” said the duke, “lest he should say I was afraid of him.”

The soldiers obeyed; and regaining his saddle, the bastard pushed his horse close up to the duke. Emmanuel waited for him unmoved, holding a second pistol ready primed in his hand.

“Emmanuel-Philibert, Duke of Savoy, Prince of Piedmont,” exclaimed the bastard, “I am, from this hour, your mortal enemy. You have killed my father with your own hand: I swear, from this hour, eternal hatred to you and yours. Look at me,” continued he, dashing up his visor, “look at me, and whenever you see my face,—whether by night or day, whether in peace or war,—remember that misfortune is at hand!”

With a gesture of malediction and an imprecation, the bastard turned his horse’s head and galloped away.

“Wretch!” exclaimed Emmanuel’s squire, preparing to dart after him.

“Stop!” said the duke, “Scianca-Ferro, I command you—stop!”

The duke then turned to his page, who, pale and trembling, seemed scarcely able to retain his seat. “What is

the matter ?" said he ; " why, Leone, my child, to look at your pale face, one would take you for a woman ! "

" Oh, my lord ! " replied the page, kissing the hand extended to him by the duke : " tell me you are unhurt, or I shall die with terror. "

" Safe and unharmed, foolish boy ! Am I not under the protection of God ? "

The Duke then, advancing a few paces, turned and addressed the followers of the Count :

" My friends, " said he, " take up the body of your chief, and procure for it Christian burial. Forget not his example ; and remember that, like God, Emmanuel-Philibert is no respecter of persons, but that he punishes the guilty in whatever rank he may find them. "

So saying, Emmanuel turned his horse, and, followed by Scianca-Ferro, Leone, and the attendants, returned to the camp, his calm and noble brow bearing no outward sign of the sentence he had just executed.

CHAPTER VII.

TRUTH AND FICTION.

THE adventurers, at once awed and warned by the events they had witnessed, quietly returned to the grotto, to wait for some other opportunity of putting the conditions of their association into full force ; determined in the mean time to hear Procope terminate the reading of this famous act, and then to sign it.

The Rhetans, in obedience to the commands of Emmanuel-Philibert, took the body of their chief to the cemetery of Hesdin-Fert, and there, having laid him in a grave, dug by their own hands, they left him, in the hope that, having expiated his crimes on earth, he would meet with mercy in heaven.

Whilst Emmanuel and his companions are quietly regaining their tented home, we will, if it pleases the reader, take an excursion into the domains of history, and give some account of our hero's family and origin.

In the splendid annals of the past, romance and history are so closely blended, that we need dread neither the aridity of the one nor the frivolity of the other ; for the heroes of those days of chivalry were such as the poet would choose

to sing, whilst their deeds are those which history loves to write in the indelible characters of truth.

Emmanuel-Philibert was the third son of Charles III., surnamed the Good, and of Beatrice of Portugal. He was born at the castle of Chamberry, on the 8th of July, 1528.

He was christened Emmanuel, after his maternal grandfather, the king of Portugal, and Philibert, from a vow made by his father to the saint of that name, under whose patronage he placed his son. He was born at four o'clock in the afternoon, and was such a poor, weak infant, that he would have died had not one of his mother's women breathed into his lungs. Until the age of three years he was sickly and rickety, unable to hold up his head, or to stand firmly on his legs.

The astrologer who drew the horoscope of this new-born infant, as was the custom in those days, met with very little credence when he prophesied that the child would be a great warrior, and shed more lustre on the House of Savoy than his illustrious ancestors, Preine, surnamed Charlemagne the Less, or Amedeus the Great, or Amedeus VI., commonly surnamed the Green Count. Beatrice, a gentle and pious princess, shook her head and shed tears when she looked at her puny child, and his father, resigned to the will of Heaven, bowed in submission to its decrees, hoping that his prayers might bring this prophecy to pass.

Emmanuel-Philibert was the nephew of Charles V. by his mother, Beatrice of Portugal, one of the most accomplished princesses of her day. He was cousin to Francis I. of France, by his aunt Louise of Savoy, under whose pillow the insolent Connétable de Bourbon pretended to have forgotten the ribbon and order of the Holy Ghost, which, after his rebellion, Francis I. summoned him to return.

Another of his aunts was the beautiful and witty Mar-

guerite of Austria, who has left us a volume of manuscript poems, which are still to be seen in the National Library of France. This princess, who had been betrothed to the Dauphin of France, and afterwards to the king of England, being on her way to espouse the eldest son of Ferdinand and Isabella, was overtaken by a severe storm, which placed her in imminent danger of her life—upon which occasion, somewhat prematurely, since she survived, she wrote her own epitaph, in the following lines :

Pity poor Marguerite,
Young and fair :
Thrice was she wedded,
Yet died a maid.

In spite of the brilliant destiny prophesied by the astrologer, the father of Emmanuel-Philibert, seeing the weak constitution of his son, destined him to holy orders. In order to consecrate him to the church, he was sent to Bologna when only three years old, to kiss the foot of Pope Clement VII., from whose hands his uncle Charles V. had just received the imperial crown of Rome, and through whose influence the infant prince was promised a cardinal's hat. Thence in his infancy he obtained the surname of *Cardinalino*, much to his disgust, for he very soon manifested tastes which were quite incompatible with this holy title, and which promised to lead him into the field rather than to the sacred altars.

The lady in attendance on the Duchess when Emmanuel-Philibert was born, and to whom he owed his life, since she breathed the breath of life into his lungs, had also a son, then about six months old, a child of marvellous health and vigor. To this lady the Duchess Beatrice confided her puny infant.

“ Take him, Lucrezia,” said she, “ take him, and let him draw his nourishment from your bosom. He owes you his life, but I shall owe you more than mine, if you bring him up—for the life of her child is more to a mother than her own.”

So the good Lucrezia took the puny prince, and brought him up with her own Rinaldo, who was, for beauty and strength, the marvel of all who saw him. Together the children prospered, although the prince, notwithstanding that he got more than his own share from the bosom of his adopted mother, did not thrive in proportion to the sturdy little Rinaldo.

The visit Emmanuel-Philibert paid to the Pope, however, appeared to have created a favorable turn in his constitution, for from that time he increased in strength and stature, as though Heaven had confirmed the blessings of the holy father.

His foster-brother Rinaldo had now grown to be a miracle of strength, so that the usual toys given to children of his age, were like paper in his hands. He broke and twisted them, to the great edification of his nurses and those around him, with the same facility with which the infant Hercules strangled the serpents in his cradle. The good Duke Charles III., who liked to watch the children play, gave this boy the nickname of Scianca-Ferro, which in Piedmontese means *Split-iron*.

Split-iron idolized his foster-brother, whom he sustained and protected, whilst Emmanuel-Philibert, far from being jealous of the superior physical qualities of his brother, strove in every way to emulate him. The children loved each other as though they had really been brothers.

One day, the court being at Vercelli, the two young men went with their riding-master on horseback along the

banks of the Sesia, almost as far as Novara, by the Ticino, when the Duke Emmanuel, who rode first, was almost thrown from his saddle by the sudden plunging of his horse, alarmed, as it was, by the bellowing of a bull.

The horse of the duke soon recovered itself, but, snorting with alarm, started off at full speed with its rider. The equerry, watching the course of the horse, took a cross road to meet it, whilst Scianca-Ferro, in the greatest alarm, followed him at full speed.

For some time his pursuit was vain. Emmanuel was quickly out of sight; and it was not until he began to fear some terrible accident, that, guided by his voice, he found Emmanuel. The prince was safe; his horse was quietly grazing near him, whilst the prince, on his knees, was endeavoring to succor a child of some four years old, who lay almost lifeless in the arms of its dead mother.

Emmanuel had vainly tried to restore the hapless mother; she was dead past all help, and her child appeared half dead from fatigue and hunger.

The prince took the child in his arms, and the little creature, as if by instinct, feeling that he owed his preservation to him, clung to him, imploring him, in most touching accents, to awaken his mother.

Scianca-Ferro, seeing at a glance the emergency of the case, galloped off to the village of Olnaggio in search of help.

Emmanuel strove to soothe and to console his infant charge, and presently Scianca-Ferro returned with bread and a bottle of *vin d'asti*.

The child recovered rapidly, and soon fell asleep.

Meantime, the rumor that the prince was in the vicinity had spread through the village. The equerry, too, told of his danger; and as the Duke of Savoy was adored by his

subjects, the villagers rushed forth and soon traced out the spot where were the prince and his foundling.

After the first ebullition of their enthusiasm, the peasants, one and all, offered their services to the prince. Emptying his purse into their hands, he confided to the men the burial of the poor woman, and to one of the farmers' wives he gave his infant charge; and then, as it was growing late, he, with Scianca-Ferro and the equerry, rode off towards the castle of Verecelli.

The duchess, who was awaiting with great anxiety the return of the truants, listened with deep interest to the story of their adventure, and promised on the next day to visit the little orphan.

True to her promise, the next day the duchess, accompanied by her son and two ladies in waiting, proceeded in a litter to the village.

Great was the joy of the poor orphan at the sight of his benefactor. He rushed into his arms, and pointing towards the duchess, he exclaimed, whilst tears almost choked his utterance—

“They have not put your mother into the earth like mine!”

The duchess, touched by these words, took the child kindly by the hand, and wiping away its tears, inquired its name.

The child replied that his name was Leone, and that his mother was called Leona; but this was all he could tell, or rather all he appeared disposed to tell, for there was something in his manner which indicated that he knew more.

The duchess, with a woman's instinct, divined that with her dying breath the mother had commanded her child not to reveal more. The duchess gazed with curiosity at the child, examined his beautiful and high-born features, and

his small, white hands—noticing that he spoke with equal fluency and distinction both Italian and French; and yet the woman was dressed as a peasant, and the child like a peasant's child.

There was one only incongruity in the costume of the peasant-woman which appealed to the imagination of the duchess—that was, that though all her other garments were of the coarsest material, she wore silk stockings—as though in assuming a hasty disguise this one article had been forgotten.

In vain the duchess interrogated the child; he invariably replied, “I know nothing;” so that all she could do was to order that the child should be well taken care of—determining to have inquiries made as to its parentage and the history of its dead mother.

But events of vital interest soon obliged the duchess to think of other things.

Francis I. declared war with the emperor, Charles V., for the third time, claiming as his the duchy of Milan, in right of Valentine Visconti, wife of Louis d'Orleans.

In the first war with the emperor, Francis had gained the battle of Marignan; in the second, he had lost the battle of Pavia. But neither this terrible defeat, nor the imprisonment at Toledo, nor the subsequent treaty at Madrid, could restrain Francis, who coveted this fair duchy, and who was not, as we know, much troubled with scruples or bound by promises. He therefore seized the first opportunity, and again preferred his claim by a declaration of war.

Milan at this time was governed by Maria Francesco Sforza, who had bought it of the emperor, in 1529, for the sum of four hundred thousand ducats, payable in the first year of his reign, and five hundred thousand within the ten following. As a security for the fulfilment of the treaty, the

emperor retained possession of the fortresses of Milan, Como, and Pavia.

To this, Duke Sforza, Francis I., sent as ambassador, in 1534, a gentleman of the name of Maraviglia. He was by birth a Milanese, who had earned both favor and fortune at the court of France. He had brought with him to Milan his daughter, of three years old, and his wife—leaving behind him his son, named Giacomo, who was page to the king.

For some reason, which it would be impossible to know, unless the secret correspondence of Charles V. and Cosmo de Medicis was found, this ambassador incurred the displeasure of the emperor, who gave secret orders to Sforza to get rid of Maraviglia at the first opportunity. Maraviglia himself soon gave Sforza an opportunity of obeying the emperor's commands; for being one night engaged in a street brawl, he had the misfortune to kill two of the duke's subjects. Maraviglia was arrested and conducted to the fortress, which, as we have said, was in the possession of the emperor.

What became of him was never revealed—but the probability was, that he had been secretly murdered; for he was never again heard of, and his wife and child disappeared from the city about the same time.

Here was the pretext of which Francis hastened to take advantage. Francis swore to avenge the death of his ambassador—swore it on the head of the orphan son of Maraviglia; and a third expedition to Italy was resolved on.

The moment, it must be confessed, was well chosen; for Charles V. was just about to commence an expedition against the famous Khair-Edden, or Cherredin, surnamed Barbarossa.

Now, for both the King of France and the Emperor, it

was necessary to pass through the domains of the Duke of Savoy. To remain neuter was impossible. For whom would the Duke of Savoy, Charles the Good, declare himself?—for his nephew, or for his brother-in-law? None could tell—though the general opinion was that he would side with the emperor against France. He had given many proofs of interest and affection to the emperor, and had refused the order of St. Michael, with a pension of twelve thousand crowns, offered him by Francis I., refusing to do homage to the crown of France for some fiefs which he held in that kingdom. Besides, he was known to have written a congratulatory letter to Charles, on the victory of Pavia, and to have lent money to the Connétable of Bourbon, just before he was killed by Benvenuto Cellini at the siege of Rome.

In order to solve all doubt, Francis sent Guillaume Poyet, the President of the Parliament of Paris, to Turin. He was ordered to make the following demands of the Duke of Savoy :

1st. A free passage for the French army across the Piedmontese states.

2d. The occupation, as hostages, of the towns of Montmeillan, Villano, Chevas, and Vercelli.

In exchange for these courtesies, he offered to give the duke vast territories in France, and to consummate the marriage of his daughter Margaret with the Prince Louis, the eldest son of the duke, and brother of Emmanuel-Philibert.

Charles the Good, in order to meet the ambassador on his own ground, appointed Purpurat the President of his Parliament, empowering him to grant a free passage to the troops, but to evade and finally refuse the request to occupy the Savoyard towns.

After many arguments on both sides, Poyet, getting out of all patience, exclaimed—

“It must be so, for such is the king’s pleasure!”

“Excuse me,” replied Purpurat, “but there is no such law as that in our code.”

And so the conference was broken off, leaving the result in the hands of God, who makes both peace and war. This time, war was the result.

In the month of February, 1535, the Duke Charles, being in his castle of Vercelli, a herald from the King of France was announced, and, being introduced, declared war in the name of his royal master.

“Friend,” said the duke in reply to the challenge, “I had imagined that the services I had rendered the King of France, that the tie of our relationship, and our long alliance, would have secured me against such a message. I have done my best to avoid war, and I know that my forces are not to be compared to his, any more than my kingdom is to his. Still, by the devotion of my people, and the support of my allies, I hope to meet him on the frontier, and to defend my territory from invasion. My nephew knows the motto on my shield; tell him that in it I still confide—*He wants no human aid who has God with him.*”

With these words, he dismissed the herald, with rich presents and much courtesy, and then began to prepare for war.

Emmanuel, foreseeing times of great confusion approaching, began to wish that his young protégé should be under the immediate protection of the court and of his mother. The duchess, whose tender heart looked forward with fear and anguish to the storm which seemed gathering over her house, and who persisted in imagining that the peasant-mother was of higher rank than she appeared, and her child

born to other associations than those which now surrounded him, felt inclined to indulge her son's wish. She remembered how God had sent an angel to Tobias, in time of trouble, and how that angel had brought joy and light in return for the welcome he had received. She felt as though this orphan child were sent by God. Trusting that a good deed might propitiate Heaven, and obtain its protection for the dark days that were at hand, she desired Emmanuel to send for Leone. Emmanuel, enchanted at the permission, set off for the village, at dawn of day, and found the little orphan in tears; for he had heard that his kind protectors, all rich and powerful as they appeared, had now been overtaken by misfortune, and that they were going far away. But Emmanuel reassured him, and told him he had come to take him home: and ere the tears were dry on his cheek his face was wreathed with smiles; for the sorrows of infancy are as near joy as dawn is to daylight.

Presently Scianea-Ferro arrived, with his suite and the duchess's own hackney, which she had herself sent for the child. Scianea-Ferro lifted him gayly into the saddle. Emmanuel put a purse of gold into the hands of the farmer's wife, who with many tears was taking leave of her charge; and then, with Leone between them, on his gentle steed, and followed by their equerries, the two happy friends galloped off.

At Verelli they were received by the duke and duchess, who embraced the boy, and adopted him as one of their own household; and then the whole court departed from Verelli and proceeded to Nice.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SQUIRE AND THE PAGE.

It is not our intention, however, we beg to assure the reader, to follow historical events, or to dwell upon the struggles of the rival sovereigns of the sixteenth century any more than is necessary for the development of the events connected with the hero of our story. Some, however, of the great catastrophes of those days must figure in our humble history, as occasionally the towering Alps are seen to pierce the clouds at their base.

Francis I., having traversed Savoy and Piedmont, entered Italy; and during three years the cannon of Italy and the cannon of the empire resounded through the plains of Lombardy—those plains now so rich and fertile, and which have been fertilized by streams of gore.

During all this time, the children, in security with the court at Nice, grew and prospered under the maternal care of the duchess,—Nice, with its azure and silver sky, with its fire-flies, like sparks of gold, illumining the night, so fit an abode for childhood and mirth.

The three youths pursued their studies together, Emmanuel rapidly acquiring health and vigor, so as almost to equal his foster-brother Scianca-Ferro. Leone, although a

beautiful and intelligent child, some three years younger than his companions, showed no ability or taste for manly or warlike exercises; so, leaving to Scianca-Ferro the post of squire, he contented himself by assuming the more peaceful duties of a page.

About this time the duke and duchess were thrown into the most profound grief, by an event which considerably influenced the fortunes of Emmanuel. Prince Louis, his eldest brother, and the heir to the duchy, died suddenly at Madrid. Although the prince had been long away from his family,—although Emmanuel-Philibert, who had never left them, was a son to be proud of, as well as to love, both the duke and the duchess felt this loss severely. The duchess grieved for her child, and, like Rachel of old, refused to be comforted. Her sorrow, added to the anxiety and uncertainty as to the termination of the war, impaired her health. Spite of the skill of the ablest physicians,—spite of the care and affection of her husband, and all who surrounded her, the Duchess Beatrice expired on the 8th of January, 1538.

The duke, though profoundly grieved, was too religious not to submit with patience to the will of Heaven; but Emmanuel-Philibert's grief knew no bounds. Then was it, when he wept for his mother, that Leone, who knew what it was to lose a mother, would stay by his side,—would throw his arms around him, not seeking to console him, but silently weeping with him.

Scianca-Ferro, though he had loved the duchess sincerely, was of too ardent a nature to mourn long. Had the sorrow which oppressed his friend taken a tangible form, he would have expended all his strength to conquer it, and so relieve his friend; but he knew not how to console him. Scianca-Ferro's nature was incapable of patience or resignation. Whilst Emmanuel and Leone wept together, he would ride

forth along the shores of the Mediterranean, seeking imaginary and impossible adventures,—longing to cross the sea and combat the Arabs and the Moors, and so, in violent and active exercise, expressed the grief which wrung his heart.

Time and religion, the two great consolers, at length did their work. Circumstances, too, obliged them to rouse themselves, for a congress had just been decided on, and Nice had been selected as the place for the meeting of the powers, in the hope that the presence of his uncle might render Francis I. more easy in his conditions.

This congress, too, was intended to bring about a reconciliation between the pope, Paul III., and Charles V., who had been for some years on bad terms, owing to a gift which the pope had made to his son Louis, of the duchies of Parma and Piacenza, in exchange for the principalities of Camerino and Nessi, which he bestowed on his second son, Octavius.

This arrangement had very much displeased the emperor; and to testify it, he had, on the death of Sforza, refused to sell the pope the much-disputed duchy of Milan, which duchy formed the pretext of the never-ending quarrel between France and the empire.

Charles V. was, however, fully justified in his aversion to the Duke of Parma, for he was Louis Farnese, of infamous memory. The popes of the sixteenth century were unfortunate in their children.

The congress of Nice was, therefore, designed to be one of general reconciliation. But, with all this, it was not without some anxiety and apprehension that the Duke of Savoy looked forward to receiving, in the last of his fortified towns, all his enemies.

Fearing, likewise, for his only child, he sent Emmanuel-Philibert, with a goodly garrison, into the fortress, desiring the governor, on no pretext, to admit any one, should they

even come in the name of the emperor, the king, or the pope. Having taken these precautions, he went forth to meet the pope,—it having been arranged that he was to precede the other potentates.

When the pope was within a mile, the governor of the fortress of Nice received a letter from the duke, his master, commanding him to prepare apartments for his holiness in the citadel.

This letter was given to the governor by a captain of the pope's guard, who, with two hundred armed men, desired also to be admitted as guards of honor of the pope.

Now, the duke had said nothing in his letter about the guards or the captain, and the request of the pope was in direct opposition to the explicit command of his master. The governor was puzzled, and, in this emergency, resolved to call a council. From courtesy, and in order to inspire the officers with courage, the Prince Emmanuel, though only eleven years of age, presided.

Whilst they were deliberating, the prince happened to fix his eyes on a small model in wood of the fortress, and turning to the council, he exclaimed :

“ My lords, since we have two castles, and the pope wants one, let us send his holiness the one made of wood, and keep the one made of stone.”

“ My lords,” said the governor, “ the prince is right. His holiness shall have the wooden castle, if he likes ; but I swear that, as long as I live, he shall not have the other.’

This reply was given to the captain of the pope's body-guard. The pope took the hint, and established himself in a convent of the Cordelier monks.

The emperor and the king also arrived in due time, and took up their abode in tents outside of the town.

The congress, when it began to enter into the affairs for

which it met, found that it had a more difficult task than it had anticipated.

The emperor demanded Piedmont and Savoy for his brother-in-law, Charles III.

Francis I. claimed the duchy of Milan for his son, the Duke of Orleans.

The pope required that the duchy of Milan should be given to a prince unconnected with either of these sovereigns, although he should, of course, pay a tribute to both. The pope, in this demand, had in view one of his sons, whom he intended to place on the ducal throne of Milan.

It was, of course, impossible to satisfy these demands; and, accordingly, after a stormy deliberation, it was decided to suspend hostilities and to proclaim a truce, desirable for all parties,—more especially for Francis I., whose men were disabled, and whose territory was exhausted.

The emperor, too, wanted leisure to repress the incursions of the Turks, who were invading Naples and Sicily.

The pope desired time to establish his son, Louis Farnese, in the duchies of Parma and Piacenza, failing, as he did, in securing for him the duchy of Milan.

All being, therefore, agreed, a truce of ten years was concluded, Charles V. refusing to agree to any shorter time, although it was he who broke it at the expiration of four years. •

As for the Duke of Savoy, fearing the princes might end by seizing the small territory to which he was now reduced, he was not sorry to see his illustrious visitors depart, although their visit had cost him an immense sum, which he could at that time ill afford.

The pope was the only one who gained any thing by this congress, for he there negotiated two marriages for his family, which contributed much to its aggrandizement, by the

marriage of his second son, Octavius Farnese, with Margaret of Austria, whose first husband, Giulio de Medicis, had been assassinated at Florence; and the marriage of his niece, Vittoria, with Antoine, the eldest son of the Duc de Vendôme.

The emperor being freed from the war with Francis I., repaired to Genoa and prepared his armaments against the Turks. These hostile preparations lasted two years; and just as the fleet was about to sail, the Duke of Savoy resolved to proceed to Genoa, and to present to the emperor his son, Emmanuel-Philibert, then in his thirteenth year. Scianca-Ferro and Leone were, of course, to bear them company, for the prince never went without them.

Emmanuel-Philibert, as soon as he knew he was to be presented to his illustrious uncle, set to work to compose a speech, in which he should prefer a request to the emperor, on which he had set his heart. He could not consult his tutors, the Bishop of Lausanne, the Grand Equerry of Savoy, and the Baron de Lullens, for he knew they would be opposed to his wishes; he therefore had recourse to his faithful allies, Scianca-Ferro and Leone, but Scianca-Ferro was not particularly skilled in rhetoric, and Leone declared that he would not assist in sending Emmanuel on so perilous an expedition—for the request that the prince intended to prefer to his uncle, was nothing less than to be allowed to accompany him in his expedition against the Turks.

Left to his own resources, Emmanuel-Philibert, occasionally consulting Livy, Quintus-Curtius, and Plutarch, who stood his friends, succeeded in producing a speech which appeared to him calculated to produce a favorable answer.

Charles V. was lodged in the palace of his friend, Andrea Doria. The terraces of this palace commanded a full view of the sea, and of the fleet about to sail. It was on these

terraces that Andrea Doria, with ostentatious magnificence, gave a banquet to the Venetian ambassadors; throwing afterwards into the sea, all the gold and silver plate which had been displayed on the table.

The Duke of Savoy repaired, with his suite, to the palace, and was immediately admitted into the presence of the emperor. Charles V. embraced his brother-in-law, and afterwards his nephew, with great cordiality. When the first salutations were over, Emmanuel-Philibert, falling on one knee before the emperor, his equerry and his page standing on either side of him, pronounced, with the utmost gravity, his famous speech :

“Devoted to your cause, which is that of God and our holy religion, I come, Cæsar, to implore you to receive me amongst the princes and warriors who are flocking to your camp. Proud and happy shall I be, oh Cæsar! to learn the art of war under so noble and illustrious a captain as yourself.”

The emperor could not refrain from smiling at the little warrior at his feet; but seeing how earnest he was, he replied with great gravity :

“I thank you, prince, for this proof of your attachment, but you are as yet too young to follow me to the field. But if, a few years hence, you still retain the same desire and the same warlike ardor, you may rest assured I will find employment for you.”

With these words he raised the young prince from the ground, and embracing him, took from his own neck the order of the Golden Fleece, and put it on that of his nephew.

“By Heaven!” exclaimed Scianca-Ferro, with enthusiasm, “that is better, prince, than your cardinal’s hat.”

“Eh! eh! you have a bold companion, as warlike as

yourself, methinks! We must give him a chain at least, if not an order."

Charles V., taking a heavy gold chain from the neck of one of his courtiers, threw it over Scianca-Ferro, who knelt to receive it.

"And you, my pretty page," continued the emperor, turning to Leone; "you must not be forgotten;" and taking a diamond ring from his finger, he presented it to Leone.

Leone, to the surprise of all, remained immovable. The emperor repeated his summons, and held the ring towards him; but Leone remained haughtily and coldly where he was. Emmanuel, in great astonishment, took his hand and tried to bring him forward; but Leone, uttering a stifled scream, rushed from the room.

"A disinterested page, by my troth, have you there, my fair nephew! you must tell me where you find them. There are few who would refuse a diamond like this; why, it is worth a thousand crowns. A brilliant example, my lords," added the emperor, turning to his courtiers: "a very good example, and one much needed at court."

CHAPTER IX.

LEONE—LEONA.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the entreaties of the duke, and of Emmanuel-Philibert, Leone refused to explain why he had refused the emperor's gift, and why, like a frightened bird, he had so abruptly fled from his presence. Vain were all questions; he replied to none; and as he had refused to explain to the Duchess Beatrice any thing about his mother and his former condition, so he now declined to initiate any one into the motives which actuated him.

What the emperor could possibly have had to do with Leone or his antecedents, it was impossible to surmise; but, however mysterious Leone's conduct appeared, Emmanuel was persuaded that Leone, if he chose, could justify it—for he knew him incapable of caprice or prejudice.

The truce had now lasted two years. Two years was a long time for Francis I. to keep his word, and the Duke of Savoy was fully persuaded that when the emperor should no longer be there to protect him, Francis would make some hostile demonstration. Nor was he mistaken—for scarcely had the fleet set sail, before a messenger was sent to the duke from the king, offering to give him Piedmont, provi

ded the duke would allow the duchy of Savoy to be annexed to the kingdom of France.

The duke, indignant at such a proposition, dismissed the messenger, forbidding him ever to appear again before him.

Francis I. had had time in two years to recover from the effects of his prolonged wars, and he now went boldly to work, for he had two new allies, Luther and Soliman.

Strange allies for the eldest son of the church, for the most Christian king, were the Huguenots of Germany and the Mahometans of Africa! and stranger still is it that the *Roi chevalier*, he who had received the sword of his knighthood from Bayard, he who had said after the battle of Pavia those memorable words, "*all is lost save honor*," should have at Madrid signed a treaty which he had not the intention to keep!

From that hour this prince, whom historians should efface from the pages of history, as Christ expelled the money-changers from the temple, would seem to have abandoned all principle and truth. He, the son of St. Louis, goes hand in hand with the sons of Mahomet and the apostates from his faith; and God in his anger sends him defeat, and in his justice sends him the plague.

But Charles V., the just, the wary, the prudent sovereign, who never flies to arms but at the last extremity—Charles the just, who feels that he has God on his side—does not fear this hero whom his flatterers compare to Ajax-Telamon, and to Judas Maccabeus—this warrior, who at the battle of Marignan, clad in armor which he alone could wear, with a sword that he alone could wield, clove a man in twain from the head to the waist. Charles V., a man of ordinary strength, does not fear to challenge this giant to single combat. Yes, to terminate the differences which were shedding so much innocent blood on both sides, Charles

V. challenges Francis I. to single combat, at the place and with the arms he chooses; and the giant, he whom historians call the *Roi chevalier*, refuses the challenge—shrinks from the contest!

But the poet and the man of true nobility of soul, who thinks and feels aright, scorns to give this title to so infamous a king, so recreant a knight—one who was false to his enemies, false to his friends, false to his God.

No sooner had Francis received the reply of the duke, than he prepared to make a descent on Nice. The duke, leaving a brave Savoyard officer, on whom he could depend, in Nice, retreated to Vercelli, where he began to assemble whatever forces still remained to him.

Emmanuel-Philibert had implored his father to let him remain in Nice, in order to try his maiden sword against Francis and Soliman; but, sole heir of his house, the duke looked on him as too precious to be left in so dangerous a post. The same motives, however, did not restrain the duke with regard to Scianca-Ferro—so, obtaining leave, the squire most joyfully took his position amongst the troops preparing for battle.

Scarcely had the duke, Emmanuel, and Leone left Nice, when a fleet of two hundred sail, bearing the French and Turkish flags, appeared in sight and landed at the port of Villa Franca ten thousand Turks, commanded by Khair-Eddin, and twelve thousand French, commanded by the Duc d'Enghien.

The siege of Nice was one of the most terrible in the annals of war. Prodigies of valor were performed by the assailed and by the assailants. The French battered down the walls in ten different places; then, entering the town, they were met by the people, who defended every inch of

the ground, until at last fire and sword left nothing but ruin around.

Odinot de Montfort retired to the fortress, and there shut himself up with his remaining forces.

No sooner was he barricaded here than a herald summoned him to surrender.

“ Friend,” said De Montfort, shaking his head, “ I belong to a race which never surrenders. My name is Montfort, and the motto of my family is, ‘ We must retain.’ Tell this to those who sent you. Go ! ”

De Montfort proved worthy of his name and of his motto; for he did retain the fortress until the duke, coming to his aid with four thousand Piedmontese on the one side, and Don Alfonso Avallos with ten thousand Spaniards on the other, the enemy was obliged to raise the siege.

Great were the rejoicings when the good Duke Charles re-entered his capital, all in ruins as it was; and great was Seianca-Ferro’s delight to recite his exploits, and the histories of the various skirmishes in which he had taken an active part, Emmanuel envying him, and Leone shrinking with affright at the mere relation of the dangers he had passed.

Through the intervention of Charles V. and his forces, who made an incursion into Provence, peace was at length signed on the 14th of October, 1545.

By this treaty it was agreed that Philippe of Orleans, second son of Francis I., should espouse the daughter of the emperor—bringing as her dower the much-coveted duchy of Milan, and the Low Countries. Francis I. obligated himself to give back all the territories of the Duke of Savoy, retaining only as strongholds the fortresses of Mont Neillan and Pignerolles, and to give up all claim to the kingdom of Naples.

By this time Emmmanuel-Philibert had reached the age of seventeen; Scianca-Ferro was six months older, and Leone not quite fourteen. As he increased in years, Leone appeared to lose his cheerfulness. Though never morose, his brow was ever clouded, and his manner pensive and reserved; never mixing in the tilts which his companions were ever enacting—Emmanuel to acquire strength and vigor by continual exercise, and to banish all traces of the Cardinalino—Scianca-Ferro, because fighting was his only pleasure. Sometimes Leone would watch these games from afar; but oftener, taking some poem or romance, he would retire into some solitary corner of the garden, and there remain alone for hours.

He had learned to ride, and excelled in that accomplishment; but lately he refused to join his companions in their daily rides, nor could the anticipation of Emmanuel's restoration to his inheritance rouse him from his sorrow, though he loved Emmanuel with unbounded affection.

The duke one day received a proposal of alliance for Emmanuel-Philibert with the daughter of King Ferdinand of Naples. No sooner was the project made known to Leone than, bursting into tears, he rushed from the room.

Emmanuel, deeply affected, hastened after him. He loved both his young companions dearly. For Scianca-Ferro he would have given his life; but to spare one tear which quivered on the long eyelashes of Leone, he would have sacrificed his heart's blood. Long had Emmanuel watched the increasing melancholy of Leone, and often had he tried to penetrate its cause; but Leone, making an effort to smile and look cheerful, would reply:

"I am happy, prince, too happy; and I am afraid such happiness will not last."

Afraid to inquire further, Emmanuel would take the

page's hands in his, and looking sadly at him, try to read his ever-varying features. But then, Leone would turn away his eyes, look confused, and, withdrawing his hands from Emmanuel, walk quickly away. Then, when he could no longer see him, Emmanuel would join Scianca-Ferro, who never perceived his abstraction, and who, though he loved Emmanuel with a true and devoted friendship, never thought of either taking his hand or gazing into his face.

On this occasion, Emmanuel in vain sought for the page; he was nowhere to be seen. Emmanuel was returning disconsolately to the palace, when a servant told him that he had seen Leone enter the chapel. Thither he hastily repaired, and in an obscure corner of one of the aisles he saw Leone, kneeling, apparently lost in prayer and meditation. He had not heard Emmanuel approach; and it was not until the prince, touching him on the shoulder, pronounced his name, that he looked up in affright.

"What are you doing here, Leone?" said the prince.

"I am asking God to give me the strength to execute a project I am meditating."

"And may I not know that project, Leone?"

"You shall be the very first to know it, monseigneur."

"You must promise me that," said Emmanuel, taking his hand.

"I do," replied Leone, withdrawing his hand and assuming his meditative attitude.

"Come away," said Emmanuel.

"Presently," replied the page: "go, leave me alone a little longer with God."

There was something so solemn and so melancholy in the voice of Leone, that Emmanuel complied without speaking.

He left the church and awaited outside till Leone should come.

Leone started at seeing him there, but walked on by his side.

“When shall I know this great secret?” said Emmanuel.

“To-morrow, if I am strong enough to tell it you. I will tell it to you here, in the church, at this same hour to-morrow; until then, monseigneur, I shall remain alone in meditation in my own room. Allow me now to retire.” With these words Leone seized the prince’s hand and carried it to his lips. Emmanuel, drawing it hastily away, held out his arms to embrace him; but Leone evaded him, and hurrying away rushed into his room, where Emmanuel heard him bolt the door. The grating sound of the iron thrilled through the prince’s veins. He remained lost in thought for some moments, gazing on the door.

“Great heavens! what is it I feel? is it a presentiment of evil, or—”

“What are you doing there, before Leone’s door?” exclaimed Scianca-Ferro’s voice behind him.

“Nothing,” said Emmanuel, with a sigh; and taking his friend’s arm, he proceeded to the garden; then, seating themselves side by side on a bench, Emmanuel related to Scianca-Ferro Leone’s strange behavior.

Scianca reflected for a few moments, and then exclaimed—

“I know what is the matter with Leone—he is in love.”

“Impossible,” said Emmanuel.

“Why impossible? Am I not in love?”

“You, Scianca-Ferro? and with whom?”

“With Gervaise, the daughter of the guardian of the castle door. She was so frightened, poor little thing, during the siege, that if I had not taken care of her, I think

she would have died. Directly it was dark she used to come to me."

"Nonsense," replied Emmanuel, "nonsense!"

"Nonsense as much as you please, prudish Signor Cardilano; but let me tell you that I think Gervaise is a great deal more beautiful than any of the court ladies. I mean to declare myself her knight; to wear her colors, and to maintain her beauty against all other knights who may dispute it."

"They'll fare very badly, I think, with you, my dear Scianca-Ferro!"

"I promise you they would—for I should fight as hard for her as if she were the daughter of a king."

Emmanuel smiled, and rising, returned to the palace. He soon perceived that there was no consolation to be had from Scianca-Ferro, so he shut himself up and spent the time until the next morning in wondering what Leone's secret might be.

When the hour appointed by Leone arrived, he proceeded, with fear and trembling, to the chapel. It seemed to him that the treaty, which was either to restore or for ever to deprive him of his inheritance, had been of very little importance, compared to what Leone was about to reveal to him.

He found the page in the same place as the day before, and, as the day before, absorbed in prayer. The page greeted him with a faint smile.

"Well, Leone," said Emmanuel.

"Well, monseigneur, I have a favor to beg of you."

"Speak, Leone; what is it?"

"Your highness sees how little fitted I am for war; how little I excel in the accomplishments of the young cavaliers of my age; how little taste I have for violent exer-

cises, such as Scianca-Ferro loves. I am therefore useless to your highness, and I entreat permission to leave you."

"To leave me!" exclaimed the prince, whose life was so intermingled with that of his two friends, that the possibility of a separation had never crossed his mind. "Leave me! impossible!"

"There is no help for it—I must."

Emmanuel looked up to heaven, and then down on Leone, but in neither did he find comfort—he could but repeat in a faint voice,

"Leave me! I, who have treated you, have loved you, like a brother!"

"I know it, monseigneur; I know how much I owe you; and it is for this that I wish to leave you and retire into some monastery, where I may pray for you."

"Retire into a monastery!"

"Yes—is not that a fitter place for a poor orphan like me, than a brilliant court, such as yours will shortly be?"

"Oh, my sainted mother! you, who loved this boy so much—what would you say now, when you see he wishes to desert me?"

"I take God to witness," said Leone, fervently, "that if she could hear us now, your sainted mother would approve of my resolution."

There was so much solemnity in the page's manner, that Emmanuel ventured no further opposition.

"Leone, my friend, do as you think fit. I sought to enchain your affections, never your liberty. You are free; only do not be too precipitate. Take time to consider."

"I cannot delay," replied Leone.

"What, not even for a few days?"

"No, not even for a few days; for if I do not go now, when God has given me the courage to speak to you, who

knows whether I shall ever have courage to go?—and I must leave you,” added Leone, bursting into tears.

“But why *must* you leave me?” inquired Emmanuel.

But to this question Leone opposed that impenetrable silence, with which he always evaded replying to what he did not choose.

Emmanuel was about to repeat his question, when a servant approached and requested the prince instantly to repair to the duke, who had inquired for him.

“I will see you again to-night, Leone,” said Emmanuel, as he left the church: “remember, I must see you again.”

Leone replied by sobs alone, and in the deepest grief sought his chamber. Here the thought that he must once again see Emmanuel, and once again resist his solicitations and entreaties, overcame the page. He sat pale and trembling, listening to every sound, until at last Emmanuel’s step sounded along the corridor, and in a few moments he appeared.

“Well, Leone,” said he, “have you decided?”

“I had decided when your highness left me,” replied he.

“Then you persist in leaving me?”

“I do, my lord.”

“Leave me, when I am about to lose rank, riches, power—”

Leone looked at the prince with astonishment.

“Yes, all. The Duke of Orleans is dead, and the treaty of Crespy is thus annulled; for, as the emperor can no longer give his daughter or the duchy of Milan to Francis, Francis refuses to restore my father’s possessions.”

“But,” said Leone, “the marriage proposed for you with the emperor’s niece still exists.”

“Ah, Leone! it was to the Duke of Savoy, to the sov-

ereign of Piedmont, that the emperor desired to marry his niece; and not to Emmanuel-Philibert, disinherited of all but the town of Nice, the Valley of Aoste, and some miserable villages in the mountains of Savoy."

"Ah!" said Leone, with an accent of joy; "ah, the marriage is then broken! No matter—I ought to go."

"You still persist in leaving me, then, Leone?"

"What was right yesterday is right to-day, Emmanuel."

"Yesterday I was a crowned monarch, rich in followers and friends: to-day I am dethroned, deprived of all, with no other fortune than my sword. Yesterday it was cruel in you to leave your friend, Leone; to-day it is ungrateful."

"Ungrateful!" exclaimed Leone. "Oh God! I cannot bear that he should think me ungrateful!" Then rushing towards the prince, who was leaving the chamber in silent grief, he extended his arms towards him, and saying, "Oh, Emmanuel! Emmanuel!" fell fainting at his feet.

Emmanuel raised him in his arms. The page was deadly pale; his eyes were closed, and he seemed to breathe with difficulty.

Emmanuel, alarmed, tore open the buttons of his tunic; and then, in an instant, the prince comprehended his own feelings and those of Leone—so mysterious and wayward. Leone was a woman!

Emmanuel held him in his arms, no longer Leone, his faithful page, but Leona, the mistress of his heart and his affections. With one long kiss he restored her to life; and then, nestling in his bosom, she told him how she loved him, and vowed to devote her life to him for ever.

No more was said about parting, for she knew Emmanuel loved her. Only to the world, even to Scianca-Ferro, they agreed she should continue to be Leone the page; but to her lover, she was Leona, a loving and lovely girl.

So as a prince Emmanuel-Philibert had that day lost Brescia, Piedmont, and the greater part of Savoy ; but he had gained what compensated for the loss of all. Though a dethroned prince, yet he was richer than all others ; for having Scianca-Ferro and Leona, he possessed what no other prince could buy, and what God rarely grants to one man—the two greatest blessings on earth—true friendship, and devoted love.

CHAPTER X.

THE THREE COURIERS.

SOON after Emmanuel had announced to Leona that he had been deprived of all his possessions, an opportunity occurred for him to carve for himself a new fortune, with all that remained to him—his sword. The Protestants, headed by the Elector of Saxony, revolted against the emperor. Emmanuel flew to offer his services to his uncle; and this time they were not rejected.

The Protestant princes assembled in Smalkalde, a small town belonging to the Landgrave of Hesse; and hence this conspiracy was called the league of Smalkalde, by which title it is known in history. The princes' pretext for revolt was, that Ferdinand was not entitled to be king of Rome, while the emperor, who bore that title, still lived.

Henry VIII. had refused to join this revolt; but Francis I. was, as usual, ever ready to mingle in any affray. Soliman, too, had helped it by laying siege to Vienna, in 1532. The emperor, however, soon obliged him to raise the siege; the plague decimated almost entirely the army of Francis in Italy; so that a temporary peace was proclaimed at Nuremberg. But Francis, as we know, scrupled not to break his word; and the revolt of Smalkalde broke out.

Charles, who was always more particularly interested in his German subjects than in any other, resolved to lead the army against these rebels, in person.

On the 27th of May, 1545, Emmanuel-Philibert, accompanied by Leona and Scianca-Ferro, and followed by forty gentlemen, joined the emperor at Worms. These forty followers were all that the deposed Duke of Savoy could find, in his now restricted territory; although he continued to bear many titles—and amongst others, that of King of Cyprus.

Charles V. received his nephew with great honors, and authorized him to take the title of Majesty, from this kingdom of Cyprus.

Emmanuel-Philibert repaid his uncle's kindness with prodigies of valor, at the battles of Ingolstadt and Mühlberg, and ten of his followers remained on the field.

Scianca-Ferro, had he not already obtained this name, would have acquired it in this action. Singling out the elector himself, he devoted himself to him, and so disfigured him, that after he was taken prisoner, he was obliged to declare his name, before the emperor could recognize him.

These victories, and the death of Francis I., who, on his death-bed, recommended his successor to break with the heretics and Mahometans, and to rally to the support of Charles V., produced another temporary peace. Taking advantage of it, Emmanuel-Philibert repaired to Vescelli, on a visit to his father, and the old duke, feeling a presentiment that he was embracing his son for the last time, gave him his blessing.

Henry II. did not long remember the advice of his father. At the first opportunity which offered, he recommenced hostilities. A pretext was easy to find in those days of bloodshed, and the assassination of Louis Farnese at Piacenza, in 1548, by Palavicini, Landi, Auguiseiola and Gonfalouieri

was an admirable one. The assassins had, immediately after his death, opened the gates of the city to Ferdinand Gonzaga, who governed Milan in the name of Charles V. At the same time, Octavius Farnese, taking advantage of his brother's death, seized upon Parma, invoking the protection of Henry II. of France, in order to maintain himself in it. Charles V. had, however, never ceased to lay claim to both, as belonging to the duchy of Milan.

And so war was once again declared, and broke out both in Italy and in the Low Countries.

As usual, Charles V. concentrated his attention on the Low Countries, where, at the beginning of this work, we now find Emmanuel-Philibert. We have told our readers how, after the siege of Metz and the destruction of Hesdin, the emperor had allowed his nephew to rebuild the latter town, and had, at the same time, appointed him generalissimo of the army.

It was in the midst of these honors that, on the 17th of September, 1553, Emmanuel lost his father, the Duke of Savoy. It was with his brow still overclouded by grief at this loss, that we find him when first introduced to our readers.

On his return to the camp, after his encounter with Waldeck, he found awaiting him a messenger from the Emperor. Emmanuel immediately dismounted, nodded to his equerry and his page, unbuckled his sword from his side, carrying it, as he always did when on foot, under his arm, and then followed the messenger to the tent of the modern Cæsar. The sentinels presented arms as he passed, and the chamberlain announced his arrival to the emperor. The imperial tent was divided into four parts, besides a kind of portico which served as a waiting room. These four compartments were used : one as an eating-room, another as a receiving-room, a

third as a bed-chamber, while the fourth was the private closet of the emperor.

Each of these divisions had been furnished by some conquered town, and each contained some trophy of victory. The trophy in the bed-chamber was, in the eyes of the emperor, worth all the rest, for it was the sword of Francis I., which that monarch had surrendered to Charles V. after the battle of Pavia.

Charles V. so valued this sword that he took it with him to the monastery of St. Just; and often has the writer of these lines drawn that sword from its scabbard, and thought of the three great heroes who had once possessed it—Francis I. who resigned it, Charles V. who took it, and Napoleon, who brought it once again into France. This sword, after having been almost the only dower of a de-throned princess, is now in the possession of a grandson of Catharine II. of Russia. Oh, Francis, Charles, and Napoleon! Oh, vanity of all earthly glory!

As Emmanuel-Philibert crossed the anteroom, with the quick eye of a chief he noticed that there was a man there with his hands tied behind him. He saw that the man was dressed as a peasant, but there was something about his air and manner which denoted a person of superior grade; and Emmanuel concluded that he was a French spy taken by the troops, and that probably it was for this that the emperor had sent for him.

Emmanuel entered his uncle's closet.

Charles V., born in the first year of the sixteenth century, was now fifty-five years of age. He was of small stature, but vigorous and robust. His eyes, bright and intelligent, sparkled beneath his bushy eyebrows; his hair was turning gray; but his short thick beard still retained the ardent auburn, not to say red, tinge, which both hair and

beard had borne in his youth. He was reclining on a divan covered with Arab stuffs, taken from Soliman at the siege of Vienna, and was enveloped in a long black velvet robe, richly lined with sable. Trophies taken from the Turks hung around and formed the drapery of the room.

Until the arrival of his nephew, the physiognomy of the emperor had betrayed irritation and impatience; but no sooner was Emmanuel announced, than Charles, accustomed to control and to conceal his feelings, assumed a bland smile, with which he welcomed his nephew. He turned round to him as he entered, and immediately began to converse with him in Italian. He, who had so often regretted never having been able to learn Greek or Latin, was well skilled in modern languages, for he spoke five, all equally well—Italian, Spanish, English, Flemish, and French.

He has himself given us his reasons for acquiring these five languages. "I learned Italian," said he, "to speak with the pope; Spanish, to speak to my mother; English, to my aunt, Catharine (of Arragon); Flemish, to converse with my friends, and French to please myself."

"What news from the camp, general?"

"Sire," replied Emmanuel, speaking also in Italian, which was his native language, "the news I bring of the camp would probably soon reach your ears, therefore I prefer myself telling your majesty. Sire, in order to enforce the authority with which you have deigned to invest me, I have been just now forced to make an example in a high quarter."

"Indeed!" said the emperor, in a tone indicating little curiosity.

Emmanuel-Philibert then proceeded to give a detailed narration of his encounter with Count Waldeck; but the emperor was so absorbed in his own thoughts, that it is

probable he had heard nothing, for he continued gazing at his hand, swollen and twisted with the gout, and endeavoring to move the fingers. Gout was, after all, the bitterest enemy of the emperor, and one which resisted him—one which he could not conquer, as he had done Soliman, Francis I. or Henry II.

Luther and the gout were his two night-mares—they haunted him always. “Ah!” he would exclaim, “ah! if it were not for Luther and the gout, how well I should sleep to-night!” For even after hard fighting and fatigue, these two plagues would keep him awake, full of suffering and anxiety.

“I too have news for you,” said he at length, when Emmanuel had done speaking, “and what is more, bad news.”

“Bad news, your majesty! from where?”

“From Rome.”

“Is the pope elected?”

“He is.”

“And his name is—”

“Pietro Caraffa. The pope to whom he succeeds was just my age, born in the same year—Marcellus II. Poor Marcellus! His death is a warning to me to prepare for mine.”

“Your majesty, I think,” replied Emmanuel, “should not look on this death as in the course of nature. Marcellus Cervino, the cardinal, full of life and health, had every chance of living to a good old age—had he remained a cardinal; but Marcellus Cervino was elected pope, and in twenty days was dead.”

“I understand,” replied Charles; “he was in too great a hurry to be pope. He placed the tiara on his head on a Good Friday, the very day our Saviour was crowned with thorns—that brought him ill-luck. I do not think so much

of the death of the old pope, as I do of the election of the new pope, Paul IV.

“ Paul IV. is, if I mistake not, a Neapolitan, and consequently a subject of your majesty.”

“ I know he is : but I have no very good opinion of him. I myself knew him at the court of Spain, and had reason to complain of him. Poor Marcellus ! I thought when he was elected I had done with that perpetual bickering with the court of Rome ; and now, that I am exhausted and ill, I must begin it all once more.”

“ Oh, sire ! ”

“ Perhaps, however, he may change, now that he is elected ; for the cardinals always do. I had imagined that I knew Cardinal Medicis, Clement VII. I took him to be of firm character, inclined to order and peace ; and behold, he turns out to be quite the contrary. Julius the third, too, I fancied to be careless, sensual, and fond of pleasure. *Peccato !* he proves to be an ambitious, intriguing fellow. What trouble he and Cardinal de la Pole gave us about Philip’s marriage with Mary of England ! By the mass, I think, if I had not stoppèd the meddling cardinal at Augsbourg, that marriage would never have been consummated ! Ah, poor Marcellus ! I am afraid it was not your being crowned on Good Friday that brought you ill luck, but your being my friend, that shortened your life.”

“ Let us wait and see what Paul IV. does. Your majesty confesses to having been mistaken in Pope Clement VII., and in Julius III.—your majesty may have misjudged Paul IV.”

“ I hope to heaven I have ! But there is some one at the door : see who it is, Emmanuel. I had given orders that we should not be disturbed.”

Emmanuel raised the drapery which served as a door-

way, and after speaking with the groom in waiting, he said,

“It is a courier from Spain.”

“Oh, let him enter instantly. He brings me news of my kind mother.”

The messenger entered.

“You bring news of my mother, do you not?” said the emperor, addressing the messenger in Spanish.

The messenger extended the letter to Emmanuel-Philibert, without replying.

“It is from my mother, is it not? Emmanuel, give me the letter.”

Emmanuel hesitated; for the letter was sealed with black. Charles noticed the black seal, as he took it, and shuddered.

“Ah!” said he, “does the election of the pope already bring misfortune?”

“August emperor,” said the prince, “remember that you are a man.”

“Ay—that is what was said to the Roman conquerors,” replied the emperor, breaking the seal with a trembling hand.

The letter contained but a few lines—yet the emperor took some minutes to read them. Tears obscured his sight. Tears! Those eyes that for forty years had glistened with ambition, hate, and anger, had still tears for his early affections.

Extending the letter to Emmanuel, the emperor fell back on the divan, exclaiming,

“Dead! My mother dead—and on the very day that Paul IV. was elected—the 13th of April, 1555. Ah, I knew his election boded me no good!”

Emmanuel took the letter. It contained merely a few lines from one of the royal notaries at Tordesillas, announcing

the death of Jane of Castile, the mother of Charles V.— better known in history as *Jeanne la Folle*, or the mad queen.

Emmanuel-Philibert gazed silently at the emperor; before so great, so overwhelming a sorrow, what could he say? Charles V. adored his mother, and Emmanuel knew it.

“Most august emperor,” said he, at length, “remember all you were good enough to say to me two years ago, when I had the misfortune to lose my father.”

“I found words of consolation, I know, but still they were but words. There is no consoling so deep a grief, Emmanuel.”

“Alas, I know too well how irreparable is the loss of a parent, Cæsar. I cannot console, but I can weep with you. Remember, we are all but mortals.”

“What a life was hers, Emmanuel! My poor, poor mother; married in 1496 to my father, Philippe, the handsomest and most accomplished prince of his day, whom she adored. He is poisoned ten years after, and she goes mad from grief. Fifty years did she survive him; and for fifty years had she been patiently awaiting his resurrection, which, to calm her grief, a friar had prophesied. For fifty years she remained shut up in Tordesillas, never leaving but once, to meet me at Villa-Vicosa, in 1517, when she, with her own hands, crowned me King of Spain. Her love for her husband had deprived her of her senses, but she recovered them at intervals, to attend to the welfare of his son. My poor mother! Every action of my reign will attest my love and reverence for you. There never was an important measure decided on, without her advice being respectfully asked. Often she was not in a state to reply to us; but still I fulfilled my duty in asking her. How good a mother, too, she was! Did she not, all haughty Spanish woman as she was, go to Flanders

in order that I might be born there, and thus lay claim to the crown of the Emperor Maximilian? and that I might belong to the country, taking me from her own bosom, she gave me to a Flemish nurse, that the Flemish people might indeed think I had Flemish blood in my veins. And my two greatest claims in the eyes of the people to the imperial crown were, that I was a citizen of Ghent, and that Anne Sterel had been my nurse. My mother, my noble mother, had foreseen this before my birth. And now, for all that she has done for me, what can I do for her? Nothing; nothing, but consign her with funereal honors to the earth. Oh, Emmanuel! How vain are the pomps and glories of this world! Oh, Emmanuel! To be Emperor of Germany, King of Spain, King of Naples, of Sicily, and the Indies—to have an empire on which, as my flatterers say, the sun never sets—and yet to be able to do nothing to testify my love, my grief, my reverence, for the best, the noblest of mothers, but to give her a pompous mausoleum! Vanity, vanity of this world! What is the most powerful, compared with God!”

The emperor, overpowered with grief, buried his face in his hands. At this moment the arras was lifted before the door, and a courier, covered with dust, appeared at the entrance. Seeing the emperor thus absorbed, the courier and the groom in waiting stopped suddenly; but Charles, looking up and seeing the officer, motioned them to advance.

“Speak,” said the emperor, in Flemish; “I see you bring important news.”

“August emperor,” said the messenger, “the King of France, Henry II., has just opened the campaign with three *corps d’armée*—one commanded by the Connétable of Montmorency, the other by the Marechal St. André, and the third by the Duc de Nevers.”

“Well?” asked the emperor.

“The King of France has laid siege to Marienbourg, which he has taken; and now he is marching towards Bouvines.”

“What day was Marienbourg taken?” inquired the emperor.

“On the 13th of April, sire.” Charles turned round to Emmanuel.

“What think you of the day?” said he, speaking in French.

“It does indeed seem a fatal date.”

“Thank you, sir,” said Charles to the courier, “for the speed with which I see you have travelled. See,” continued he, turning to the groom in waiting, “that the captain is cared for, as though he had brought good news.”

The messenger and the groom retired. Emmanuel then eagerly addressed the emperor.

“Sire,” said he, “although we can do nothing against the election of Paul IV., although the death of your august mother is beyond our power, the taking of Marienbourg, thank heaven! has its remedy.”

“What is there to be done?”

“To retake it immediately, to be sure.”

“It is very well for you to talk, Emmanuel; but for me—look here!” with these words Charles V. slid from the divan, and with great effort and apparent pain, stood on his feet, and strove to walk across the room.

“Look here, Emmanuel! My limbs will no longer support me, either on foot or on horseback. My hands, too, can no longer hold a sword. It is a warning from on high. He who can no longer hold the sword, is no longer fit to wield the sceptre.”

“What means your majesty?”

“I mean, Emmanuel, that every thing tells me it is time

for me to give place to another. That affair of Innsbruck, whence I was forced to fly; the retreat of Metz, where I left two thirds of my army, and one half of my reputation; and above all, this terrible disease, which invades the whole frame, from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet, penetrating to the marrow of the bones, converting the healthful juices of the body into solid chalk, making more ravages than sword, or fire, or all the implements of war; this ever present fiend annihilates all powers of the mind, all energy of the soul. This inexorable tyrant cries loudly to me, every day, 'Thou hast reigned long enough, Charles, by the grace of God Emperor of the Romans; Charles, Emperor of Germany; King of Castile, of Leon, of Grenada, of Arragon, of Naples, of Sicily, of Majorca, of Sardinia; lord of the Ocean isles of the Indies, which the broad Atlantic bathes; Charles, thou must reign no more!'"

Emmanuel was about to speak; but the emperor silenced him by a gesture.

"Listen to me a little longer, Emmanuel. As if disease, revolt, and heresy, were not enough, to-day they have tried to murder me."

"To-day!" exclaimed Emmanuel.

"To-day, an attempt has been made to assassinate me."

"Can it be possible?"

"Why not, Emmanuel? Did you not tell me that I was but mortal?"

"And who is the wretch?" said Emmanuel, scarcely yet recovered from the shock created by this intelligence.

"Ah! that I cannot tell. I have the dagger but not the culprit."

"I saw a man bound in the anteroom."

"Ay, a miserable instrument—but of whom? Is he from the Turks? No. Soliman is a loyal enemy. Henry

II. ? I cannot even suspect him. Paul IV. ? He has had scarcely time to plan this since his election ; and then, popes prefer discreet poisons to tell-tale daggers ; *ecclesia abhorret a sanguine !* Is it Octavius Farnese ? He would scarcely dare attack me, whom Prince Maurice dared not attack—an imperial bird there was no cage large enough to contain. Perhaps the Lutherans of Augsburg, or the Calvinists of Geneva ? Emmanuel, the man has refused to reply to all the interrogatories I have put to him ; do you take him to your tent, and see what you can get out of him. I must know who is my enemy.”

“ Charles V. paused ; then fixing his eyes on Emmanuel, said in a careless tone—

“ Apropos, your cousin Philippe is in Brussels.”

The transition from one subject to the other was so sudden, that Emmanuel started ; and gazing on the emperor, shuddered.

“ I shall be happy to see my son again,” continued the emperor ; “ yet it seems as though he had divined that the time was come for him to receive his inheritance. However, before I see him, I should like you, Emmanuel, to find out who is my assassin.”

“ In less than an hour your majesty shall know all you wish to know.”

Emmanuel withdrew ; and as he kissed the swollen hand of the emperor, he felt convinced that of all the important subjects on which they had spoken, the last was the one which weighed most on the emperor’s mind.

CHAPTER XI.

ODOARDO MARAVIGLIA.

EMMANUEL-PHILIBERT, as he passed through the anteroom, looked closely at the prisoner, and was confirmed in his first impression, that he was far above what he wished to appear.

Addressing himself to the soldiers who guarded him, Emmanuel said, "Take this man to my tent—such are the orders of the emperor."

The soldiers, who adored Emmanuel, needed not the authority of the emperor to induce them to obey with alacrity.

The prince returned to his tent—not like the emperor's, divided into four compartments, and furnished with luxury, but a mere soldier's tent, divided in two by a canvas curtain. He found Scianca-Ferro seated at the door.

"Stay where you are, my dear friend," said Emmanuel; "only arm yourself with some good weapon."

"What for?" said Scianca-Ferro.

"They are going to bring a man to my tent who has attempted to assassinate the emperor. If he should seek to fly, do you prevent him—only, mind, take him alive."

"For one man, Emmanuel, I want not weapons; my own two arms are sufficient."

“As you please, Scianca-Ferro;” and with a familiar nod, the prince left his friend and entered his tent, where Leone, or rather Leona, was awaiting him.

“Oh, Emmanuel!” exclaimed she, rushing into his arms; “how glad I am to see you, after that horrible scene of this morning! I have scarcely got over it yet: I am a very woman—I am trembling still.”

“And yet, Leona, you ought by this time to be accustomed to a soldier's life. Look how well Scianca-Ferro bears it—he never has any fear for me.”

“Ah, Emmanuel, we do not love you alike. Scianca-Ferro loves you as well as one man can another; but I love you more than I can even tell. I love you as flowers love the dew, as birds love the free air, as all nature loves the bright sun. With you I live, for I love. Without you—without your love, dearest, you know I should die.”

“Yes, my love, I know that grace, love, and devotion, beam in your eyes, live in your voice, in your every action. I know that you exist in me alone; and you know that, life of my life as you are, I have nothing hidden from you.”

“Why do you say this? Have you a secret to tell me?”

“No, love, not a secret, but I hope to hear one; for I am about to interrogate a prisoner, who is accused of a great crime. You can hear his confession if you will, for I know it will be as if I alone listened to it.”

“To whom should I reveal it, my beloved? What is all the world to me?”

With these words, and a tender caress, the young girl disappeared into the interior of the tent; almost at the same moment the prisoner was conducted into the presence of Emmanuel. The prince seated himself in the shade, so that he could examine the prisoner without being scrutinized. He was evidently of superior rank; the distinction and dig-

nity of both his features and his bearing, revealed it, spite of all disguise.

"Leave your prisoner alone with me," said the prince. The sergeant obeyed, and left the tent; then the prisoner, walking straight up to Emmanuel, fixed on him a bright and scrutinizing glance.

"Sir," said Emmanuel-Philibert, "let me untie the cords which bind you. First give me your word as a gentleman that you will not try to escape, and I will free you."

"I am a peasant," replied the prisoner, "and cannot, therefore, give you my parole as a gentleman."

"If you are a peasant, as you say, the parole you give as a gentleman will not be binding—so you need not hesitate to give it."

The prisoner did not reply.

"Then I will loosen your arms without your parole. I am not afraid of being man to man on any terms."

Emmanuel began to loosen the cords.

"Stop!" said the prisoner, "I give you my parole on the honor of a gentleman."

"Ah!" said Emmanuel-Philibert, smiling, "neither horses, dogs, nor men, can conceal their high blood. There," added he, as the last cord fell to the ground, "there—now you are free. Now let us talk."

The prisoner gazed for an instant on his swollen and discolored hands; then, letting them fall by his side, he said:

"Talk, my lord? and on what subject?"

"Why, first of all, of the motives which could have induced you to commit this crime."

"On that subject I have nothing to say."

"You had nothing to say to the emperor, whom you sought to assassinate; this I can well understand. You had

nothing to say to the soldiers who arrested you ; this is also natural. But to me, who treat you as a gentleman, to me you will tell all."

" Why should I ? "

" Why ? In order that you may not be looked upon as a sordid bravo, paid by some cowardly hand too weak to strike the blow itself ; in order that you may not die the death of a serf, or of a villain, but be decapitated, like a nobleman, as you are."

" Nay, I have been threatened with torture ; why is it not applied ? "

" Torture would be useless, for you would endure it in silence. I do not wish to have the shame of trying to extort the truth from a brave man. But I, a gentleman, a prince, the commander of these armies, I implore your confidence—a confession such as you would make to a priest. If you do not fully understand the spirit in which I speak—if you are incapable of appreciating the motives which actuate me, then are you one of those vile assassins with whom I was so unwilling to confound you."

" Spare your insults, my lord. My name is Odoardo Maraviglia ; and that name alone will tell you much."

As the prisoner pronounced these words, a suppressed shriek was heard on the other side of the curtain which divided the tent, and Emmanuel himself, agitated by the mention of a name which had served as the pretext for despoiling him of his inheritance, thought he understood the sympathy which had caused this exclamation.

" Are you the son of the French ambassador at the court of Milan, Francesco Maraviglia ? "

" I am his son."

" Maraviglia is indeed the name of a gentleman of high

birth, but I cannot in any way connect it with your present crime."

Odoardo smiled disdainfully.

"Ask your emperor," said he, "whether his memory will not serve him better than yours."

"You must forgive me; but at the time of Count Francesco Maraviglia's disappearance, I was but a child, and never heard the details of this event, but in the most confused manner."

"I will give them all clearly to you, my lord. Your highness knows what a miserable, vacillating wretch was the last of the Sforzas—turning with every political change of fortune, from one prince to the other; now devoted to Charles V., now the slave of Francis I. In the year 1534, the emperor being in Africa, the Duke of Saxony, being an ally of the French, Clement VII., who had just excommunicated Henry VIII., also in league with France, all seemed to go against the fortunes of the emperor in Italy. Sforza, being still in debt more than a thousand ducats, followed the current; and, abandoning Charles V., threw himself into the hands of Francis I. and his ambassador Maraviglia. The ambassador had achieved a great triumph, and was imprudent enough to boast of it. His boasting reached the ears of Charles V., then besieging Tunis.

"Two months after, fortune changed. Clement VII., who was the reliance of the French in Italy, died; Tunis was taken by the Emperor, who with his victorious army returned to Italy. Enraged with the duke, who trembled before the now prosperous chief, the duke threw all the blame upon the efforts and ingenuity of Maraviglia, and Maraviglia was offered up as an expiation to the vengeance of the emperor. An opportunity soon occurred. My father's attendants, meeting some of the duke's followers in

the streets, engaged in a quarrel with them, in which two of the Milanese were killed. By command of the duke, my father, who until now had been higher in authority than the duke himself, was arrested and dragged to the fortress. My father was with my mother when the ruffians seized them. My young sister, only four years old, was by his side. I was at the Louvre, serving as page to Francis I. My mother knew not where her husband had been taken. Vainly she sought for him, for my father was rich, and my mother knew that gold could open prison doors. She offered, by means of her friends, five hundred ducats to whoever should discover where her husband was confined.

“ One night a stranger knocked at the palace gate, and asked to speak to the countess alone. My mother hastened to receive him, and found that it was one of the jailers of the fortress in which my father was confined, and that he was the bearer of a letter from him to my mother. At the sight of my father’s writing, my mother counted down the five hundred ducats to the messenger. My father in his letter informed my mother that he was kept a close prisoner, but that he was well treated—adding that he was not under any very great apprehension. My mother replied in a few words, assuring my father of her love and her devotion. Five days after, the same man returned to the palace and had another interview with the countess. The jailer this time told a more alarming story; and although he evidently intended to obtain a large sum from the countess, still he appeared to tell nothing but the truth. The prisoner, he said, had been removed to a deep dungeon, and was most strictly guarded. The countess gave him another five hundred ducats, promising the jailer, if he could help the count to effect his escape, a sum of five thousand ducats, and twenty thousand more when the count should be beyond the frontier. The jailer

promised to think of a plan of escape. Meantime the countess made inquiries of the friends she had still at the court of the duke, and found that the count's situation was even more perilous than the jailer had described it. It was the intention of the court to bring the count to trial. To trial! Of what could they accuse the count? Of the death of the two Milanese in a street brawl? But was not the count an ambassador from a powerful court, and was not this an affair entirely beneath his attention? for the quarrel had been between servants and peasants, and had had nothing to do with a man of my father's rank. Some, however, whispered that there would be a condemnation and a sentence, but no trial; and these were the most sinister reports of all. Night after night my mother watched with beating heart for the jailer. At length he came. My mother rushed eagerly to meet him. He came to propose a plan of flight for the count. The dungeon in which the prisoner was confined was separated from the jailer's room by an empty cell. He proposed to bore a hole in the wall, large enough for the count to pass through; and so the jailer, having of course the key of the empty cell, would convey him in the dusk of the evening through an obscure and unfrequented way to the outer walls, where the count could easily get into a carriage, proceed to the frontiers, and soon be beyond the reach of his enemies. The countess approved of the plan, but fearing some deception, she declared her intention of being present at the count's flight. She had obtained permission to see her husband, and it was arranged with the jailer that after ostensibly leaving her husband's cell, she with her infant daughter should enter the jailer's room and there await the decisive moment. The countess agreed to give the jailer half the promised sum, promising that the

count should give the other when the jailer should have conducted him safely to the carriage.

“The jailer, who was sincere in his offers, agreed to all these conditions; then, telling the countess the exact spot where the carriage, under the guard of a faithful servant, should be stationed, he took his five thousand ducats and departed. But forgive me, my lord; these details, so full of interest to me, are probably tiresome to a stranger.”

“On the contrary, they are full of interest to me, and recall many strange events to my memory. Proceed, I beg of you.”

Odoardo obeyed, and proceeded with his narrative.

“Two days were to intervene between the visit of the jailer and the execution of his plan of flight. They were spent by my mother in the agonies of suspense. One only thought reassured my mother's anxiety, and that was the interest the jailer himself had in the success of the scheme—for a whole life of fidelity to his trust would not be paid one tenth what this one hour of treason would bring him. The last twenty-four hours were hours of agony to the countess. It appeared to her as though each minute would bring some catastrophe which would annihilate all her hopes. But, marked by the hand of time, the hour for repairing to the prison struck at last.

“My mother, taking her little daughter by the hand, with faltering step and beating heart, proceeded along the streets of Milan to the fortress. On her way, her heart misgave her that the order, which was now more than a week old, would not be accepted. She trembled as she presented it; but without any hesitation both she and her child were admitted into the presence of my father.

“The jailer had exaggerated nothing: the Count Maraviglia, an ambassador from the court of France, was in an

obscure, damp dungeon, chained hand and foot. How heart-rending would have been that interview without the certainty of what was to follow! The count was determined to run all hazards, for he knew that the emperor had demanded his death."

Emmanuel-Philibert started at this accusation.

"Are you quite sure of what you say, sir count? This is a grave accusation to bring against a magnanimous prince like the Emperor Charles V."

"Does your highness desire to hear more?"

"I desire to hear all, my lord. But why do you not answer my question?"

"Because what I am about to tell will render my reply useless."

"Go on, then," said Emmanuel-Philibert.

CHAPTER XII.

What took place in the dungeon of the fortress of Milan on the night of the 14th of November, 1534.

“ A FEW minutes before nine,” continued Odoardo, “ the jailer came to warn my mother that it was time to depart ; the sentinels were about to be changed, and it was necessary that the sentinels who had seen her enter should see her leave the prison. Although they were so soon to meet again, the separation was a most painful one. My sister, especially, clung to my father, and would not leave him. At length my mother carried her away by force ; and having passed before the sentinels, my mother re-entered the fortress by another door, and reached the jailer’s room in safety. They were there enjoined to keep the most profound silence ; and the three hours which yet intervened between her husband and liberty appeared to the countess as long as the forty-eight hours which she had just passed. At length the jailer opened the door.

“ The countess had not for an instant abandoned her child ; she knew not what the emergencies of the moment might produce. Whether they would have to fly or to remain, she could not leave the little helpless girl alone, so, clasping her in her arms, my poor mother prepared to encounter her fate.

“The jailer drew his bed from the wall, and revealed an opening large enough for all the prisoners to have passed through, one after the other. The countess, the jailer, and my little sister passed into the empty cell; and the jailer’s wife, who was in the secret, then pushed back the bed, in which her infant son was sleeping. The fugitives passed into the count’s cell. He had been for the last hour engaged in filing the chains which bound him; but little skilled in this work, he had not as yet more than half accomplished his task. The jailer seized the file, and kneeling down, began to sever the chain round the ankle of the count. The countess and the child clung to him in agonized suspense. The jailer had nearly completed his task, when suddenly he paused, listened anxiously, and pointed towards the door.

“‘What is it?’ said the count.

“‘Silence,’ said the jailer—‘listen.’

“They obeyed, and all four distinctly heard the measured tread of many footsteps approaching the dungeon.

“‘It is some night patrol, probably,’ said the jailer—‘they will soon be gone. They must not, however, see you; let us hide till they are passed. Come!’ So saying, the jailer seized the countess and the child and dragged them into the outer cell. This cell contained a grating looking into the dungeon of the count. The countess and her child clung to the bars, and looked into the other dungeon. They beheld the door open, and a patrol of soldiers slowly enter.

“‘Not a word, madam,’ said the jailer, seizing the countess by the wrist; ‘not a word or I stab your child. It is a case of life and death, madam, and my life is as valuable as yours to me and to my family. Silence your child, or I strike.’

“The countess put her hand on her child’s mouth, and

strained her to her bosom; then remained like a pale statue of despair, gazing through the bars.

“First there entered two men in black, bearing torches; then came a man with a roll of parchment in his hand. Behind him was another man enveloped in a large cloak, wearing a mask, and then, last of all, a priest.

“The countess held her breath as she watched this horrible procession enter; but the cold drops stood on her forehead, and her heart almost ceased to beat, as she looked through the open door into the corridor beyond. Oh God! my poor mother! what did she behold? A man bearing a coffin on his shoulders, and behind him the shining mus of ten soldiers!

“Scarcely had my mother time to behold this awful vision before the door closed, leaving those who had entered first standing opposite the count. My father, calm and pale, stood erect, gazing on those bars behind which he knew the agonized gaze of my mother was following him. He knew his fate was sealed—the count felt it, and so did my mother. Her agony is not to be described.

“The two men bearing torches now advanced and placed themselves on either side of the count, the man who was masked and the priests remaining near the door. He who held the roll of parchment now advanced towards my father.

“‘Count,’ said he, ‘are you at peace with God?’

“‘I have nothing on my conscience, sir, therefore I am.’

“‘So much the better, count, for you are condemned to suffer death; this is your sentence.’

“‘Pronounced by what tribunal, sir?’

“‘By that of the duke.’

“‘By whom am I accused?’

“ ‘ By the Emperor Charles V.’

“ ‘ I am ready. Read the sentence, sir.’

“ ‘ Kneel then, sir count—it is on his knees that a criminal should hear his sentence.’

“ ‘ When he is a criminal it may be, but when he is innocent, he stands erect.’

“ ‘ Count,’ said he, ‘ you will oblige me to employ force.’

“ ‘ As you please, sir.’

“ ‘ Let him remain standing if he pleases,’ said the man in the mask ; ‘ but let him make the sign of the cross.’

“ My father turned towards him, with a bitter smile.

“ ‘ Duke Sforza,’ said he, ‘ I thank you.’

“ ‘ If it is the duke,’ murmured my mother, ‘ he may perhaps have pity.’

“ ‘ Silence, madam ! Remember.’ My mother could not restrain a groan ; the count heard her, and smiled sadly.

“ ‘ In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,’ said the count, making the sign of the cross.

“ ‘ *Amen!*’ responded all present.

“ Then the man who held the parchment, unrolling it, began to read the sentence. It was in the name of Francesco Maria Sforza, acting by order of his Imperial Majesty the Emperor Charles V., condemning Francesco Maraviglia, agent of the King of France, to be executed in the dungeons at night, as a traitor and a spy.

“ ‘ However iniquitous and unjust is the sentence of the duke, I accept it, without anger, without emotion, yet, though I would not defend my life, it is incumbent on me to defend my honor.—I owe it to my master, Francis I., and I appeal to God, who reads the hearts of all, especially of kings and princes.’

“ ‘ Is this the only tribunal to which you appeal, count ?

“ ‘It is, Duke Sforza ; and before that tribunal I summon you to appear.’

“ ‘When?’ said the man in the mask.

“ ‘In the same space of time as Jaques de Morlay assigned his judge to meet him—in a year and a day. This is the 15th of November, 1534. Francesco Maria Sforza, I shall expect you on the 15th of November, 1535—remember!’

“With these words he extended his hand towards the man in the mask, who quailed before him ; and for an instant the judge trembled in the presence of his victim.

“ ‘I leave you to your confessor,’ said he to my father, after a pause ; ‘one quarter of an hour is all that is allowed you.’

“Signing to the holy man to advance, he left the dungeon, followed by the bearer of the sentence. But though all left the dungeon, out of respect to the sacred ceremony of confession, the door was left ajar, so as to allow of those without watching all that went on within. Another deep sigh burst from the bosom of the countess. She had hoped to touch the holy man by her prayers, by her entreaties ; she had relied on the door being closed—but now this last shadow of hope vanished.”

Emmanuel-Philibert was deeply moved ; it seemed as though he was listening to some horrible legend. But the sight of Odoardo, his intense agony, thrilled his heart, as from the lips of the son he heard the last details of his father’s horrible fate.

“My father” pursued Odoardo in a stifled voice, “suffering for the dear ones behind the grating, ten times the agonies of death, knelt before the confessor ; to them was his confession addressed rather than to the priest. My mother, stupefied with grief, clasped her child mechanically to her heart, and wept in silence. That child, my poor sister, can alone tell

the supreme agony of that moment; for I, heedless child, was far away, not dreaming of the crime which was to make me an orphan.

“The confession was soon over. The man in the mask stood, watch in hand; and when the fifteen minutes had expired, he advanced into the dungeon.

“‘Count,’ said he, ‘the priest has done his office; it is now the turn of the executioner.’

“The priest gave the absolution, and still holding the crucifix to the count, he retreated towards the door, passing out whilst the executioner entered.

“The count was still kneeling.

“‘Have you anything now to say?’ asked the man in the mask.

“‘Nothing, but to God.’

“‘Then you are ready?’

“‘Am I not kneeling?’

“The count, still kneeling, turned, concentrating all his love into one fervent glance towards the grating. Appearing still to pray, he murmured his last farewell to his wife and his child.

“‘If you would not be defiled by the touch of the executioner, count—you, who are noble, and whom I cannot touch but with the sword—bare your neck.’

“The count obeyed without reply.

“‘Commend yourself to God,’ said the executioner.

“‘Father, God Almighty! into thy hands I commend my spirit!’

“These words were the last he ever uttered. The sword flashed, and the head of my father, as with a last instinct of affection, rolled to the foot of the iron grating. Then there was a sound as of a weight falling to the ground, followed by a stifled shriek. But those who were within, mistook

them for the falling of the body of my father on the stone floor, and for his last shriek of agony. I can speak no more, my lord; my tongue cleaves to my mouth—my voice refuses its utterance.”

Emmanuel-Philibert looked at his strange guest. He was pale; his lips were parched, and his whole frame tottered. The prince, deeply affected, rushed to his assistance; seated him on a pile of cushions; held a cup of water to his lips. Odoardo soon recovered himself; then, turning towards Emmanuel, he said :

“ Do you yet wish to hear more ? ”

“ All, all ! ” replied Emmanuel; “ such events are the lessons of princes. ”

The prisoner, dashing the tears from his eyes, bowed, and continued :

“ When my mother recovered her senses, she found herself lying on the bed in the jailer’s room—my sister, her eyes distended with terror, weeping silently by her side. The jailer’s wife, full of pity and compassion, knowing the danger every minute’s delay might incur, made my mother rise, and clothing her in one of her own humble dresses, while she put on my sister one belonging to her little son, conducted my poor bewildered mother out of the fortress. Then, giving her two ducats, she left her to the mercy of heaven. My mother walked forward mechanically. She was stupefied with grief and terror; her mind was a chaos,—one instinctive thought alone predominated, and that was an idea that she must fly. She remembered neither the carriage which would have taken her to the frontier beyond all harm, nor her palace, where she would have found shelter; but taking her child by the hand, she walked straight on. Sometimes, when, hungry and weary, my poor little sister would complain or cry, she would carry her in her

arms. Terror had turned her brain—on, on she went. But where she found shelter, or whether, exhausted, she sunk down and died, I know not. None ever knew the fate of my hapless mother, and my poor little sister.

“ It was from the king that I first heard of my father’s death. At the same time he told me how he was going to avenge it. Some years after, war was declared against Sforza. The king assured me of his protection, and I followed the army to Italy. We passed triumphantly, as you know, prince, through Piedmont and Savoy. We reached Milan, and there found that the Duke Sforza had fled to Rome, to seek the protection of the pope, Paul III. Vain were all our rescarches ; we could discover nothing relating to the circumstances of my father’s death. No traces could be found of either the officer who read the sentence, or the priest who had received my father’s last confession. The executioner had died suddenly, three days after the execution ; and the jailer and his wife had fled. I could not even discover where my poor father’s bones lay mouldering ; when, one day, I received a letter from Avignon, signed merely with an initial, in which the writer offered to give me some information concerning the death of Francesco Maraviglia, if I would come to Avignon. I instantly started for Avignon. The object of my life had been to learn all respecting my father’s death, and to avenge it.

“ Following the directions in the letter, I repaired to the house of an obscure priest, and he conducted me to the writer of the letter. It was the jailer of the fortress of Milan.

“ After relating to me all the details I have given you, the jailer confessed that, knowing where the carriage was waiting for the count, and the immense sums it contained, he had been unable to resist the temptation of appropriating

them. Leaving his wife occupied in taking care of my mother, he stealthily left the prison, and hastened towards the appointed place of meeting. There he found the carriage in charge of one of the followers of the count, who had undertaken to act as coachman. With a blow of his dagger he got rid of this one unsuspecting obstacle to his plans—then, hurling him from his seat, he took his place, and following the route traced by himself for his prisoner, he was soon with his booty beyond the frontiers.

“But the finger of God was on this man. Spite of his riches, misfortune pursued him. His wife, whom he had contrived to send for, lived but a few years, and his only child soon followed his mother to the grave. Infirmities and sickness began to prey upon him; remorse overwhelmed him—remorse for the theft and for the murder of my father’s attendant. He resolved to make all the atonement in his power. It was he who told me all the events of that terrible night, which had left so deep an impression on his memory. Unfortunately, he could tell me nothing of my mother; nothing of my poor little sister. They must have died alone, of hunger and fatigue, by the wayside. Still, I cannot abandon the hope that Providence may have saved them, and that one day they will be restored to me. In this hope I have given to the Countess Maraviglia and her daughter, the chateau of Villeneuve, which this man had bought with my father’s gold—for I am rich, and for myself did not want the restoration, which, as an expiation, the jailor insisted on making. Then, in consideration of his intention of saving my father, I forgave this man. Francesco Sforza, the instrument of another’s revenge, died, as my father had prophesied, exactly a year and a day after my father’s execution; but Charles V. remained—Charles, the real author of the crime, of my father’s iniquitous death, of

my mother's and sister's death by starvation and misery. God had punished the other two, but his vengeance seemed to have forgotten the emperor, now at the height of power, glory, and renown. I took my revenge into my own hands; I struck the murderer of my father. But he wears a coat of mail. If God has forgotten his crimes, *he* remembers them—for he fears. I have deserved death; I await it. But you know now who I am; and I demand an honorable death, and not the ignoble death of a serf."

"You have a right to die the death of a nobleman, as you are; and I promise you that this request shall be granted. Do you wish to be free until the hour of execution?"

"I do—I give you my parole not to take advantage of your clemency."

"That is sufficient. Have you any other request to make?"

"None, but that the execution may be speedy. The crime is public, is avowed, and there is no motive for delay."

"I have not the power to assign the hour of your sentence—that rests with the emperor. Ho, without there!"

The guards entered.

"Take the prisoner to a tent where he may be alone. Leave him unfettered—one sentinel will suffice. I have his parole that he will not attempt to fly."

The guards and the prisoner left the tent. Emmanuel, deeply impressed by what he had heard, remained watching Francesco Maraviglia, as far as he could see him—then, turning round, he perceived Leona standing at the entrance of the second division of the tent. Her hands were clasped, her cheek pale, her eyes suffused with tears.

Emmanuel rushed towards her.

"What is the matter, my beloved?"

“ Oh, Emmanuel ! he must not, cannot die ! ”

“ Alas, Leona, he has committed an unpardonable crime ! ”

“ I care not, he must not, shall not die,” replied Leona, throwing herself in his arms.

“ I can do nothing to save him, Leona, but to tell the emperor all we have heard.”

“ Yes, you will do more, Emmanuel ; you will implore the emperor to forgive him.”

“ Leona, I have not as much power with the emperor as you imagine.”

“ No matter, Odoardo Maraviglia must live, or I shall expire in your arms.”

“ You, Leona ! ” said Emmanuel, clasping her tightly to his heart ; “ you, my Leona ! ”

“ Oh Emmanuel, the prisoner Odoardo Maraviglia is my brother ! ”

Emmanuel-Philibert started, and in an instant he understood the reasons for what had appeared mysterious in the conduct of Leona, from the sullen silence of the child, to the haughty refusal of the page to take the diamond from the emperor. Odoardo Maraviglia was her brother.

CHAPTER XIII.

HE DEMON OF THE SOUTH.

WHILST this scene was going on under the tent of Emmanuel-Philibert, an event, announced by the flourish of trumpets and the shouts of the soldiers, was creating great excitement in the imperial tent.

A troop of cavaliers had been seen approaching on the Brussels road; a courier had been sent to ascertain who they were, who had returned swiftly, and announced that the cavalcade was no other than the escort of the only son of the august emperor, Philippe, Prince of Spain, King of Naples, and husband of Mary of England, who was coming to visit his father.

At the sound of the trumpets, and the shouts proceeding from the imperial tent, the chiefs from the other tents turned out with their staffs and beat to arms, so that Philippe's entry into the tented city was a perfect ovation.

Philippe of Spain was mounted on a milk-white charger, which he sat with ease, if not grace. He was dressed in violet and black, being in royal mourning for the recent death of his grandmother. He wore the order of the Golden Fleece around his neck. He was at this time about twenty-eight years of age. Although the regularity of his features and

his handsome light beard and moustache, gave him claims to be called handsome, the harshness of his mouth, the trembling and uncertain expression of his eyes, which ever sought the ground, the wrinkled brow, so full of care and thought, gave to his whole appearance something so repulsive, that his beauty was forgotten, and he has been handed down, traditionally, to us, as an ugly rather than a handsome man, as he really was.

The Emperor Charles V. loved his son devotedly, as he had loved his own mother; but even he, had always felt repelled by that coldness and reserve of manner which would check all demonstration of tenderness in the first moments of their meeting. Often would the emperor ponder on the meaning hidden in that glance, which never fixed itself on his; often would he ask himself whether all those deep-laid schemes, with which his son was always preoccupied, were not against himself, rather than against their common enemies.

Philippe was born under the most unfavorable auspices, and like the dark clouds which, obscuring the rising sun, darken the whole day, his life appeared to have felt the influence of the first hours of his birth. He was born on the 31st of May, 1527,—the day of the sacking of Rome—the day on which Charles de Bourbon was killed, and Pope Clement VII. taken prisoner. Christianity was plunged in grief; it was not until one year after his birth that the child was declared Prince of Spain in the midst of public rejoicings—but the child, sickly and suffering, wailed and cried when all was joy around.

When he had attained his sixteenth year, his father, anxious to test his military talents, sent him to Persingnan, which the French were besieging, in order to compel them to raise the siege. That he should not fail to accomplish

this object, the emperor sent with him six Spanish grandees, fourteen barons, eight hundred gentlemen, two thousand horsemen, and five thousand men a foot. The expedition, under such auspices, could not fail. The Prince of Spain returned, therefore, victorious ; but, notwithstanding this success, the emperor contrived to understand that his son's disposition was not essentially warlike. He therefore left him to pursue the political and diplomatic studies for which he appeared more peculiarly fitted, and appointed him governor of the kingdom of Spain.

In 1543 Philippe had married his cousin, Donna Maria of Portugal, and by her he had had a son, the unfortunate Don Carlos, the hero of a most lamentable love story, and of two modern tragedies.

In 1548, Philippe embarked for Italy, under contrary winds, which dispersed his fleet, commanded by Doria, and obliged him to re-enter port. Again he embarked, and again under contrary winds. He succeeded, however, in landing at Genoa. Thence he proceeded to the field of the battle of Pavia. There he caused the position of the contending troops to be pointed out to him ; paused on the spot where Francis I. gave up his sword, and gazed at the mound under which slept the flower of the French nobility. Then, without a word, without a remark, silent and sombre, as usual, he returned to Milan, and crossing central Europe, joined the emperor at Worms.

Flemish at heart, as well as by birth, Charles had felt proud to present his son to his fellow-citizens at Brussels, Ghent, and Namur.

At Namur, Emmanuel-Philibert had received him at the head of seven hundred noblemen and gentlemen ; then, the cousins having embraced each other cordially, Emmanuel-Philibert conducted the Prince of Spain into the town

where his arrival was celebrated by a tournament, in which Philip, of course, took no part. At Brussels the prince was welcomed with great honours and rejoicings; and having been duly recognised as the heir of the greatest potentate in the world, the prince repaired to Spain. Emmanuel-Philibert accompanied his cousin as far as Genoa, and then saw his father for the last time.

Three years after his return to Spain, Mary of England having wrested the crown from Jane Grey, looked around for a partner to share her throne. She was in her forty-sixth year, and had therefore no time to lose. Policy soon directed the views of her cabinet towards Philip, for the alliance of England and Spain could thus annihilate France. Philip's young wife had died a few days after the birth of Don Carlos. Being left alone,—her ladies of honor having all gone to witness an auto-da-fè,—the young queen, contrary to the physician's orders, and like a true daughter of Eve, took a violent fancy for some fresh fruit. A melon was by her order brought to her bed-side, and, having eaten plentifully of it, the young queen expired twenty-four hours afterwards.

There were, however, two other pretenders to the hand of Mary—both young and handsome; but the influence and keen policy of Charles V. soon contrived to set them aside. Then, it having been decreed that Mary could marry none but a king, he made Philip king of Naples, and so the marriage was settled. Accordingly, on the 25th of July, 1554,—on the day of St. James—the tigress of the north, Bloody Mary, as her subjects called her, was married to Philip of Spain, whom they called the demon of the south.

Great were the preparations for the celebration of these nuptials. Philip went from Spain to England with a whole fleet, but, within sight of England, he waited the fleet which

Mary of England sent to meet him, and boarding the royal vessel, sailed into the port of Hampton under the flag of England. He was accompanied by the flower of the Spanish nobility,—the Admirante of Castile, the Duc de Medina-Coeli, Ruy Gomez da Silva, and the Duc d'Alba. "Wonderful to relate," said Gregorio Lopez, the historian of Charles V., "these noblemen had amongst them a train of more than twelve hundred followers, a thing which had never been seen before."

The marriage was celebrated in the cathedral of Winchester. Those who are curious to know the details of the feast,—what the queen wore, and how the king looked, and how, by an admirable contrivance, both disappeared from the banquet and retired to their chamber alone,—had better consult the historian above quoted, where they will find these and many other marvels related in most satisfactory detail. For ourselves, we will resume our acquaintance with King Philip at the present moment, when, after being nine months married, he is returning from England to visit his father, and arrives in his camp, welcomed by the acclamations of the assembled army.

Charles V. was surprised and pleased by this unexpected visit, for he had suspected some hidden motive for the presence of Philip in the Low Countries. Determining to testify his joy, he made a violent effort, and, by the help of his officers, dragged himself to the door of his tent. Scarcely had he reached it, before he perceived—surrounded by high dignitaries, overshadowed by waving banners, followed by the acclamations of the soldiers,—Don Philip advancing towards him.

"Already so great!" murmured the emperor to himself; " 'tis the will of God."

No sooner did the prince perceive his father, than he

stopped his horse and alighted ; then, with uncovered head and extended arms, he threw himself at the feet of the emperor.

This humility banished all ill-feeling from the mind of Charles V. He hastened to raise his son, and then turning to those around him, he said :

“ I thank you all for the welcome you give my son. Don Philip,” continued he, speaking to his son, “ it is five years since we met. We have much to say to each other.” Then bowing to the assembled crowd, Charles V., leaning on the arm of his son, retired into his tent, in the midst of cries of—“ Long live the king of England ! long live Don Philip ! long live the emperor ! ”

Although, as the emperor had said, both he and his son had much to say to each other, both, after they were seated, remained silent ; it was, at last, the emperor who spoke.

“ My son,” said he, “ your presence could alone make me forget the evil tidings I have received to-day.”

“ Some of these tidings, as you may see by my dress, my noble father, have already reached me. You have lost your mother, and I—”

“ Did you hear of her death in Belgium, Philip ? ”

“ We have direct communication between England and Spain,” replied Philip, “ whilst the courier which brought your despatch must have come on foot from Genoa here.”

“ Probably, my son, but, besides this private sorrow, I have another cause of grief.”

“ Your majesty refers, probably, to the election of the Pope Paul IV., and to the league he has entered into with France.”

The emperor looked with astonishment at his son.

“ Philip,” said he, “ did you get this news also by an

English vessel? It is a long way from Civita-Vecchia to Portsmouth."

"The news came to me through France. The snows of the Tyrol and the Alps probably retarded your courier; mine came direct from Ostia to Marseilles, and from Marseilles to London."

Charles had been so long accustomed to be first in all things, that he could not brook his son Philip's knowing as much as he did—nay, more, for he had not yet heard of the league with France.

Philip, however, seemed not to heed his father's darkening brow.

"The Caraffas and the other partisans of the pope," said he, "had so well taken their measures, that even before the election, during the sitting of the conclave, they had already sent the treaty to Henry II. It was on this account that the king of France advanced so boldly on Bouvines and Dinant, after having taken Marienbourg, with the evident hope and intention of cutting off your retreat."

"Is he, indeed, so close upon us?" exclaimed the emperor, "and am I to expect, a second time, to be taken by surprise, as at Innspruck?"

"No," replied Philip, "your majesty has nothing to fear, for I trust you will consent to sign a truce with Henry II."

"By my soul! I should be a madman to refuse a treaty, —nay, even not to propose one."

"Sire, it would make Henry of France too proud, if you were the first to propose the treaty of peace, but it is another thing to get him to propose it, and then to condescend to accept it. The queen of England and myself have been long desirous of bringing him to this point."

"By the mass! you and your queen have been right

Lose no time! send your most able diplomatists to France; there is no time to be lost."

"So we have thought—the queen and myself; and, anxious to spare your majesty all humiliation, we have sent an ambassador already to the court of France, empowered to demand a truce in our name—not yours—so that your majesty has still the power of denying all knowledge of the transaction."

"Your ambassador will be too late; Henry will be in Brussels before he sees him," replied the emperor, shaking his head.

"To avoid this, our ambassador, the Cardinal de la Pole, crossed directly to Ostend, and joined the king at Dinant."

"He is an able negotiator, but I much fear that in this case he will fail."

"I am happy to be able to remove all doubt from your majesty's mind," replied Philip, in his usual calm and monotonous voice. "The cardinal has succeeded; the king accepts a treaty of peace—or at least a temporary truce, in order to discuss the terms of the treaty. The place appointed for the meeting is the monastery of Vocelles, near Cambray. The cardinal came to Brussels to give me the results of his mission, and I now lay them before your majesty."

Charles V. looked at his son with admiration; whilst Don Philip, apparently unconscious of having achieved any thing of importance, preserved the same unmoved and humble countenance.

"How long is this treaty to last?" inquired the emperor

"Ostensibly, or in reality?"

"Ostensibly."

"Five years."

“Is this decision to be relied on?”

“That will be as it please God.”

“And how long, Don Philip, do *you* imagine it will please God it should continue?”

“I imagine,” replied the king-consort of England, that God will please to permit the treaty to last long enough to allow of your majesty’s getting a reinforcement from Spain, and of my sending you ten thousand men from England.”

“Philip,” said Charles V., impressively, “only obtain this treaty, and I promise that it is you alone who shall keep it or break it as you please.”

“I do not understand your imperial majesty,” said Philip, his eyes for the first time brightening, as also for the first time they encountered those of his father.

But though he pretended not to understand, the wily and grasping prince had full well comprehended that the imperial sceptre was within his grasp; and a week after this interview, a treaty of peace was signed.

The treaty was for five years, and included both Philip and the Pope, as well as the other nations of Europe.

The treaty was brought to the emperor by Don Philip in person; and as the emperor received it, he gazed almost with terror on the calm and unmoved features of his son.

All that was wanting to the treaty was the signature of the emperor. Charles V. took it, and with great difficulty holding the pen in his swollen hand, he signed it.

“Sire,” said he, for the first time addressing his son as a sovereign; “Sire,” said he, “your majesty may return to London: but I request you will hold yourself in readiness to repair to Brussels whenever I shall summon you.”

CHAPTER XIV.

In which Charles V. fulfils the promises he made to Don Philip.

ON the 15th October, in the year 1555, there was a great assemblage of people from all the various Flemish provinces, in the streets of Brussels.

An assembly of the States had been summoned by the emperor, Charles V., the object of which had not been revealed, and for which great preparations had been made.

The large hall in the royal palace, now no longer existing in Brussels, but which then stood on the heights of Candenberg, had been hung with rich tapestry and banners; and on a raised platform, a throne, with two lesser ones on each side, had been erected—the centre one being for the emperor, that on the right for King Philip of Spain, and the one on the left for Mary, queen dowager of Hungary, sister to the emperor. Seats were placed in front, and in the whole length of the hall, as if for a numerous assembly.

Philip of Spain; Queen Mary; Queen Eleanor, widow of Francis I.; Maximilian, king of Bohemia; Christina, duchess of Lorraine, were all lodged in the palace—whilst Charles V. had continued, as usual, to inhabit his pavilion in the park.

At four o'clock the emperor appeared, mounted on a

mule, whose gentle paces suited the state of suffering in which he now was, being unable to bear the motion of a carriage, or to walk even a few paces.

Kings, princes, and nobles followed on foot. The emperor wore the imperial robes of cloth of gold and ermine, with the order of the golden fleece. He wore the imperial crown, and the sceptre his hand was no longer strong enough to sustain, was borne before him.

The hall was already filled with the grandees summoned by the emperor's commands. On the right of the throne were ranged the knights of the golden fleece.

To the left were the grandees of Spain. Then, all in their appointed places, and all in grand uniform, were the officers and councillors of state, both of Flanders and Brabant.

The galleries surrounding the hall had since morning been filled with spectators.

Towards four o'clock, the emperor entered the hall, leaning on the shoulders of William of Orange, surnamed the Taciturn. Close upon him followed Emmanuel-Philibert, with his page and his faithful Scianea-Ferro.

Immediately before the kings and princes, and within a few paces of the emperor, was a personage whom all were astonished to behold in such a place, and none perhaps more so than himself. This was Odoardo Maraviglia, who had been taken from his prison without any explanation; and having been splendidly attired, had been placed in the procession.

At the sight of the emperor, this august assembly rose. Charles V. proceeded slowly along the hall, with an air of suffering which it required all his courage to endure.

Having seated himself on the throne, with Philip on his right, and Mary of Hungary on his left, the emperor mo

tioned to the assembly to be seated. Emmanuel-Philibert and the Prince of Orange alone remained standing, with the officers in the immediate suite of Charles V., and Odoardo Maraviglia, who, from his post beside the emperor, looked with incredulous astonishment on all around.

Order and silence being restored, Philibert Brunelles, the emperor's privy-councillor, rose and began to speak.

All leant eagerly forward—for none knew the subject of the meeting—all excepting Philip, whose downcast eyes and unmoved features remained calm and impassable as ever.

The councillor then declared to the assembly that they had all been called together to witness the abdication of the august emperor, Charles V., in favor of his son, Don Philip of Spain, who, from this time forward, he invested with the royal dignities, hitherto belonging to him—all excepting the imperial crown of Germany, which he reserved for Ferdinand, king of the Romans.

At this reservation, made by the speaker, Philip turned pale, and his lips trembled.

Philibert Brunelles went on to say, that the emperor had been brought to this resolve from the infirmities of the gout, which was increased by the rigors of the climate of Flanders and Germany. The emperor had an ardent desire to revisit Spain, which he had not seen since he was twelve years of age; and prayed the States to approve the act of his consigning them to the care of his son, Don Philip. With an invocation to Providence, that it might ever watch over and protect the emperor, the orator then concluded.

Then the emperor rose, pale and care-worn, the hot drops of suffering on his brow. He indicated by a gesture that he was about to speak—and the agitation manifested by the assembly at the close of Philibert Brunelles' speech,

was calmed in an instant. The emperor began in a low feeble tone; but so intense was the silence, that each word re-echoed to the farther ends of the hall. As he proceeded, Charles V.'s voice became louder. As he retraced his life, his plans, his victories, his achievements, his eyes flashed and his face beamed, until his words, grand and solemn, like those of a dying man, struck awe into the hearts of all present.

“My friends,” began the emperor,* “I have requested my worthy councillor to set before you the motives for my desiring to abdicate, and for wishing to resign my kingdom to my son, Don Philip. But I cannot leave you without addressing some words to you myself. My friends, it is now forty years, as some of you may remember, since my grandfather, the Emperor Maximilian, of glorious mémory, invested me with my inheritance. I was then in my fifteenth year. The next year, Ferdinand the Catholic being dead, I inherited the crown of Spain. My beloved mother, young as she was, ought to have been regent; but you know, my friends, how that tender heart, wounded by the early death of my father, had scorned to retain its intellect. Earthly kingdoms and carthly power were as nothing in her esteem. The weight of this government fell also into my hands, Then the Emperor Maximilian died, and I aspired to the imperial crown—not from personal ambition, so help me Heaven! but from a desire to watch over the welfare of Germany, and to promote the interests of my beloved Flanders and my Flemish countrymen. From my fifteenth year I have never rested. Count over my voyages—they have

* This address of Charles V. is copied from the historical text, published in 1830 by M. S. Gachard, keeper of the archives of Brussels. The translator has thought proper to somewhat condense it.

extended over the whole world. I have never rested, either by land or by sea. My frequent absences, and the revolt of Ghent, obliged me to establish my good sister, here present, as vice-queen of these States; and you all know how faithfully and ably she has fulfilled her trust. I have had, in the midst of all the toils of government, many wars, all of which were undertaken against my will; and now I regret that I do not leave you with better prospects of peace.

“My friends, do not imagine that I am presumptuous enough to think that all has been accomplished that I could desire, for the good of my people. As long as my arm was strong enough to hold the sceptre God had given me, I resolved to keep it. The helpless state of my mother, the extreme youth of my son, commanded it. I had resolved to stay the inroads of the Lutherans and the Turks, which threatened Christianity; and had it not been for the German princes, and the king of France, who, violating all treaties, attacked me unexpectedly, and nearly took me prisoner at Innsbruck, I should have succeeded. I never stopped for leisure—no suffering arrested me: but now, all further effort is impossible. Pain and suffering have taken entire possession of me—have overpowered my faculties. God has deprived me of my mother; I have no longer strength of mind and body to govern my beloved people. Instead of an old, an infirm sovereign, with one foot in the grave, I give you a young and vigorous prince, full of virtue, religion, and strength. Swear, then, to him, that fidelity and love which you have sworn to me, and kept so truthfully. Be faithful to each other, or the heretics will take possession of your churches.

“And now, to speak of myself. My friends, I have committed many faults, but never have I voluntarily committed any act of injustice, or suffered one to go unatoned.

One of these atonements I am about to make in your presence."

Charles V. paused to recover his strength—then, turning towards his son, he said :

" My son, if, having descended to the tomb, I had left you the inheritance I have this day given you, I should, I think, have deserved both your gratitude and your thanks ; but now that, still living, I endow you with a power unequalled in the world, I implore you to show your love for me, by the love you show to my people. Let me, yet amongst the living, feel pride in my successor, happy in having given him life, happy in having endowed him with every virtue. There will be few sovereigns who will follow my example. I have followed no suggestions, in accomplishing this design, but my own. Let posterity find, by the admirable manner in which you use the authority with which I have invested you, that I was justified in abandoning the trust Heaven had confided to me. My son, confide in Heaven ; watch over your passions ; sustain the laws ; be just, be merciful—and may your children bless you, as I do, when, like me, you are descending into the dark valley which leads to a glorious immortality ! "

Charles V. placed his hand on the head of his son, who was kneeling at his feet, and remained for some moments silent, everpowered by his emotion. Then, raising his head, the tears still trembling in his eyes, he held out his hand to his sister ; whilst Don Philip, alarmed at the pallor of his father, arose from his knees and encircled him with his arms. Mary of Hungary then drew from her pocket a small flask, from which she poured into a small golden cup, a few drops of a red liquor, and presented it to the emperor.

As the emperor swallowed this restorative, the assembly, overpowered by tenderness and emotion, remained gazing at

him in awe-stricken silence. It was, in truth, a grand and impressive sight to behold this warrior, this great statesman, the most successful and powerful monarch of his day, thus declare in the presence of his subjects, the vanity of all human power and ambition—proclaiming, even in presence of his successor, the utter inefficiency of earthly prosperity to give rest or happiness. Thus to see this great conqueror, whom their proud affection had surnamed Cæsar, calmly retire from the busy field of active life, and from the clang of war, was indeed a spectacle to make many weep and all reflect.

But a far grander spectacle awaited them—that was the public confession of a crime, and its public atonement. Charles V., gently putting aside his son, turned once more towards the assembly, and again addressed it.

“My friends,” said he, “having set before you my good deeds, it now behoves me to confess my faults to you. One act of injustice weighs heavy on my heart. It shall be revealed to you, and in your presence will I make what atonement I may to the aggrieved and deeply injured party.

“Odoardo Maraviglia,” continued he, turning towards the person he addressed,—“Odoardo Maraviglia, stand forth! Count,” said he, inclining his head; “how deeply I have injured you, you alone can tell, for you have felt, have mourned the miserable consequence of my violence or my injustice—for by my means did your father, in the dungeons of Milan, die a violent and ignominious death. Often has his pale spectre hovered near me; and remorse for his fate, like a winding-sheet, has wound itself around me.

“Count Maraviglia, in the face of God and man, in the solemn hour when I am about to take from my brow the Imperial diadem, which has for thirty-six years encircled it, I humble myself before you, and entreat your forgiveness;

and having that, I ask your prayers, that God may grant, through the intercession of the vietim, that pardon he has withheld from the murderer.”

Odoardo Maraviglia uttered a wild cry; and falling at the feet of the emperor, he exclaimed,

“Magnanimous emperor! Well have you been named Augustus—far surpassing the Augustus of old. I forgive you, oh, my sovereign, in my own and my father’s name! I forgive you—but, oh! how ever shall I forgive myself!”

Then rising, Odoardo turned towards the multitude, and said, in a firm and distinct voice:

“I, too, am guilty—I, too, have to confess a crime. I have attempted to assassinate your most noble emperor. King Philip,” continued he, falling on his knees before Don Philip, now Philip II.; “I put my life into your hands.”

“My son,” said Charles V., in a feeble voice, for his strength was now fast failing him; “let this man’s life be sacred to you, as it would be to me.” As he pronounced these words, the emperor, sinking on his throne, lost all consciousness.

Leona, profiting by the confusion occasioned by this accident, glided up to the Duke of Savoy.

“Oh! my Emmanuel,” said she, “this—this is your work! How can I express to you my love and my devotion?” and, before the prince could prevent it, she carried his hand to her lips and kissed it, with as much reverence as love.

The emperor having recovered himself, the ceremony of the abdication proceeded. Philip, coming to the foot of the throne, prostrated himself before his father, and, speaking in the Spanish language, which many present did not understand, he said, in a voice which, for the first time, betrayed some emotion:

“ Father, I have not deserved this overwhelming proof of confidence and affection, which you have lavished upon me. I tremble to think how insignificant I am, compared to your greatness and magnanimity. Be assured, oh! my beloved father, that, from this hour forth, I will study to govern those you have committed to my charge, in a manner which shall convince them that I have their welfare at heart as much as you had, during your long and glorious life, dedicated to their service.”

With these words, he pressed his father's hand to his lips, and Charles, raising him, embraced him, and said with great emotion: “ Heaven bless you, my son! Heaven assist you, now and ever, in all your trials!”

Philip then, passing his hand across his eyes, as if to dash away a tear,—which, probably, did not exist,—turned towards the assembly. He stood with his plumed cap in his hand, as did likewise all present, excepting the emperor, who alone remained reclining on his throne; and, in very imperfect French, said these few words:

“ Gentlemen, I would that I could express in your own language all the affection I feel for you; but, as my words would be wanting, I have deputed the Bishop of Arras to speak for me.”

Then Antoine Penenot de Granville,—the same who was afterwards cardinal, rose, and as Philip had said, assured the people of the good intentions of his master, and of his entire love for them, and his intentions to follow in the footsteps of his father.

Then Queen Mary, sister of the emperor, who, for twenty-six years, had governed the Low Countries, arose in her turn, and, in a few brief words, resigned her office into her nephew's hands.

These ceremonies being concluded, Philip took the oath

to maintain the laws ; and then all the Spanish grandees, the officers of state, the knights of the Golden Fleece,—in fact, all the dignitaries present, took the oath of allegiance.

All having now been accomplished, Charles V. rose for the last time from his throne, and seating his son in his place, he took the crown from his own head, and placed it on that of Philip, exclaiming, in a loud tone :

“ Grant, oh God ! that this crown, with which I here invest my son ; may not prove a crown of thorns ! ”

Charles V. now turned to depart. Instantly, Philip, Emmanuel-Philibert, and the officers present, advanced to support the emperor ; but, motioning them aside, he signed to Odoardo Maraviglia to advance.

Odoardo obeyed, scarcely comprehending the emperor’s meaning ; but, with a smile, Charles, when he drew near, placed his arm on his shoulder, and tried to walk. He had chosen the son of the man whose death he had caused, and the man whose arm had been lifted against his life, to be his last support as he stepped from his royal seat. He walked with difficulty, however, and one swollen arm hung helplessly by his side. Emmanuel-Philibert, then addressing his uncle, said :

“ Sire, allow, I entreat you, that my page Leone should support you on the other side. It is an honor I supplicate for him, which I shall consider as conferred on myself.”

Charles V. looked at the page, and immediately recognized him.

“ Ah ! ah ! ” said he, “ our young friend who refused the diamond. So, my pretty page, we are reconciled at last, are we ? I am afraid you have lost by your anger, for, see, I have only a simple gold ring now to give you. But it has my cypher, and that, perhaps, you will consider as an equivalent for the diamond.”

With these words, the emperor drew from his poor swollen finger a simple gold ring, and placed it on the thumb of the page—the only member of that delicate hand which it would fit.

So, supported by the children of the man whom, in darkness and mystery, he had deprived of life, amidst the tears and acclamations of the multitude Charles V. left the hall. Far greater even would have been the enthusiasm, had the whole multitude known how noble an example of repentance the emperor was at this moment giving, both to men and angels, whose joy is greater over one sinner that repenteth than over ten just men. When he reached the small postern, at which his patient mule had been waiting during the last two hours, Charles V. dismissed the two young people, and, attended merely by one groom, who assisted him to mount, he proceeded through the most quiet and narrow streets. Whilst all Brussels was re-echoing to the news of the abdication, he who had performed this great act was painfully seeking the repose of his unostentatious retreat, which stood where the *Palais des Representants* now stands.

The popular tumult had not reached this spot; the emperor found every thing in the order he had left it. Passing through the open doors by the aid of his crutch, he entered an inner chamber, and there, reclining his aching and weary limbs, began to recall the events of his past life—the events of the last half century. What a half century had it been!—one which had produced Henry VIII., Maximilian, Clement VII., Francis I., Soliman, Luther, and Charles V. Like a traveller long absent from his home, who retraces his steps to his native village, stopping at every tree, flower, and stone, to recall some memory of early days—the memory

of the emperor recalled but victories, triumphs, adulation, and prosperity : all flitted by as in some dreamy vision ; when, suddenly, the log which was burning in the chimney broke asunder, and rolled into the middle of the room, still smoking and burning. This commonplace accident recalled the emperor to reality.

“ Without there, oh ! ” exclaimed he.

But there was no reply.

“ Who waits there ? ” again cried the emperor.

But there was no one waiting—all, from the officers of state down to the valets, had gone to swell the cortège of the new king, Don Philip.

“ What ! deserted already—alone ? ” said the emperor, rising with great difficulty, and by aid of the various pieces of furniture in his way, at length attaining the flaming log, and replacing it in the chimney. “ Am I so soon to be made to feel that I am now nobody ? ”

At this moment a step was heard in the ante-room, and some one appeared in the doorway.

“ Sire,” said the figure, stopping on the threshold, “ I beg your majesty will excuse me ; but finding all the doors open, and no one in waiting to announce me, I have taken the liberty of announcing myself.”

“ Pray then, sir, do introduce yourself—tell me your name,” replied the emperor, who was beginning to learn how to wait on himself.

“ Sire,” said the intruder, in a tone of the most profound respect, and bowing to the ground—“ sire, I am Gaspard de Coligny, lord high admiral of France, ambassador extraordinary to your majesty from my sovereign, Henry II. of France.”

“ My lord ambassador,” said the emperor, with a bitter smile, “ you have entered into the wrong presence ; it is no

longer to me that kings send ambassadors, but to my son, Don Philip, who within the last twenty minutes has succeeded me in the thrones of Spain, the Low Countries and the Indies, besides the throne of Naples, of which I put him in possession some nine months ago."

"Sire," replied the ambassador, even still more respectfully than before—"sire, whatever changes may have taken place in the fortunes of Don Philip within the last few months or the last few minutes, to me you are still the anointed sovereign of Germany, emperor by the will of God and the people; to you is my master's letter addressed, and into your majesty's hands do I deliver it."

"Since such is your will, my lord," replied the emperor, "you must be good enough to help me to light these candles, for you see the accession of my son Philip has deprived me of all my servants."

With these words the emperor, as anxious, no doubt, to see one of his most powerful adversaries as he was to read King Henry's letter, proceeded, with the assistance of the admiral, to light the candles in the candelabra on the chimney-piece.

Gaspard de Chatillon, lord of Coligny, was at this time a man of about thirty-nine years of age. He was tall, and finely made. His loyal and truthful heart, as well as his intrepid courage, beamed in every feature of his fine face. He had been a great favorite with Francis I., was high in favor with the present king, Henry II., and was destined to exert great influence over his successor, Francis II. To assassinate such a man as this, on the day of the massacre of St. Bartholomew, required all the hatred of Henry of Guise, added to the hypocrisy of Catharine de Medicis, and the religious fanaticism of the times.

In their early days, François de Guise and Gaspard de

Coligny had been inseparable friends and companions, sharing alike both toils and pleasures; "even," says Brantôme, "the same colors, and having the same liveries." But differences had arisen between them after the battle of Renty, and that hatred which was to separate two of the greatest captains of the day, who, together, could have achieved so much, was beginning to rankle in their hearts.

The emperor gazed with admiration upon this great captain, whose appearance so well betrayed his character; until suddenly it occurred to him that Admiral Coligny had been sent, not so much to deliver a letter, as to give an account of the great events which had just taken place. Under this impression, he abruptly asked the admiral when he had arrived.

"This morning, sire," replied the admiral.

"And you have brought me?"—

"A letter from his Majesty Henry II.," replied Coligny, presenting the letter.

The emperor took it, and tried to break the seal; but his hands were so swollen that all his efforts were vain. Abandoning the attempt, he held it out with a smile to the admiral.

"You see, admiral," said he, "how unfit I am to break a lance, when I cannot even break a seal."

The admiral, having opened the letter, was about returning it to the emperor.

"No," replied he, "my eyes are as helpless as my hands; read it to me yourself. You see it was high time I should give up all to one younger and more expert than myself."

It was merely a letter, in the king's own hand, accompanying all the documents pertaining to the treaty, signed and sealed by the arms of France, copies of which had been in possession of the emperor for six months.

The emperor, taking these documents, which the admiral took from his bosom, glanced carelessly over them, and then threw them on a table which stood near him, and approaching the admiral, he leaned upon his arm and slowly tried to regain his couch.

“My lord admiral,” said he, “does it not seem like a miracle that I should be leaning, in the hour of my weakness, on the arm which so often threatened to overthrow me in the hour of my strength?”

“Ah! sire,” replied the admiral, “it was decreed that none but Charles the Fifth should depose Charles the Fifth; and if we inferior beings have ventured to struggle against you, it is that God wanted to prove your strength and our weakness.”

Charles V. smiled; it was evident that the compliment, coming from a man like the admiral, was not displeasing to him. Seating himself, and signing to the admiral to do likewise, he replied:

“A truce to flattery, admiral; I am no longer king; flattery is for princes: let us change the conversation;—tell me how fares it with my brother Henry of France.”

“Well, your majesty,” answered the admiral.

“I am happy to hear it,” rejoined Charles V.; “for I am proud of my maternal relationship with the royal fleur-de-lys. But I am told that my well beloved brother is beginning to get gray; and yet I can scarcely believe it, for it seems but the other day that he was a beardless boy in Spain; but no, what do I say?—the other day; it is more than twenty-five years ago.”

At these words, the emperor, as if this recollection had once more brought the past before him, threw himself back on the couch, and sighed deeply.

"It is true, sire, his majesty has detected some few gray hairs; but who has not gray hairs, even younger than he?"

"True, true!" exclaimed the emperor, "I can tell you a good story about my first gray hairs. I was then about thirty-six or thirty-seven years of age, and being in Naples, was anxious, like many others, to propitiate the favors of the fair dames of that admirable city. Accordingly I sent for my barber, and ordered him to shave and perfume me. I had not looked in a glass for many months, for we had had a hard time with the Turks, those precious allies of my good brother, Francis I. No sooner had I looked at myself in the glass, than I exclaimed: 'Hallo, friend, what is this?' 'Merely two or three gray hairs, sire;' the flatterer lied, for there were not two or three, but two or three dozen: 'out with them,' said I, and he obeyed; but when I next looked into the glass, I perceived double the number of gray ones. So mind and tell my brother Henry, to let his two or three gray hairs alone, and not allow them to be pulled out, even by the fair hands of Madame de Valentinois."

"I shall not fail to tell him, sire," the admiral replied.

"Apropos of Mde. de Valentinois," continued the emperor, who was perfectly well informed of all the intrigues of the court of France, "how is your uncle, the high constable?"

"He too is well," replied the admiral.

"And still, I suppose," said Charles, "the devoted servant of the ladies. But I have not yet done with you, my dear admiral. Now that you are here, I mean to ask you about all my friends at the court of France. Tell me something of the daughter of my old friend, Francis I.," said Charles, laying great stress on the words "old friend."

"Does your majesty allude to the Princess Margaret, of France?"

“ Is she still called the fourth Grace, and the tenth Muse ? ”

“ She every day deserves these titles more, both from her personal endowments, and from the protection which she accords to our men of letters, such as Messieurs L’Hopital, Rousard and Dorat.”

“ Hey ! hey ! hah ! hah ! hum ! hum ! ” said the emperor, “ my brother Henry seems determined to keep this pearl in his own court. I do not hear of any marriage spoken of for the Princess Margaret ; and yet she must be — near upon thirty-two,” added he, after a pause.

“ She is,” replied the admiral, “ but she does not look twenty ; each day she appears more fresh and beautiful.”

“ Roses bloom afresh, every spring,” said Charles V. ; “ but apropos of roses, what are you doing in the court of France, with that sweet little rose-bud, the Queen of Scotland ? Can I be of no use in arranging matters between her and my daughter-in-law, Mary of England ? ”

“ Oh ! sire,” replied the admiral, “ there is no hurry, for your majesty, who seems to know so well the age of our princesses, must know that Mary Stuart is only just thirteen, and that she is destined,—I do not think I am revealing a state secret, in confiding this to your majesty,—to become the wife of the Dauphin Francis ; but of course the marriage will only take place in a year or two.”

“ Wait a moment,” said the emperor, seeing that the admiral was about to rise ; “ I have an important message to send to Henry, a warning, a prophecy ; can you tell me, my dear admiral, what has become of a young nobleman named Gabriel de Loryes, Count de Montgomery ? ”

“ Certainly I can ; he is captain of the Scotch Guard, and in great favor with the king.”

“ In great favor ? really ! ”

“ Has your imperial majesty any thing to say against this young man ? ”

“ Nothing, nothing. But let me tell you a story.”

“ I am all attention.”

“ When I went through France, with the permission of my gracious brother, Francis I., to quell the revolt of my well-beloved subjects, the citizens of Ghent, the king of France was pleased to receive me with great honor, and even sent the dauphin, with many young nobles and pages, to meet me at Fontainebleau. You must know that it was only as a case of stern necessity that I consented to go through France, for I had been told that Francis I. intended to revenge the treaty of Madrid, by detaining me prisoner. To confess the truth, I was almost convinced of it myself; and in order to be prepared, I brought with me an astrologer, who possessed the power of reading the features of every one he saw, so as to know their most secret thoughts.

“ We were going on quietly, from Orleans to Fontainebleau, when we perceived a great body of men advancing towards us. At first we mistook them for a troop of horsemen coming to arrest us; but as they drew near, the waving plumes, the satin and embroidery, revealed that their mission was not hostile. Presently the dauphin greeted me in the most graceful and affectionate manner, bringing with him complimentary messages from his father. I was so touched by this courtesy, that I insisted upon embracing the graceful prince; and as I pressed him in my arms, his suite, anxious to behold one who had made some little noise in the world, came close upon us. Next to me, however, I found, to my great astonishment, my astrologer, Angelo Policastro, the Milanese. Astonished at his audacity in thus mingling with the royalty and nobility of France—‘ Hallo, Signor

Angelo,' said I, 'what are you doing there? Get out of the way!'

" 'I am not in the way, sire; I am in my own place,' he replied.

" Suspecting that something threatened the prosperity of our journey, I allowed him to remain—telling him that I should expect an explanation when we reached our resting-place.

" 'I will explain all, sire, only I beg of you to look well at that fair young man with the long hair, who stands next to you.'

" 'I see him,' replied I.

" 'That is all I ask of your majesty—you shall know more anon.'

" No sooner had I retired to my apartment than Angelo entered. 'Well, Angelo,' said I, 'what have you got to tell me about this young man?'

" 'Did your majesty remark the deep wrinkle which, notwithstanding his youth, that young man carries between his eyebrows?'

" 'By my faith, I did not look so closely at him.'

" 'Well, sire, that line is what in cabalism is called the line of death: that young man is destined to kill a king.'

" 'A king, or an emperor?'

" 'That I cannot tell, unless I could get some of his hair.'

" 'His hair! How is that to be done?'

" 'I know not.' As he spoke, the daughter of the gardener entered my room, with her arms full of flowers, for the vases. Going up to her, and putting my hand in my pocket, I drew forth a handful of gold pieces. 'Look here, my child,' said I, taking her to the window, and showing

her the young man, who was waiting in the court, with the rest of the suite, 'do you see that fine young man?'

" 'I do,' said she.

" 'What do you think of him?' said I.

" 'I think him very handsome, and very finely dressed.'

" 'Well, child, I want you to get me a lock of that young man's hair, and you shall have, to-morrow morning, twenty more gold pieces.'

" 'But how am I to contrive it, sire?'

" 'That is not my business, my pretty child—all I can do is to give you a Bible.'

" 'A Bible?'

" 'Yes—so that you may see how Delilah contrived to cut off Samson's hair.'

" The young girl blushed; then, nodding to me, she smilingly left the room. I know not whether she followed my instructions, but I know that the next morning she brought me the shining golden lock I had demanded. Ah, my dear admiral, these women are mighty cunning!"

" But your majesty has not finished the story," said the admiral.

" Oh! there is very little more to tell. I gave the lock of hair thus obtained to Signor Angelo; and after various cabalistic operations, he declared that the sovereign whom this young man was destined to kill, wore the *fleur-de-lys* in his crown. Now, my dear admiral, the fair young man with the deep wrinkle between his brows, was no other than the Count de Montgomery, captain of the Scotch Guard of my brother Henry II."

" How! Can your majesty suspect?" said the admiral.

" I?" replied the emperor, "I suspect no one: I merely tell you of this prophecy, so that my good brother Henry

may beware of the line of death which distinguishes his captain of the guard."

"His majesty shall be warned," said the admiral.

"And in case you should forget it," said the emperor, "let me give you this." So saying, he took from his neck a massive gold chain, to which was appended the diamond star, which was called, in allusion to the Spanish possessions in America, the Star of the West, and threw it over his neck. Coligny bowed his knee to receive the royal present; but Charles, raising him to his feet, embraced him, and the admiral took his leave.

At the door he met Emmanuel-Philibert, who was hastening to offer his respect and affection to the emperor, who seemed nobler to him now, than in the height of his glory and renown.

The prince and the admiral saluted each other courteously. They had met on the field of battle, and knew how to esteem each other's prowess.

"Has your majesty any further commands?" said Coligny.

"No commands, admiral," said the emperor, looking at Philibert with a significant smile; "but tell his majesty that, should our spiritual cares and duties leave us any leisure time, we may perhaps be able to find a husband for the princess Marguerite of France." Then, leaning on the arm of Emmanuel, he entered the inner room.

CHAPTER XV.

AFTER THE ABDICATION.

ALTHOUGH the present chapter is somewhat irrelevant to our story, we cannot refrain from writing it, because it follows the fortunes of Charles V. into the obscurity of private life, from the day of his abdication, October 25, 1555, to that of his death, on the 21st of September, 1558.

The various political affairs which Charles V. had to regulate in the Low Countries—the abdication of the empire in favor of Ferdinand, which immediately followed that of his hereditary kingdoms in favor of Don Philip—detained the emperor for another year in Brussels. It was not until the beginning of September, 1556, that he was able to leave Brussels for Ghent, escorted by the nobles, ambassadors, magistrates, and officers of state.

Don Philip had insisted on accompanying his father to Flushing, where he was to embark for Spain. The emperor, no longer able to sit a mule, travelled in a litter. He was accompanied by the two queens, his sisters, and by Emmanuel-Philibert and his two inseparable companions, Leone and Scianca-Ferro.

Long and sorrowful were the adieus, at this last farewell. The emperor, who had wielded the sceptre of the world, was

for ever separating himself from all he had loved—from his sisters, his son, his nephew, perhaps most loved of all. He was also quitting the world for ever; for it was his intention, on his arrival in Spain, to enter a monastery.

The emperor had insisted upon giving his farewell audiences on the eve of his departure; feeling, as he said, that if they took place on the morrow, he should never have the courage to set sail.

The first of whom Charles took leave was his son, whom he loved the least of all. He embraced him; and then, with that majesty which he pre-eminently possessed, he gave him his blessing, and, in a few last words, conjured him to maintain the peace of Europe. Then, turning to Emmanuel-Philibert, who was present, he strained him to his heart, and still holding him in his arms, motioned Don Philip to approach.

“My dear son,” said he, “I have given you much—I have given you Naples, Flanders, and the Indies—I have given you all I possessed. But remember that neither Naples, with her palaces, nor the Low Countries, with their merchant-ships floating on her waters, nor the two Indies, with their mines of silver, gold, and precious stones, can be compared to the treasure which I give you in your cousin, Emmanuel-Philibert, a man of head and heart—an admirable commander and an admirable diplomatist. Consider him not as a subject, but as a brother; and even then I know not whether he will be treated as he deserves.”

Emmanuel-Philibert, overwhelmed, sank at his uncle's feet; but the emperor, raising him, placed him in the arms of Don Philip. “Now go,” said he, “go—leave me! It is weakness for men like us to weep over a short separation in this world. May we all lead such a Christian life that, a few years hence, we may be united above!”

Don Philip and Emmanuel-Philibert remounted their horses and returned to Brussels.

At length, on the morning of the 10th of September, the emperor set sail. Scarcely was he out of sight of land, when he was met by an English vessel, sent by his daughter-in-law, Queen Mary, entreating that her father-in-law would not pass so near the coast of Great Britain without paying her a visit. The Earl of Arundel, who was the ambassador sent by Mary on this mission, added his own respectful entreaties to those of his sovereign.

"My lord," said the emperor, "I cannot imagine that it would be any great pleasure for so great a queen to present a private gentleman as her father-in-law. However, my lord, it will depend upon the wind."

The two queens were on the same vessel with their brother, and a fleet of sixty vessels escorted the imperial frigate. But, seeing that the emperor passed before all the English ports without making any signal, he placed himself in the rear of the imperial squadron, and sailed with it as far as Laredo, where Charles V. was received by the Lord High Constable of Castile.

No sooner had Charles set foot on Spanish soil, than, falling on his knees, he reverently kissed the ground, saying, "I salute thee, oh mother earth! and as, from my mother's womb, I came forth naked, to be clothed with all thy honors, I now return to thee, to claim a final home within thy bosom." Scarcely had he finished this address, when a violent tempest arose, so that all the fleet, including the imperial vessel, perished in the port, burying in the ocean all the treasures which the emperor had brought from Germany and Flanders.

It would seem that these vessels, having borne the greatest man of the century, had scorned ever to carry the

fortunes of a less exalted personage. And well was it that something testified respect for the fallen fortunes of Charles V. ; for men remained cold and indifferent before this great change. At Burgos, for example, no deputation came out to meet him, nor did the citizens even open their windows to see him as he passed. "It would seem," said the emperor, as he noticed this neglect, "that the inhabitants of Burgos literally believe what I said at Larida—that I came naked into Spain!"

On that evening, however, a nobleman named Don Bartolomea Miranda, coming to pay his homage to his sovereign, said, "It is exactly a year, sire, to-day, since your majesty first abandoned the vanities of this world, to dedicate yourself to the service of God."

"Yes," replied Charles; "and it is exactly one year since I began to repent having done so very foolish a thing!"

Then Charles V. recalled that sad and solitary evening, when he was forced to rise from his couch, to arrange his own fire and light his own candles, having no other society than the ambassador of a foreign court.

When the emperor reached Valladolid, he was met by a troop of horsemen, headed by his grandson, Don Carlos, who was then a child of about eleven years of age. After the first greetings, the boy, who managed his horse admirably, rode by the side of his grandfather's litter, respectfully raising his cap whenever he spoke to him.

Charles V., who now saw his grandson for the first time, gazed on him with admiration and affection; and no sooner did they arrive within the palace, than he sent for him.

"I thank you, my dear grandson," said he, "for your attention in coming to meet me."

“ It was no more than my duty,” replied the boy; “ am I not twice your subject?—am I not your grandson and your subject? Besides, had I not come out of duty, I should have come from curiosity.”

“ Indeed ! ” said the emperor.

“ Yes—for I have heard so much of you!—that you were a most illustrious emperor, and that you had done so many great deeds.”

“ Really ! ” said Charles V. “ Would you like to hear all about these great deeds ? ”

“ It would be a great pleasure, and an immense honor for me to hear them related by you.”

“ Well, then, sit down, and I will tell you every thing.”

“ Thank your majesty, I would rather stand in your presence.”

Then the emperor proceeded to relate all his wars with Francis I., the Turks, and the Protestants. Don Carlos listened with great attention; and when the emperor had concluded, exclaimed,

“ Yes—that is exactly it ! ”

“ But,” replied the emperor, “ you have not done me the honor of telling me what you think of my adventures, and whether you think I conducted myself like a brave general.”

“ Oh,” replied Don Carlos: “ I am perfectly satisfied with your general behavior: but there is one thing that I cannot forgive.”

“ I am sorry,” said the emperor, smiling; “ pray tell me to what you allude.”

“ I mean,” said the young prince, with great gravity, “ when you were obliged to fly from Innspruck, before the duke Maurice.”

“ Oh, I couldn't help that,” replied the emperor, laugh-

ing ; “ he surprised me when I was alone—I had no one near me.”

“ Well, no matter—I would not have fled.”

“ But since I could not resist him ? ”

“ No matter—I would not have fled.”

“ Then I must have allowed myself to be taken prisoner ; and that would have been a great imprudence.”

“ No matter—I would not have fled.”

“ Tell me, then, what you would do, if I were now to set thirty men after you.”

“ I would not fly,” replied the prince.

The emperor’s brow darkened. Calling to the prince’s tutor, “ Sir,” said he, “ take away your pupil. I congratulate you upon the education he is receiving—for he promises to be one of the greatest warriors of the family.”

Being alone with his sister that evening, the emperor said, “ Sister, I think Philip is unlucky in his son. His manners and his thoughts are not those of his age, and he seems to me very obstinate. I fear for what may happen when he is grown up. Watch him well, and write me what you think of him.”

Three days after the emperor’s departure, Queen Eleanor wrote to her brother : “ If the manners of your grandson displease you, after knowing him but one day, how much more do they displease me, after knowing him for three ! ”

This boy, who so disapproved the flight of Innsbruck, was the same Don Carlos whom his father put to death twelve years later.

At Valladolid the emperor took leave of all his court, retaining only twelve servants and twelve horses, together with some books and a few favorite articles of household furniture. A few gentlemen volunteered to accompany him ; and, bidding adieu to the two queens, he set off for

Palença. Palença was but eighteen miles from the monastery of St. Just, belonging to the order of St. Jerome, which the emperor had chosen as the place of his retreat. The year before, he had sent an architect to construct him an apartment, consisting of six cells leading into each other, and instructing him to lay out a garden according to a plan designed by himself. This garden was the most beautiful feature of the imperial retreat. It was divided in the middle by a murmuring stream of water, and planted with orange trees, citrons, and fragrant cedars, which sent their perfumes into the apartments of the illustrious anchorite.

In 1542 Charles V. had visited the monastery of St. Just, and on leaving it, had said, "This is a fit retreat for a modern Dioclesian."

The emperor took possession of his apartment on the 24th of February, 1557—the anniversary of his birth, and a day which had always been fortunate for him. "To-day," said he, as he stood on the threshold of his cell, "to-day I am born to a spiritual life, as, years ago, I was on this day born to a terrestrial one."

From this moment he held little communication with the outer world. Occasionally some of his former courtiers paid him a visit, and once or twice a year he received letters from his son Philip, from the Emperor Ferdinand, and from the two queens his sisters. The only amusements he had were his promenades in the garden of which we have already spoken, and now and then a dinner given to some chance visitor, whom he would detain till evening, saying, "Come, stay a little, and see the life of a recluse!" Besides these, he had his birds, in whose society he took great pleasure, carefully attending to all their wants.

This life lasted a year; but, at the end of this time, the imperial recluse, deeming himself not yet sufficiently

withdrawn from the world, said to the Archbishop of Toledo who paid him a visit on the anniversary of his entering the convent,

“ Monsieur, I have lived fifty-seven years for the world ; one year for my intimate friends ; and now I desire to dedicate to God alone the few remaining months of my existence.” And, thanking the prelate for his visit, he desired him not to come again, until he should be called to perform the last offices for the emperor’s soul.

From this day the emperor remained in a complete seclusion, resembling in austerity that of the monks themselves, with whom he ate, and all of whose discipline he observed—allowing himself only the relaxation of praying for the souls of the soldiers, sailors, and officers who had been slain in his service.

About the beginning of July, in this year, 1558, weary of attending the funeral ceremonies of others, he resolved to arrange his own—an idea to which he had been for some time devoted. He had at first been prevented by the fear of ridicule from giving way to this idea ; but it finally became too strong to be resisted, and he communicated his desire to a monk of the convent, named father Jean Reyola.

It was with fear and trembling that the august recluse confided his cherished desire to the monk ; but, so far from opposing it, the father, to the emperor’s great joy, said that, although the idea was a singular one, yet it appeared to him to be fraught with the most exemplary piety. The approbation of a humble monk, however, not being deemed sufficient, in a case of so much importance, Reyola undertook to procure the assent of the Archbishop of Toledo. The monk, being furnished with an escort, consequently set out on his mission, while the emperor awaited his return with the liveliest impatience.

At last, after an absence of a fortnight, the monk returned. The answer was favorable—the archbishop considered the desire of the emperor very holy and devout.

From this moment, a sort of holiday reigned throughout the monastery, and nothing was thought of but the preparations for the funeral of the emperor, which were to be on a scale worthy of the occasion, and of the emperor who was to be interred while yet alive.

The first work undertaken was the construction of a magnificent mausoleum, in the centre of the church. Father Vorgas, who was both architect and sculptor, prepared a design which was approved by the emperor, and to execute which the necessary workmen were sent for from Palença. For five weeks, twenty workmen were busily engaged on this mausoleum, and at the end of this time it was declared completed. It was forty feet in length, fifty high, and thirty in width. On the various panels were frescoes, recording the principal events in the history of the house of Austria, and of the principal battles of Charles V. On the summit was the open bier, having on the left a statue of Fame, and on the right a statue of Immortality.

Every preparation being now completed, the 24th of August was appointed for the celebration of these meek obsequies. As early as five o'clock, four hundred wax lights, which had been dyed black, were lighted round the sarcophagus, around which stood, torch in hand, the emperor and all his followers. At seven o'clock, Charles V., dressed in a long black robe, and bearing a lighted torch, having a monk on each side of him, placed himself on a seat prepared for him in front of the altar. There, he listened to his own funeral service, from the *requiem* to the *requiescat*—whilst six monks of six different orders, said six masses in the adjacent chapels. When this ceremony was concluded,

the emperor, kneeling on the steps of the altar, resigned his torch into the hands of the friar, saying,—

“ I supplicate Thee, Oh arbiter and monarch of our life and our death ! that, as this priest takes from me this light, which I give up to him in all humility, so wilt thou receive my soul, which I recommend to thy infinite mercy ! ”

The prior then placed the torch in a massive silver candlestick, which had been presented to the church by the dead-alive monarch.

Mass being over, the emperor rose from his seat ; but, not yet satisfied with the ceremonies that had taken place, he ordered one of the flag-stones to be raised, and a grave to be dug in the earth. This being done, the emperor wrapped himself in a velvet pall, and lay down in the grave—closing his eyes, and crossing his hands on his breast, in the attitude of a man really dead.

Then the officiating priests began to chant the *de profundis* ; and the assistants, forming themselves into procession, walked round the grave, sprinkling holy water upon the body.

This ceremony lasted two hours. At the end of that time, the emperor had become so wet and chilled from the holy water, that it was impossible for him to move—so that when the two monks raised him in their arms, he said,

“ My brethren, I think it is scarcely worth while to take me away from here ! ”

He was, however, placed in his bed ; but, notwithstanding all their care, he expired in exactly one month from that day, and the funeral was celebrated in earnest.

It was on the 21st of September, 1558, that Charles V. expired, in the arms of the Archbishop of Toledo, who had been hurriedly sent for. He was in his fifty-eighth year, and had reigned forty-four.

Strada, the historian, in his "History of Flanders," says that, on the night of the death of Charles V., a lily bloomed in the garden of the monastery of St. Just, and that this lily was placed on the altar in the chapel, as an emblem of the purity of the emperor's soul.

So much for the judgment of history! We prefer to remain merely a novelist.

PART II.



CHAPTER I

THE COURT OF FRANCE.

ABOUT a year after the abdication of Charles V., at Brussels, at the time when the emperor was entering the monastery of St. Just—when the golden harvest was ripe on the plains of St. Germain, and the brilliant July sun gave to the foliage those warm tints so loved by painters—a brilliant cavalcade issued from the gates of the chateau of St. Germain. It consisted of Henry II. of France; his sister, Madame Margaret; his mistress, the beautiful Duchess Valentinois; of the dauphin, Francis, his eldest son; of his eldest daughter, Elizabeth de Valois; and of the young queen of Scotland, Mary Stuart, accompanied by the principal lords and ladies of the court.

The house of Valois, which had reached the throne in the person of Francis I., was now at the height of its prosperity. Watching this cavalcade from an iron balcony, leaning on the iron balustrade, wrought like the finest lace, stood Queen Catherine de Medicis, with the two young

princes, her sons, one of whom was afterwards Charles IX., and the other Henry III., then in their sixth and seventh years; whilst the little princess, Margaret, afterwards queen of Navarre, then five years old, peeped through the bars, and smiled at her father.

These children had been left at home, as being too young to follow the hunt, for which the royal party were preparing. Catherine de Medicis had excused herself from joining it, on the plea of indisposition; and as Queen Catherine was a woman of excellent health, and never did any thing without a good reason, we may conclude that she had some motive for being indisposed on this particular occasion.

As all the people composing this cavalcade are destined to play an important part in our history, it may not be out of place to give a description of each, individually.

Let us begin with Henry II., who was at the head of the cavalcade, having on his right hand his sister Margaret, and on his left the beautiful Duchess Valentinois. He was at this period about thirty-nine years of age, with a fine black beard, fine eyes, and a warlike countenance. If not so finely formed as his father, he was far more graceful and elegant in his movements. War was his only pastime; and when he had not the reality, he would invent tournaments and sham-fights, to satisfy his taste. He had only learning enough to read the poets with tolerable facility; but, guided by his accomplished sister, Margaret, by his talented mistress, Diana, and by his fascinating ward, Mary Stuart, he was a liberal patron of the arts. He was, besides, the most active man in his kingdom. Two hours of every morning and every evening were dedicated to state affairs. He heard mass every morning, being a good Catholic, as he proved by wishing that he might live to see his minister, Dubourg, who was a Protestant, burnt at the stake—a pleasure, however,

which was denied him, as the king died six months before the minister was burnt.

At twelve o'clock, precisely, the king dined. After dinner he repaired, with all the court, to visit the queen, Catherine de Medicis. "There," says Branthomme, "he found himself surrounded by earthly goddesses, each more beautiful than the other. Then, whilst he conversed with his wife or sisters, each gentleman, singling out the lady he loved best, paid his court to her for two hours."

Then the king proceeded to his amusements, which consisted of tennis, racket, and ball. Henry II. was a distinguished player at all these games—he almost always won. But though the stakes were some five or six hundred crowns, he never received them, but left them to be divided among his attendants.

In winter, in a hard frost, he would suddenly repair on horseback to Fontainebleau, to skate on the ponds there, or, erecting a fortress of snow, he and his courtiers would attack it with snow-balls.

At other times, fencing was the favorite diversion—an amusement which had cost one of the courtiers an eye, and for which the king had most humbly asked his pardon.

The ladies were always present at these games; for the king was fond of the society of women, and thought nothing could be complete without them.

In the evening, after supper, the king and his courtiers again repaired to the queen. Dancing was not then the fashion at the court, and a ball was of rare occurrence, so that the evening was almost entirely dedicated to conversation and discussions upon polite literature. Rousard, Daurat, and Murel (both wits and poets, says Branthomme), together with Messieurs Danesius and Amyot, preceptors of the young prince Francis, furnished the staple of conversa-

tion, often reciting impromptu verses, to the great delight of the ladies. There never was a merrier, a wittier, or a more splendid court ; and few only remembered the terrible fate which had been predicted for Henry on his ascent to the throne. An astrologer had predicted to the king that he would be killed in single combat. Monsieur de Montmorency, in whose presence the prophecy had been made, was for throwing both prophecy and prophet out of the window ; but the king declared that, not only did he believe in the prophecy, but that he considered it a very honorable death, provided his adversary were worthy of him.

This prophecy, almost entirely forgotten, had been once more talked of, after the return of Admiral Coligny from his visit to Charles V. But Henry, who had so readily admitted the first prophecy, scoffed at the latter as an impossibility, for he knew that he could never fight a duel with the captain of his Scotch guard. Therefore, instead of sending away the Count of Montgomery from him, he took him more than ever into his confidence.

As we have said before, on the king's right, rode his sister, the Princess Margaret. This princess, one of the most beautiful and accomplished of her day, was born in this very chateau of St. Germain in 1523, and was consequently, at the time of our introducing her to our readers, in the thirty-third year of her age.

How came it to pass that so beautiful and accomplished a princess was still unmarried ? There was for this, two reasons—one of which she avowed openly, the other she scarcely acknowledged to herself. When she was quite a girl, it had been proposed to her to marry Monsieur de Vendôme, but she had scornfully refused to marry a subject ; this was the avowed reason of her being single. The secret reason was this :—

At the time of the interview at Nice between Paul and Francis, she had been taken by the Queen of Navarre, her aunt, to visit the Duke of Savoy. A marriage between Emmanuel-Philibert and herself had then been proposed. Emmanuel, with the indifference of his age, had scarcely remarked the presence of the princess. It had not been the same with Margaret; the young prince had made a deep impression upon her heart; and when the negotiations were broken off, and her father declared war against Savoy, she wept in despair.

Twenty years had now elapsed, but still the Princess Margaret hoped on, and had, on various pretexts, refused all other alliances. She was now celebrated for her grace and her learning. She had regular features, large hazel eyes, shaded by long, black eye-lashes, and with undulating golden hair. Her mouth had one defect in respect to regularity, but this added to the voluptuous expression of her face; her lips, though red like coral, were too full, though they contrasted admirably with her skin, which bore all the tints of the pearl, whose name she bore.

On the other side of the king, as we have said, rode the celebrated Diana de St. Vallier, comtesse de Brezé, daughter of the lord of St. Vallier.

This Monsieur de St. Vallier was one of the accomplices of Charles de Bourbon, and had been condemned to be decapitated, but had received while on the scaffold, a commutation of his sentence, changing his punishment to solitary confinement for life—if, indeed, that could be called preferable to death.

Every thing that related to Diana seemed marvellous and mysterious. Born in 1499, she was, now that we introduce her to our readers, fifty-eight years of age; yet so young and beautiful did she appear, that she threw into the shade

all the youngest and most beautiful princesses of the court, and the king loved her above all else in the world; and in 1548, had created her Duchess of Valentinois.

It was said that the beautiful duchess was descended from the enchantress Melusina, and that her singular beauty, and her singular power over the king, was owing to this descent. This unfading beauty was owing, said some, to draughts of liquid gold which she daily imbibed. But the middle ages attributed every thing to liquid gold and the philosopher's stone. Her power over the heart of the king was owing entirely, it was said, to a magic ring which she had given him, and which he always wore.

This last report had gained so much credence, that the following anecdote is told in relation to it:—

The king being ill, Catherine de Medecis had said to Madame de Nemours, "My dear duchess, the king has a great affection for you; I wish you would go and see him in his chamber, and sit with him a little while. In the course of conversation, try if you cannot draw from his hand a ring which he wears on the fourth finger; 'tis the talisman given him by Madame de Valentinois." The duchess willingly obeyed, for no one loved Madame de Valentinois, at least none of the women; not that she was unamiable; but the young ones disliked her for remaining still young, and the old ones because she did not grow old.

Madame de Nemours succeeded in her mission. In a moment of dalliance, taking Heury's hand in hers, she drew from it the magic ring, of which the king himself did not know the power. Scarcely was the ring removed, before the king directed Madame de Nemours to whistle for his valet. [It must be remembered that, until Madame de Maintenon invented bells, servants were summoned by gold or silver whistles.]

When the valet-de-chambre appeared, the king ordered that no one else should be admitted. "Not even Madame de Valentinois?" said the valet, astonished. "She no more than the rest," said the king.

Accordingly, when Madame de Valentinois presented herself, she was refused admittance. Having been refused three times in succession, the duchess ordered the valet to stand aside, and boldly entered the king's chamber. Going up to his bedside, she soon discovered the truth, and insisted on Madame de Nemours returning the ring. Madame de Nemours dared not refuse, and the ring was restored to the king, who from that moment never ceased to love his mistress.

For our own part, we cannot admit that any magic was required to preserve Diana's almost fabulous beauty, which Ninon de l'Enclos retained, a hundred years later, even to a more advanced age; but we are disposed to attribute much to the care she took of her person, and to the cold baths which, both in summer and winter, she took night and morning. Every morning, too, the duchess rose at daylight, and either walked or rode for two hours, after which she returned to bed, where she read or conversed with her women until her dinner hour, which was twelve o'clock.

Mezerai the historian, has told a very extraordinary story of Diana, which we cannot think founded on fact. He says that Jean de Poitiers, Lord of St. Vallier, was only pardoned at the intercession of his daughter Diana, from whom Francis I. took, as a reward, the most precious treasure a young girl has to bestow—her virgin honor. Now, at the time of the condemnation of Jean de Poitiers, Diana was four and twenty, and had, for several years, been the wife of the Count de Brezé; and therefore it seems impossible that, being so long a wife, she could have had any thing more precious than her husband's honor to bestow.

However, let this pass ; we merely mentioned this anecdote to prove that a novel, besides being more amusing than history, is even more exact. We will, therefore, tell our readers that, at this period, Diana, as we have said, was fifty-eight years old ; had been a widow for twenty-six, and the mistress of Henry II. during the last two-and-twenty—and with all this, she did not look over five-and-twenty—had an unblemished complexion, not one wrinkle on her brow ; her hair, black as jet, fell in long curls over her shoulders ; her figure was admirable, and her bust and arms were models.

We must be forgiven this long historical dissertation—for surely, if any one could excuse it, it would be Diana, whose royal lover had openly adopted her colors,—black and white,—and who, in allusion to her pagan name, had taken a crescent for his crest, with the motto, *Donec totum impleat orbem.*

Immediately following the king, was the Dauphin of France, Francis, riding between his sister Elizabeth and his betrothed bride, Mary Stuart.

The dauphin was fourteen years of age ; his sister and his bride were both a year younger.

The dauphin was a tall, pale, thin youth, having an air of languor and suffering, for which the physicians of the day in vain tried to account, but of which they might have found an explanation in Suetonius, in the chapter of the Twelve Cæsars, where he describes the excursions of Nero with his mother Agrippina. Francis was habitually silent and melancholy, and his eyes, unless when beaming with passion, as they gazed on Mary Stuart, were cast on the ground. Catherine, as a foreigner and a catholic, had many enemies, mostly amongst the Huguenots, who commanded the press in those days, and who have accused her of every species of

crime. The premature death of her two sons, Francis and Charles, would however warrant many suppositions, particularly as she was known to prefer Henry III. to all her other children.

The Princess Elizabeth, though younger than her brother, was far stronger, and more healthy than he. Her birth had been a blessing to her mother, and a cause of public rejoicing, for she was born on the day on which peace was signed with England. In after years her marriage brought an alliance with Spain, so that she was the benefactress of her people. Her father doated on her, and was proud of her grace, beauty, and wit. Having married his younger daughter to the Duke of Lorraine, he replied to those who wondered that he should have married her before her elder sister, "Do you think Elizabeth is to be put off with a dukedom? No: she must have a kingdom, and one of the greatest too, for is she not great, beautiful, and noble beyond all others?" She did obtain one of the most ancient monarchies of Europe, the hand of Philip, and the crown of Spain—but with it came misfortune and early death.

But a still more dreadful destiny was in store for the youthful Queen of Scotland, who smilingly rode by her side.

There are misfortunes so great, destinies so fatal, that they have re-echoed throughout the world, and even at a distance of centuries still find sympathy and pity—such were the misfortunes of Mary, that, although many of them were not undeserved, the punishment so far surpassed the crime as to have made posterity forget, or at least forgive it.

But at this period of her life Mary had no care. Her mother, Mary of Guise, bore the weight of the crown, left by the heroic James V. to his daughter. On the 20th of August, 1548, she had set her foot on French ground at

Morlaix, accompanied by her little companions, forming a galaxy of beauty called the four Marys, all of whom were of the same age. Mary Fleming, Mary Seaton, Mary Livingston, and Mary Beaton were these friends called. In France were the few happy days of her life spent,—here, under the watchful care of her uncles, the Guises, and the affection of the Valois of France, she had grown from a child into a charming young girl.

“Your daughter,” said the Cardinal of Lorraine, writing to his sister Mary of Guise, “increases in health, beauty, and learning; every day the king passes much of his time with her, and she entertains him with so much wit and sense that he is charmed with her, and talks to her as he would to a woman of five-and-twenty.”

Wilful and passionate, Mary Stuart could be made to do nothing she did not like; but any thing she did like, she entered into with an ardor which foretold the woman, extreme, both in love and hate, she afterwards became. Flattered, loved, courted, blazing with jewels, resplendent with beauty, Mary Stuart was the wonder of that court, so full of wondrous beauty. Catherine de Medicis, who loved little beyond her son Henry, had a great affection for the young queen. “Our little queen has but to smile,” would she say, “to turn all heads, so lovely and irresistible is she.” Rousard, in a poem superlatively characteristic of the age, lavishes all the exaggerations of poetry upon her :

In spring, among the lilies born,
 Her body shamed them with its whiteness :
 The rose, steeped with Adonis' blood,
 Lent cheek and lip her blushing brightness.
 Love gave her eyes their glance of fire ;
 The graces all their gifts bestowed ;
 And, having left their home in heaven,
 With their new sister claimed abode.

These charming flatteries were exquisitely appreciated and enjoyed by the royal maiden—neither verse nor prose had any secrets from her. To her, the Greek, Latin, Italian, English, French, and Spanish, were equally familiar. Poetry, art, and science, mingled their bays to weave them into a crown for her young brows. Admiration followed her course, whether at Fontainebleau, St. Germain, Chambord, or the Louvre. There, indeed, beneath the painted domes of Primatrice, the pictures of Titian, the frescoes of Rosso, the master-pieces of Leonardo da Vinci, the statues of St. Germain Pilon, the sculptures of Jean Goujon, in the magnificent halls designed by Philibert-Delorme, she seemed alone in her place, not a mortal princess, but a creation of genius—an emanation from the fancy of the greatest men the arts ever produced, so beautiful, so full of grace, of intellect, and poetry—she was as Galatea, Venus, or Hebe, descended from her pedestal, or issuing from the canvas of Titian, the master, at once voluptuous and sublime.

As we have not his pencil, let us try our pen to portray this wondrous beauty which enchanted the world, and was so fatal to its possessor.

Her skin, soft as the peach, with the bloom still on it, partook more of the lily than the rose. On her high, full brow, sat, in singular harmony, intellect, gentleness, and daring. There was a firmness and a recklessness in her whole aspect that indicated, that impelled by passion, she would not stop even at crime. The nose was well defined in form, though small, and inclined to the aquiline; her ears, so small and pink, and so well turned, looked like sea-shells. Her eyes, dark violet, shaded by their auburn lashes, surmounted by the delicate pencilled eyebrow, were transparent as an infant's, yet flashed at times with light and passion like a very woman's. Two small dimples played on each

side of the small and pouting mouth, whilst the oval contour of the face was terminated by a round and well-shaped chin, merging by delicate degrees into a white and well-turned throat. Such was this charming head which thirty-one years later was laid on the block at Fotheringay, and severed from the graceful body by the axe of the executioner.

If some powerful magician could have revealed to the admiring bystanders the fate of these kings, queens, and princesses, who so gayly and jauntily rode by under the shadow of the forest trees, there would not have been found one of those humbly clad peasants, curiously gazing now, who would have exchanged their homely garments for the cloth of gold, or the jewels they so admired.

As for ourselves, leaving this now joyous cavalcade to pursue its way through the hoary forest, we will return to the palace, and see what motive had induced Catherine de Medicis to remain at home.

CHAPTER II.

THE ROYAL HUNTING PARTY.

No sooner had the cavalcade disappeared, than Catherine, taking her two sons with her, left the balcony and re-entered her apartment ; the two princes she confided to their preceptors, whilst the Princess Margaret, who was too young to commit any indiscretion, remained alone with her mother. Taking her by the hand, Catherine, after making a sign to her attendants, proceeded to her oratory.

Catherine was then a very handsome woman, of about thirty-eight years of age. Her golden colored hair and deep gray eyes, her brilliant complexion, beautiful arms, and splendid bust, added to extraordinary dignity of carriage, made her altogether a remarkable princess.

She had suffered much, and had studiously hidden her sufferings in her heart. During the first ten years of her marriage she had been constantly in fear of a divorce, and it was not until after the birth of the Dauphin Francis, her first child, born in the eleventh year of her marriage, that this fear ceased ; but then Diana de Poitiers had during the last nine years been the mistress of her husband.

Instead of rivalling or opposing the beautiful duchess,

Catherine submitted without a word or a struggle. Then, too, the proud nobility of France, whose power and titles dated from the field of battle, looked down with contempt on the mercantile princes of Florence, whose arms were not cannon balls, but pills. Even the gentle Mary Stuart would sarcastically say to the Duchess of Valentinois, "Are you coming to pay a visit to the Florentine shop-keeper?"

Catherine knew all this, but resented it not; she watched and waited. For nothing definite, but still feeling within her the remote consciousness of genius, and knowing that for some purpose it was given to her, she watched and waited.

The only persons in whom Catherine confided were the Guises; Henry, her weak husband, confided in all, and was governed alternately by all who chose to take the trouble to obtain an influence over him.

It was indeed a noble and powerful family—that of the Guises, and it was a rare and grand sight to see the Duke Claude repairing to the Louvre, surrounded by his six sons.

These six brothers, at the death of their father, possessed a revenue of more than four millions of francs, which, added to great talents, courage and ambition, made them one of the most powerful families of France.

The eldest was Francis, surnamed Le Balafré (*The Scarred*), and, historically speaking, the great Duc de Guise. His state was almost royal. He had chaplains and senechals, eight secretaries, twenty pages, eighty gentlemen in waiting, a hunting establishment equal to the king's, with hounds as thorough-bred, and horses of the highest Arab race, imported by him from Africa. Falcons, hawks, and ger-falcons were sent to him by Soliman, and other eastern princes. The king of Navarre wrote him an autograph letter, announcing the birth of his son—afterwards Henri IV.,

and the proud Montmorency, the first baron of France, styled him monseigneur, and signed himself "Your obedient and very humble servant," the duke replying by, "*Your ever affectionate friend,*" neither of which expressions, by the by, was sincere, as the houses of Guise and Montmorency were perpetually at war.

One must read the chronicles of the times to form an idea of the power of this great race, both at home and abroad, in the courts of the Louvre, the Vatican, or Windsor Castle, in the streets amongst the people, or on the field of battle in front of the enemy. In the Museum of Artillery there is an iron cuirass worn by Duke François at the siege of Metz, in which there are the marks of five musket balls, deadened by their contact with the massive iron breastwork.

He was more popular than the king: the people would watch around the gates of the Hotel de Guise to see him issue forth, mounted on *Fleur-de-lys* or *Mouton*, his favorite chargers, clad gallantly in erimson and gold, and followed by four hundred gentlemen, well mounted and superbly dressed. Then would the people throw up their caps, with loud shouts of "*Long live our duke!*" or, tearing down green branches, would bear them before him and strew flowers in his path.

In acknowledgment, the duke would rise in his stirrups as he did on the field of battle, in order to look far ahead, and courteously bow to the men, women, and children around. He was the true king: he did not rule either at the Louvre, at St. Germain, Fontainebleau, or Les Tournelles, but he held despotic sway in the public streets, and over the hearts and imagination of the population. He was the king of the people.

When Paul III., discontented with Philip's conduct in

his quarrel with Colonna, deposed Philip from the throne of Naples, and, at the risk of breaking the treaty of peace with Spain, offered the throne to the king of France, Henry II. gave the command of the army of Italy to the Duke François de Guise,

By this means, the Duke de Guise and the Connétable de Montmorency became great friends, for Guise being out of the country, he became the most important personage in France, and, whilst Guise was carrying on his ambitious projects on the field, Montmorency, who fancied himself a great politician, was pursuing his ambitious projects at home, which, for the moment, consisted in marrying his son to Diana, the daughter of the Duchess de Valentinois, by her husband, and the widow of the Duke de Castro, killed at the siege of Hesdin.

Next to the Duke Francis came the Cardinal of Lorraine,—almost as powerful in the church as his brother was in the field, and whom Pope Pius V. called the trans-alpine pope. He possessed all the audacity and pride of the Guises, with the subtlety and cunning of an Italian priest. It was he who conceived and carried into execution the *League*, which would have placed his nephew on the throne, had it not been that both uncle and nephew were assassinated by the *Forty-five*. The four younger Guises,—the Duc d'Aumale, the Primate, the Marquis d'Elbœuf, and the Cardinal of Guise,—always attended the levée of their brother, the Cardinal of Lorraine, after which they proceeded to that of the Duke Francis, their elder brother, and with him repaired to the king.

Both the temporal and spiritual heads of this house had taken measures to secure their influence at court. Francis had become the confidant of the king, whilst the cardinal had made himself the lover of the queen. L'Etoile, the

grave historian, relates a circumstance which leaves no doubt as to the latter fact. "One of my friends," says he, "being in bed with one of the cardinal's valets, in an ante-room, saw the Cardinal of Lorraine cross the chamber in the middle of the night, and enter the queen's apartment, having nothing on but his dressing-gown, which he held by the sleeves round his neck."

It was this very cardinal who now awaited the queen in her oratory. He was accompanied by a young man of about twenty-five, in a travelling-dress. When the queen perceived him, she exclaimed :

"Ah ! Monsieur de Nemours, is that you ? Do you come from Italy ? What news do you bring ?"

"Bad news, madame," replied the cardinal, whilst Nemours bowed respectfully to the queen.

"Has our cousin of Guise lost a battle ? Surely that is impossible ?"

"It would, as your majesty says, be impossible," replied Nemours. "He has not been conquered, but he has been betrayed by the Caraffas, and abandoned by the pope ; and he has sent me to tell the king that he can no longer maintain his position with honor to himself or to his majesty. He demands, therefore, a reinforcement or a recall."

"And you see, madame," interrupted the cardinal, "that according to our agreement, I have contrived that you should see Monsieur de Nemours first."

"But," said Catherine, "to recall Monsieur de Guise, would be to abandon the pretensions of the king of France to the throne of Naples, and my own to the duchy of Tuscany."

"Madame," replied the cardinal, "we shall soon have war in France, and then it will be neither Naples nor Florence, but Paris, that we must defend."

“ You are jesting, cardinal ! Surely both France and Paris can defend themselves.”

“ You are mistaken, madame,” replied the cardinal ; “ the best of our troops are with my brother in Italy, where certainly, without the treachery of the Caraffas and the Duke of Parma, he would have obliged King Philip to send a reinforcement to protect Naples. But now that Philip II. is assured that the troops he has already in Italy are sufficient to keep us in check, he will turn his eyes towards France—especially since the adventure of the nephew of the lord high constable, which gives the king of Spain an excuse for breaking the treaty.”

“ Do you mean his attack upon Douay ? ” said Catherine.

“ I do,” replied the cardinal.

“ Well,” said the queen, “ you know I do not love the admiral any more than you do ; therefore I am far from opposing any thing you may undertake against him.”

“ Meanwhile, what do you decide ? ” said the cardinal ; and, seeing that Catherine hesitated, he continued, “ you may speak before Monsieur de Nemours—for, although a Savoyard, he is as much with us as Emmanuel-Philibert is against us.”

“ Nay, you had better decide, cardinal. You know I am but a woman, and do not understand politics.”

The cardinal had understood the glance Catherine had directed towards him, and knew that she was not disposed to confide in Nemours. “ Still,” replied he, “ your majesty might venture to give an opinion.”

“ Well, then,” said Catherine, “ I think that his majesty has a right to be first informed of this great news. Therefore, if Monsieur de Nemours is not too tired, I should propose that he should take horse and follow the king, so as to

communicate to him the news I have inadvertently been the first to hear."

"I am never tired, madame," said the Duke de Nemours, "as long as I can serve the king."

"Then," said the cardinal, "I will provide you with a horse, and give orders that a council is to be held on the king's return."

The duke bowed respectfully, and stood aside to let the cardinal pass; but Catherine touched the cardinal on the arm, and he immediately said,

"Go on before me, Monsieur de Nemours."

Jacques de Nemours hesitated.

"Pass on," said the queen, extending her hand to him.

"Pass on first, duke—I desire you."

The duke then comprehended that the queen had probably something to say to the cardinal. Kissing the queen's hand, he passed out of the chamber, purposely closing the tapestry behind him.

"What have you to say to me, my dear queen?" said the cardinal.

"I merely wished to remind you," said Catherine, "that good King Louis XI., who in exchange for a loan of 500,000 crowns, gave my ancestor Lorenzo de Medicis the privilege of quartering the *fleur-de-lys* in our arms, was wont to say, 'If my nightcap knew of my plans, I would burn my nightcap.' Remember these words, my dear cardinal, and do not be too confiding."

The cardinal smiled; for he, of all the diplomatists of Europe, was said to be the most wary and suspicious. Yet he had found one even more suspicious than himself. It was true that this one was the Florentine, Catherine de Medicis! and, kissing the hand of the queen, they both passed into the court, where the young duke discreetly

awaited them. The cardinal gave the necessary orders to a page; and in a few minutes, Monsieur de Nemours, who had meanwhile informed himself of the direction of the chase, gracefully sprang into the saddle and disappeared down the main alley of the park.

Following the directions he had received, the young duke took the road to Poissy, in which direction he had been informed, the chase was gone—hoping that, when he had cleared the park, the sound of the horns would guide him to the presence of the king.

But when he reached the Poissy road, he could neither see nor hear any thing of the chase. Inquiring of a woodman whom he met, he was told that the hunt had led in the direction of Couflans. Towards Couflans, therefore, he turned his horse's head.

After about a quarter of an hour's riding, while crossing a side road, he saw in a neighboring cross-road, a horseman, standing up in his stirrups, and with his hand to his ear, looking and listening, as if in search of something or some one. He was evidently a huntsman who had lost himself, and was endeavoring to find his way.

Judging that a lost huntsman could afford him very little information as to the whereabouts of the king, Monsieur de Nemours passed on to the right, without questioning him. But the other, taking the duke for one of the party, and supposing that he could give him information of the direction of the chase, spurred on his horse, so that the duke and the huntsman soon met, and mutually recognized one another.

The lost huntsman was the captain of the Scotch Guard.

The two cavaliers saluted each other with the courtesy which distinguished the noblemen of that day.

The two who now greeted each other were besides of

the very highest rank. Nemours belonging to a princely house, and the Count de Montgomery dated his nobility from Roger de Montgomery, a Norman nobleman, who accompanied William the Conqueror to England.

At this period there existed in France several families, who, though untitled or bearing inferior titles, considered themselves superior in nobility and descent to many who bore the highest titles. The house of Savoy was nobler than the royal house that reigned in France. Montmorency, though bearing merely the title of baron; the Rohans, who had no title whatever; and the de Coucys, together with the Count Montgomery, were amongst the number of those who would have disdained higher titles. As the Duke de Nemours had supposed, Montgomery had lost trace of the hunt, and the place in which he now stood, commanding an entire view of the plain, allowed of his catching the first sight and sound of those of whom he was in search.

The two young noblemen, who had not met for six months, had much to question each other about—Montgomery, concerning Monsieur de Guise and the Italian campaign, and Nemours about the court of France and its intrigues.

They were at the most interesting part of their conversation, when the Count of Montgomery suddenly stopped: he had heard the distant cry of the hounds. As they listened, they beheld, at the extremity of the lane, an enormous boar, followed by the whole pack in full cry. Montgomery immediately sounded the view halloo, for the animal was followed by a single horseman accompanied by two ladies. As far as they could see, the horseman was the king; and the duke and Montgomery immediately rushed after them. The king had been the first to follow the boar; but the boar, who was no courtier, led his majesty such a dance through the thickest of the forest, that of all the train,

none but the Princess Margaret, Diana of Poictiers, and the young queen of Scotland, had had the hardihood to follow him. Notwithstanding the courage of these illustrious hunters, the difficulties of the ground and the thickness of the wood had compelled them to make several *detours*; and the depth of the ruts, which it was impossible to pass, would soon have carried both boar and dogs beyond the reach of their followers; but, at the termination of the forest, the boar, coming upon a dead wall, was forced to turn upon his steps.

Then the king, sure of his grey dogs, the finest race in the world, paused—which gave time for some of the huntsmen to join him. The dogs, having driven the boar again into the plain, the king was enabled to resume the hunt. Many, however, of the noble ladies and their cavaliers, remained behind longer than was necessary; and indeed seemed very little interested in the hunt, by the manner in which they were absorbed in each other's conversation. And so it happened that the king, when de Nemours perceived him, was alone with two ladies, who turned out to be Madame Valentinois and Mary Stuart—the former the best, and the latter the most courageous, rider of the whole court.

And now the animal, feeling that he had no chance of escape, resolved to die game. Placing himself against the trunk of a tree, in an instant he was attacked by the whole pack, and presently the yelping of the hounds and the horns of the huntsmen, warned every one to be in at the death. The king stood amidst the hounds, and as yet no one had joined him, excepting Mary and Diana, who had arrived at full gallop. Not one lock of the Duchess de Valentinois' hair had been disturbed; and the velvet cap was as firmly fixed on her head as when she started.

As for Mary Stuart, she had lost both veil and head-dress, and her magnificent hair streamed in the wind, and the animation of her cheeks and the brilliancy of her eyes, showed how excited she had been by the sport.

The huntsman now arrived on the scene of action, armed with an arquebus.

The animal made a splendid defence, and tore and gored several of the dogs, who were of such a high breed as only to fight more ardently at each wound they received.

The king thinking the fight had lasted long enough, signed to the huntsman to give him the arquebus. Henry was an excellent marksman; he took aim, the ball hit the boar between the eyes, but gliding down the bone, it struck one of the dogs and killed it.

The king, astonished not to see the boar fall, called for another arquebus; but the animal seeing a chance of escape, made a rush through the whole pack, and passing under the belly of the king's horse, was once more in the field. The king's horse reared and neighed with pain; the boar had gored him; his entrails were protruding; presently he rolled on the ground with the king under him; the boar again at bay turned on the king, and brave as was Henry, he was on the point of calling for aid, when a voice he well knew shouted in his ear,

“Do not move, sire, I am here.”

In an instant the king saw a blade flash and a sword plunged to the hilt into the body of his enemy; at the same moment two vigorous arms drew the king from his horse, and he was saved.

The king looked at the cavalier now disengaging his sword from the animal—it was the Count de Montgomery.

Having wiped it on the thick long grass near him, he approached the king as if nothing had happened.

“ Allow me to present to your majesty the Duke de Nemours, who has just returned from Italy, and brings you news of the Duke de Guise.”

CHAPTER III.

THE LORD HIGH CONSTABLE AND THE CARDINAL.

THE boar, having been taken with all the ceremonies imposed by St. Hubert on his disciples, to the great hall of St. Germain, was there quartered in the presence of the whole court, which gathered round the Duke de Nemours and the Count de Montgomery, with enthusiastic congratulations on the service they had been so fortunate as to render the king. Meanwhile, smiling and happy at the danger he had passed, the king repaired to his privy-chamber, where waited the cardinal of Lorraine and the lord high constable.

We have frequently in the few last pages mentioned Montmorency, the lord high constable, but we have not yet described him as we have the other heroes of this history. Let us therefore now evoke him, and as the soldiers did with the Connetable Charles de Bourbon, when after his death, placing him in the attitude of life, they made an artist paint his portrait, present to our readers his moral portraiture.

Anne de Montmorency was the representative of that house of the barons of France, or the first Christian barons of France, as they entitled themselves, which was founded

by Bouchard de Montmorency, hereditary high constable of France.

His titles were innumerable, and all dated from the towns and villages around Paris, so that the royal city itself seemed fenced in by the Montmorency's possessions.

In 1593, the period of which we are speaking, Anne de Montmorency was sixty-four years of age ; though he looked fully his age, there was a strength and vigor in his frame, a capability of action, a firmness of purpose, and a power of endurance, which betokened rather a man of thirty.

Vain and haughty, Montmorency submitted to the authority of the king from a respect for the right, but in reality he considered himself far above his sovereign master Henry II. Francis I. had been his hero, yet by means of a rough kind of flattery he contrived to maintain an influence over the present sovereign. Diana de Valentinois, who was a great friend of his, helped him, it is true, to maintain that influence, softening as she did with her bewitching looks and her-gentle voice, the asperities of this rough soldier.

He had been in three pitched battles, and with his idol, Francis I. before him, he achieved wonders, and would have been capable of conquering the world had it depended on hard blows. At Pavia he shared the fate of all, even of the king, and was taken prisoner. Like a true soldier, he hated all commerce and despised the law.

One very hot day, a president of one of the tribunals having asked for an audience, Montmorency received him standing, cap in hand.

"Come, sir," said he, "release yourself of what you have to say, and put on your cap."

The president, imagining that the lord high constable remained uncovered to do him honor, replied :

“ Oh, dear, my lord, I must remain uncovered as long as your lordship stands cap in hand.”

“ Fool,” replied Montmorency ; “ do you think it is to do you honor that I stand uncovered ? It is merely because of the heat.”

The president, confused and embarrassed, knowing not how to reply, merely stammered out a few words.

“ You are a fool, Mr. President,” exclaimed Montmorency ; “ a great fool. Go home and learn your lesson, and do not return here till you know it.”

The people of Bordeaux having revolted against the authorities and killed their governor, Montmorency was sent to quell the rebellion. So well known was his summary way of dealing, that the citizens of Bordeaux, when they heard of his coming, went out to meet him, and to propitiate him presented him with the keys of the city.

He was on horseback, armed *cap-à-pie*, when they came before him. Thrusting aside the keys, he said :

“ Get along with your keys ! I want none of your speeches, either. Here are some friends of mine, whose voices you shall soon hear,” added he, pointing to the cannon he had brought with him. “ As for the ringleaders of this precious rebellion, they shall all be hanged without remission ; so off with you ! ”

And he kept his word, for hanged they all were.

Another instance of his despotism took place in the same city. Monsieur de Strozzi, being with many of his followers in Bordeaux, came to visit M. de Montmorency. Although he was a relation of the queen's, and that the queen and Montmorency were always at daggers drawn, M. de Strozzi ventured to ask the lord high constable, if he would allow him to take possession of an old vessel in the harbor, in order to give it for fuel to his followers, many of

whom were poor and could not afford firewood. Montmorency immediately granted the permission, but some of the burghers of the town hearing of it, waited on Montmorency, and represented to him that the vessel was still seaworthy, and that it was a pity to destroy it.

“ A pity to destroy it ! I would have you know that what I order to be done must and shall be done, spite of every body ; and that if you say much, I will have your houses pulled down about your ears and burnt up as firewood ; so, mind your own business and be off ! ”

Montmorency hated the reformers, and persecuted them whenever it was in his power. One day, finding them assembled in prayer at Popincourt, he with his soldiers rushed into the meeting ; broke the benches, overthrew the pulpit, and had a bonfire made of the whole ; for this exploit he acquired the title of *Captain Burn-the-benches*.

With all this, Montmorency was especially devout, and was continually murmuring prayers ; the Lord’s prayer was an especial favorite of his, and was always mixed up with the most cruel orders, in a most grotesque fashion. He would speak thus :

“ Our father which art in Heaven, [*have that fellow hung !*] hallowed be thy name ; [*and this one to that tree,*] thy kingdom come ; [*flog that rascal !*] thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven ; [*shoot these fellows !*] give us this day our daily bread ; [*burn that village !*] and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us ; [*don’t let a single house stand !*] lead us not into temptation, [*if the people complain, throw them into the fire !*] but deliver us from evil, Amen ! ”

These speeches were called, the paternosters of the Lord High Constable.

Such was the man, seated at the fireplace, by the side of

the most courteous, the most gentle, the wittiest and the wisest prince of the church, the Cardinal of Lorraine. Two such opposite natures, both in high favor with the king and of great influence in the country, necessarily created much confusion.

Now, the family of the constable was as numerous as that of the Guises. By his wife, Anne of Savoy, he had had five sons, Messrs. Montmorency, d'Amville, de Mèrn, de Montbron, and de Thoré; and five daughters, the most beautiful of whom became abbess of the convent of St. Pierre, at Rheims; the other four were Mles. de la Tremouille, de Turenne, de Ventadour, and de Candale.

All these children had to be provided for; and the duke was far too avaricious to think of doing it himself, as long as the king was there to do it for him.

As the king entered, he made a military salute to Montmorency, and bowed most courteously and deferentially to the cardinal.

"My lords," said the king, "I have sent for you in order to deliberate on a matter of very great importance. M. de Nemours has just brought me news that the campaign of Italy is assuming a most disastrous aspect. The pope has not kept his promises, and all our other allies have been false to theirs. At first, all had looked favorably. M. de Strozzi had taken Ostia, though I regret to say at the expense of one of our most distinguished officers, M. de Moutlac, who died in the action. My lords, I entreat your prayers for the repose of his soul. M. d'Albe knowing your brother, my dear cardinal, was about to arrive, left Rome and retired to Naples. The duke arrived in the Roman States. He found great diversity of opinion in the council, and no troops. The Duke of Ferrara, of whom M. de Guise asked six thousand men, represented, that he might himself

be attacked and want them. So the Duke de Guise proceeded to Bologna, hoping there to find the reinforcements promised by Cardinal Caraffa. But at Bologna there were no troops. He was then told that at Ancona he would be joined by ten thousand men; but even this promise was violated; so leaving the army in charge of the Duke d'Aumale, Guise proceeded alone to Rome, to demand an explanation of the pope. Forced to be explicit, the pope declared that all his troops were occupied in guarding the various fortresses and strongholds of his dominions. But his holiness assured Guise that the French had hitherto been unsuccessful because they had had the pope against them; but that he being now for them, his temporal and spiritual influence would give force and victory to their arms. Guise, who, like you, cardinal, had faith in his good sword, and his own men, hesitated no longer. But, his army having joined him, he proceeded to besiege Campi; and having taken it, he destroyed it, together with all the inhabitants."

At this news, the lord high constable manifested his approbation; the cardinal testified no emotion whatever; and the king continued:

"The duke then proceeded to Civitella; but unfortunately Civitella, although a small place, is built upon a steep rock, and our troops, I regret to say, were repulsed."

A smile of triumph passed over the stern features of Montmorency. The invincible Guise had been repulsed—had been conquered—under the walls of a small, unimportant town!

"At this juncture, too, the Duke of Alba, with an army of three thousand Spaniards and six thousand Germans, besides three or four thousand Italians, came to the assistance of the besieged. This was twice as many men as

Guise possessed. Under these circumstances, the duke judged it necessary to raise the siege, and marched out into the open country between Fermo and Ascoli, trusting that the Duke of Alba would meet him in a pitched battle. But the Duke of Alba has never moved; and Monsieur de Guise, without men, provisions, or money, has sent to us Monsieur de Nemours, either to obtain a subsidy and a supply of fresh troops, or his recall. Now, my lords, what is to be done? Shall we send what the duke requires, or recall him, and by so doing abandon all pretensions to the kingdom of Naples, which, strong in the promises of the pope, I had already destined to my son Charles?"

Montmorency turned towards the cardinal; but the cardinal signed to him most courteously to proceed and give his opinion first. The cardinal was in the habit of making his adversaries speak first, preferring to speak himself last.

"Sire!" exclaimed the lord high constable, "my opinion is that your majesty ought not to give up, but on the contrary send every assistance to your general, so that he can carry on the campaign."

"What say you, cardinal?" asked the king.

"I beg the lord high constable's pardon, but I am quite of a contrary opinion."

"There's nothing astonishing in that, my lord. When were we ever of the same mind? You think, then, that your brother should be recalled?"

"I think it would be both wise and prudent to do so."

"Alone, or with his army?"

"With his army, of course."

"What! don't you think there are banditti enough in France, that you want to bring a whole disbanded army into it?"

“There are, no doubt, more than I could wish, my lord constable,” replied the cardinal; “but what there are not enough of in France, is good generals and brave men-at-arms.”

“You forget, my lord cardinal, that we are in a time of peace, and that, therefore, we don’t want any of these great conquerors and sublime heroes.”

“I request your majesty will ask my lord constable whether he really imagines this peace will last.”

“Of course, I do.”

“Well, then,” replied the cardinal, “here we differ again; for I don’t—and what is more, I think that if his majesty does not wish the king of Spain to attack him, he had better begin the attack himself, immediately.”

“What! in spite of the treaty sworn to by both?” said the high constable, with indignation. “Why, my lord cardinal, is not the king’s word inviolate, and has not France always kept faith, even with Turks and Infidels?”

“Why, then, my lord, has your nephew, instead of remaining quietly in Picardy at his post, made an attempt upon Douai, which would have succeeded, had it not been for an old woman, who accidentally saw the scaling ladders, and gave the alarm?”

“Why did my nephew do this?” cried the constable; “I’ll tell you why.”

“I am all attention.”

Then, turning to the king, he added, “Sire, I entreat your majesty to listen.”

“Oh, his majesty knows all about it, cardinal! Although the king is occupied with his court gallantries, believe me he is fully informed of all state affairs.”

“Pray proceed then, my lord, to give us what good reasons your nephew had for his proceedings.”

“ I can give you ten good reasons, my lord cardinal. First of all, the provocation given by the governor of Luxembourg, who attempted to bribe three soldiers of the garrison of Metz to give up the town.”

“ The town that my brother so gloriously defended ! ” interrupted the cardinal. “ I heard of the attempt, but, like your nephew’s, it failed. So much for one reason ; you promised us ten, you know.”

“ Have patience. Did you know, my lord cardinal, that that very same governor had bribed a soldier at Mariembourg to poison all the wells of the city, and that he would have succeeded, had it not been that the man, fearing he could not do all the work himself, confided in some other soldiers, who revealed the treachery ? You know this to be a fact, cardinal, for the soldier was broken on the wheel.”

“ That would scarcely be a proof of his guilt, my lord ; for you know you have had many broken on the wheel whom I consider as innocent, and as much martyrs as those victims immolated by Nero, Commodus, and Domitian.”

“ You mean, then, to deny this attempt of the governor of Luxembourg upon the wells of Mariembourg ? ”

“ No, my lord constable, I admit it, but there are still eight more reasons to give.”

“ I’ll find them for you, never fear. Do you deny the attempt of the king of Spain to obtain by bribery the city of Bordeaux ? Did not two of the principal conspirators declare that they had received the sum promised them in the presence of the Bishop of Arras ? ”

“ I am not disposed to deny it. Proceed, my lord.”

“ Oh, I am not at a loss. If you like, I can give you twelve instead of ten reasons. Was not Master Jacques Lafèche, one of King Philip’s best engineers, found sounding the fords of the river Oise, near Lafère, and did he not

confess that Emmanuel-Philibert had given him a large sum for the plans of the towns of Montreuil, Reux, Doullens, Saint Quentin, and Mezieres, towns that the Spaniards wanted to take, in order to render useless Boulogne and Ardes, and to prevent succors being sent to Marienbourg?"

"All you say is exact, my lord; still there are, I believe, only four reasons, thus far."

"By my troth, I should think that they were sufficient to prove that the Spaniards had been the first to break the treaty, and that, therefore, my nephew was justified in retaliating."

"Quite sufficient, my lord, for you have said just what I wanted you to say. The king of Spain was the first to infringe the treaties, therefore it is not the king of France who breaks his word, but Philip of Spain; therefore it is perfectly right that the king of France should send for his army and his general from Naples, in order that he may prepare for war."

Montmorency bit his long white moustaches, for he perceived that the wily cardinal had made him say the exact contrary of what he intended. Scarcely had there been a moment's pause, however, before the shrill sound of a trumpet resounded in the court beneath.

"Hallo!" said the king. "What impudent page is this who dares to deafen us with an outlandish English air? See, pray see, count," added the king, turning to one of the lords in waiting.

The count obeyed the king, and in a few minutes returned.

"It is not a page, may it please your majesty, but a trumpeter preceding a herald, sent to your majesty by your cousin, Queen Mary of England."

As the count uttered these words, the trumpet again sounded : this time it played a Spanish national air.

“ Oh, oh ! ” said the king ; “ both husband and wife, I see.” Turning then to all present, he said, with that majesty which the kings of the elder races knew so well how to assume :

“ My lords,” said he, “ let all the officers of state be summoned. I will myself apprise the queen. Then, assemble in the throne room. Whatever may be the message this herald brings us, we will receive him in such state as befits ourselves and the sovereigns whom he serves.”

CHAPTER IV.

W A R .

THE foreign airs played by the English and Spanish trumpeters, had not only been heard in the council-chamber, but had re-echoed throughout the palace. The king, therefore, found all the court prepared for the summons he gave them to assemble and receive the heralds.

As he left the council-chamber, the lord high constable was greeted by a young officer, whom the Admiral Coligny, his nephew, had sent to him. Admiral Coligny, whom we saw with Charles V. on the first evening of his abdication, was governor of Picardy, and in case of an invasion, was exposed to the first fire of the enemy.

“ Ah, Monsieur de Theligny, is that you ? do you bring me news of the admiral ? ”

“ Yes, my lord.”

“ You have, I trust, seen no one, nor communicated your news to any one ? ”

“ This news is for the king, my lord,” replied the young officer ; “ but I have orders first to see your lordship.”

“ Very well, then, sir ; come with me.”

And in the same way as the cardinal of Lorraine had taken the Duke de Nemours to Catherine de Medicis,

Montmorency took M. de Theligny to the Duchess de Valentinois.

Meantime the court had assembled in the throne room. The king and queen were on the throne; all the officers of state ranged around them, with their attendants, including the four Marys, Madame Margaret and Madame Elizabeth, of France, Mary Stuart and the Duchess of Valentinois; in fact all the brilliant court of the Valois. The English herald was introduced into the presence. He wore a surcoat on which were embroidered the arms of England and France; and until within ten paces of the throne he remained covered—but then, kneeling on one knee, he took off his helmet and said, in a loud voice:

“Mary, queen of England, Ireland, and France, salutes you, Henry, king of France, and sends greeting: that whereas you have given aid and protection to the Protestants of England, our enemies and the enemies of our religion, we, William Norris, herald of the queen of England, declare war to you, both by sea and land; and in testimony of which, we here throw down the gauntlet of war.”

So saying, the herald threw down his iron gauntlet.

“It is well,” replied the king, without rising: “I accept your challenge. But I protest that I have always conducted myself as became our alliance and friendship. But since she has chosen to attack me unjustly, I know that God, who favors the just cause, will give success to our arms, and will confound her armies, as those of her predecessors, who have unjustly assailed us. I receive your challenge courteously, because you are the messenger of a queen. If you had come from a king, I should have received you very differently.”

Then, turning towards Mary Stuart, he continued:

“My gracious queen of Scotland, you who have as

much right to the crown of England as Mary has to that of France, take up, I beseech, the gauntlet of our brave Sir William Norris. Give him at the same time the golden chain which hangs around your neck. Our dear Duchess of Valentinois will replace it by the string of pearls she wears, leaving me to replace that with a right royal hand. Take up the gauntlet. The challenge of a woman must be accepted by a woman."

Mary Stuart, with the grace which distinguished her, rose from her seat, and approaching the herald, she threw the golden chain over his shoulders; then, taking up the gauntlet, she said, with a proud and gentle dignity, which became her :

"I take up this gauntlet, not only in the name of France, but also in the name of Scotland. Herald, say this to my sister Mary."

The herald rose, bowing low. As he retired, he said :

"I will report to her majesty, the queen, the message of their majesties of France and Scotland."

"Admit the herald of our brother Philip," said the king.

The Spanish herald entered proudly, his spurs resounding on the floor as he approached the throne. He did not kneel; but slightly bowing, he said, in a loud voice,

"Philip, by the grace of God, king of Castile, Leon, Grenada, Navarre, Arragon, Naples; lord of the Indies, king of the Low Countries, etc. etc., sends greeting to thee, Henry of France: that whereas you have broken the treaties, and made attempts upon the town of Douai, and the town of Sens, the said King Philip declares war to France, by sea and land; in token of which I, Guzman d'Avila, herald of Castile, Leon, Grenada, Arragon, and Navarre, throw down my glove."

So saying, the herald threw his glove, with an air of de-

fiance, at the king's feet. The king turned pale, and his eyes flashed ; but, controlling his indignation, Henry replied, in a firm tone :

“ Our brother Philip makes accusations which we ourselves have a right to make to him ; but since he has so much to complain of, and taxes me with personal want of faith, he had better have sent me a private challenge, that we might settle our grievances between ourselves in single combat, and let God judge between us. Tell him, Don Guzman, that I accept his declaration of war most readily ; but that, if he will substitute a duel between ourselves for this declaration, I shall even more willingly accept it.”

At these words Montmorency touched the king's arm. The king looked round him with a smile ; then, still addressing the herald, he said :

“ You can add, Don Guzman d'Avila, that though my lord high constable reminded me of the prophecy that says I shall die in a duel, I do not retract my proposition ; but I much doubt that my good brother will accept it. Monsieur de Montmorency, as lord high constable of France, take up the glove of King Philip of Spain.”

Then, changing his tone to one of dignified courtesy, the king once more addressed the herald :

“ Friend,” said he, “ it is far from here to Valladolid ; and having brought me such pleasant tidings, it is not just that you should spend either your own or your master's money on the journey. Accept, then, these three hundred golden crowns, which we offer you with our own hands.”

“ Sire,” replied the herald, drawing back, “ gold is indigent to our soil—we have but to stoop to pick it up. I cannot accept your majesty's gift.”

“ Proud as a Castilian, I see,” said Henry. “ My lord

Montgomery, take this purse, and empty it out of the window for the grooms in the court below."

Montgomery obeyed, and shouts of delight greeted this unexpected bounty-money.

"My lords," said the king, rising, "it is a matter of rejoicing in the court of France when war is declared; there will be double cause for rejoicing to-night. We shall hold a revel this evening. You, Don Guzman d'Avila, and you, Sir William Norris, being the cause of our feast, will, I trust, be present as the representatives of your sovereigns."

"Sire," said the constable, in a whisper, "would your majesty like to hear news from Picardy, which Theligny, a young officer on my nephew's staff, has just brought me?"

"By my troth, but I should!" replied the king; "bring Theligny to my closet."

A few minutes later, Theligny stood before the king, in his own closet, where the monarch kept his choicest collection of arms.

"Well, sir," said Henry, "how fares it with the admiral?"

"Well, sir, with the admiral—surpassing well, in health."

"Heaven keep him so!" ejaculated Henry, "and all will go right. Where did you leave him?"

"At Lafère, sire."

"And what message has he sent me?"

"Sire, he desired me to tell your majesty to prepare for a bloody war. The enemy has assembled already more than fifty thousand men, and he thinks that all the incursions they have already attempted are but stratagems to hide their real schemes."

"What incursions have our enemies already made?"

"The Duke of Savoy, the commander-in-chief," replied

the young lieutenant, "accompanied by the Duke d'Arscot, the Count de Mansfeldt, the Count d'Egmont, and others, has proceeded to Givet, which is the rendezvous of the enemy's troops."

"So the Duke de Nevers told me," said the king; "but he added that he thought Emmanuel-Philibert designed to take Rocroy or Mezières, and I ordered the Duke de Nevers to place Rocroy in a position to sustain a long siege. I have heard nothing since."

"I can give your majesty information as to what followed. Monsieur de Nevers obeyed your majesty's orders so well, and received the enemy so warmly, that he repulsed them from the walls, and forced them to retreat, marking their way by rapine and bloodshed. Now they have reached Guise, which the admiral makes no doubt they will besiege."

"What troops are under the command of the Duke of Savoy?"

"Flemish, Spanish, and German troops, sire, about forty thousand infantry, and fifteen thousand cavalry in all."

"How many men have M. de Nevers and Monsieur de Chatillon?"

"Oh, not more than eighteen thousand infantry, and about six thousand cavalry, including two thousand Englishmen, who probably would refuse to take arms against the queen of England."

"So that, my dear lord," said the king, turning to the high constable, "we shall only be able to give you from twelve to fourteen thousand men; for you know we must leave some men in the fortresses."

"What of that, sire? I will do my best, whatever your majesty gives me. I have heard that a famous general of antiquity accomplished, with only ten thousand men, a most

extraordinary retreat—Xenophon I think was his name; and that other hero of olden times, Leonidas—did he not do wonders with only three hundred men?”

“So you do not feel discouraged, my dear Montmorency?”

“Discouraged! I never felt so sure of success. I only want to find some one who can tell me something about St. Quentin.”

“St. Quentin?” said the king.

“Yes, St. Quentin, sire. Your majesty knows that there is an old saying, that with the keys of St. Quentin one can open the doors of Paris. Do you know any thing about St. Quentin, M. de Theligny?”

“Nothing, my lord—but if I dared—”

“Well, if you dared—”

“I would send for a sort of squire the admiral gave me, who, if he chose, could tell you a great deal about St. Quentin.”

“If he chose!” exclaimed the constable; “by the mass, but I should like to see him not choose!”

“I have no doubt he will not hesitate to reply to your lordship’s questions; only, as he is somewhat eccentric, he will answer your questions in his own way.”

“His way! But I’ll see if I can’t make him answer in mine.”

“Your lordship must not expect that. It is better to humor him—for as your lordship does not know St. Quentin, it will be impossible to know whether he tells the truth or not, if he is not put into a good humor.”

“A good humor, forsooth! By my troth, but if he tells a lie, or deceives me, I’ll have him hanged.”

“A good way to punish him, but not the way to make

use of him. He is a clever, cunning youth, brave as a lion when he chooses—”

“ Only when he chooses, eh ? ”

“ Yes, when he is observed, and when it is necessary for himself. What more can one expect from an adventurer ? ”

“ My good constable,” said the king, “ the end justifies the means. This man has it in his power to render us a service. Monsieur de Theligny knows him—let Monsieur de Theligny manage him.”

“ As your majesty pleases ; but I would merely observe that I have a way of treating these gentlemen— ”

“ Ah, monseigneur,” replied Theligny, with a smile ; “ we understand your method of treatment perfectly. It has its advantages, certainly ; but to put it in practice in the case of Master Yvonnet, would only be to drive him over to the enemy, for whom he would perform the same services he can now render us.”

“ Go over to the enemy ! What the devil kind of man are you talking of ?—a blackguard or a bandit ? Turn traitor, would he ? Oh, then, we must hang him forthwith ! ”

“ He is simply an adventurer, monseigneur.”

“ And my nephew deigns to employ such cattle ? ”

“ All’s fair in war, monseigneur,” replied Theligny ; then, turning towards the king, “ I place my poor Yvonnet,” said he, “ under your majesty’s safe conduct, demanding that, whatever he may say or do, he shall go unmolested.”

“ I give you my royal word that none shall harm him. Go and fetch your strange ally.”

“ If your majesty permits it, I have but to make a sign, and he will come.”

The king nodded assent, and Theligny, going to the window, made a sign to Yvonnet ; and five minutes after

our friend appeared in the doorway, dressed in the same fashion as when we first introduced him to our readers, even to the velvet cap and the feather in it—though the whole was considerably the worse for two years' wear and tear.

Yvonnet gave a quick glance around him, and probably recognized both the king and Montmorency, for he remained respectfully standing at the door.

"Come in, Yvonnet, my good friend," said Theligny; "you are in presence of his majesty Henry II. and of the lord high constable, who, in consequence of my representation of your merits, have desired to see you."

Yvonnet appeared to accept this homage to his merits with the greatest equanimity, which made the constable furious.

"I am very much obliged to you, lieutenant," said Yvonnet, taking three steps forward, and then stopping, with a mixture of suspicion and respect.—"My merits, however insignificant they may be, I place at the feet of his majesty and at the service of the constable."

Both the king and the lord high constable remarked the difference of expression addressed by Yvonnet to each; Montmorency replied in his abrupt tone :

"Oh, pray sir, make no protestations; speak plainly, or—"

Yvonnet looked at Theligny as if to interrogate him as to his position and safety.

"My dear Yvonnet," said the young lieutenant, understanding his glance, "his majesty knows that you are a gallant cavalier, much sought after by the ladies, and fond of pomp and show, and that you are apt to squander in superfluities all your intelligence procures for you. Now, his majesty having the intencion, for the present, of putting your intelligence to the proof, as he will at some future time

your courage, begs me to offer you as an earnest of his favor these ten golden crowns. What he now wishes you to do for him is, to give him all the information you can with regard to St. Quentin."

"Have you informed his majesty, Monsieur de Theligny," replied Yvonnet, "that I belong to an association of which every member is bound by oath to give to the association one half of what he earns, whether by the work of the brain or by force of arms? therefore of the ten golden crowns five only will come to me."

"Why need you be fool enough to say any thing about this transaction to your associates?" said the constable.

"What need, my lord? the need of keeping my word; we are too insignificant as yet to permit ourselves a breach of faith."

"Sire," said Montmorency, "I have a very bad opinion of people who only do things for money."

"I request his majesty will allow me to say a few words;" interrupted Yvonnet, bowing to the king.

"What the devil do you mean, fellow?"

"My lord constable, permit me one instant," said the king; then turning to Yvonnet, with a smile, he added, "Go on, friend, I am ready to hear you."

Montmorency, shrugging his shoulders, began to pace the room as though what was going on did not concern him.

"Sire," said Yvonnet, "I beg your majesty to observe that I have fixed no price for the services you may require of me, and if I mentioned the association and the division of the money, it was merely that your majesty should know that we are all in the service of the admiral. It was M. de Theligny, I believe, who first spoke of money; as for me, I am ready to perform any service in my power for your

majesty, for it is my duty as a faithful and admiring subject."

As he concluded, the adventurer saluted the king with as much majesty as though he had been an ambassador or a count of the empire.

"I thank you, sir," replied the king, "it is better we should make no bargain beforehand."

Yvonnet smiled with satisfaction, but all these negotiations irritated the blunt old Montmorency, who, coming abruptly up to the young man, said :

"Well, now that the bargain is made, are you going to tell us all you know about St. Quentin?"

Yvonnet looked at the constable with that supercilious air a Parisian only can assume, and said :

"St. Quentin, my lord, St. Quentin, is a town situated on the river Somme, six miles from La Fère, thirteen from Laon, and thirty-four from Paris. It has twenty thousand inhabitants; the municipal government consists of twenty officers, which are chosen according to an act of parliament—"

"Stop, sir! who the devil wants to know all this—I ask you, sir, what you know about St. Quentin?"

"And I tell your lordship all I know, which I learned from my friend Maldent, who was for some years at St. Quentin."

"I told you," said the constable, "that we should get nothing out of this fellow, unless by force."

Yvonnet remained silent.

"I am not of your opinion, constable," said the king; "on the contrary, I believe that if we let Monsieur de Theligny have his own way with him, we shall obtain all we wish. You may be sure that if he knows what he has already told us, he knows a great deal more. Is it not true,

Master Yvonnet, that you have not confined your studies to the geography, the constitution, and the population of St. Quentin—but that you also know something of the state of its fortifications and the disposition of its inhabitants? ”

“ If my lieutenant will interrogate me, or if the king will do me the honor to put to me any questions he pleases, I will do my best to satisfy them.”

“ The impertinent rascal ! ” muttered the constable.

“ Now, my good Yvonnet,” said Theligny, “ do honor to the character I gave you for sagacity and intelligence, and tell the king and monsieur le connétable the present state of the fortifications of St. Quentin.”

Yvonnet shook his head.

“ One would say that the fellow really knew something about it, from his airs ! ” growled the constable.

Piqued at this observation, Yvonnet said instantly to the king,

“ Sire, I have the honor of telling you that St. Quentin, not expecting an attack, is wholly unprepared for it, and could scarcely withstand the blow of a fist.”

“ But it has ramparts ? ”

“ Doubtless,” said Yvonnet, “ and furnished with towers round and square, all connected by courtines with two batteries, one of which sweeps the Faubourg d’Ile. But on the side of the boulevard, there is not even a parapet—it being defended only by an old fossé, already in ruins. The glacis, which is scarcely above the surface of the ground, is completely commanded by the neighboring heights, and even by several houses on the outer edge of the fossé. On the right of the Guise road, the wall—as the rampart on that side is called—is so old and ruinous that the awkwardest of men could have no difficulty in scaling it.”

"But, fellow!" cried the constable, "if you are an engineer, why the devil didn't you say so at once?"

"I am not an engineer, monsieur le constable."

"What are you then?"

Yvonnet cast down his eyes and remained silent.

"Yvonnet is in love, monseigneur," said Theligny, "and for the purpose of being near his mistress, who lives in the Faubourg d'Île, he has been obliged to study the topography of the place, and to find out the weak points in the walls."

"Oh! a very satisfactory explanation!" growled the constable.

"Well, well, proceed," said the king; "and I will give you a golden cross for your mistress, the next time you see her."

"And never will golden cross have glittered on a more beautiful bosom, I can assure your majesty, than that of Gudule."

"Is the fellow going to give us a portrait of his mistress, then?" asked the constable.

"And why not, if she is so handsome?" replied the king, smiling. "You shall have your cross, Master Yvonnet."

"Thank your majesty."

"And now, there is, of course, a garrison, at least, in the city of St. Quentin."

"No, monsieur constable."

"No! How is that?"

"Because the city contains no military barracks, and because the right of the public defence is a privilege which the bourgeoisie have taken good care to retain to themselves."

"The bourgeoisie! rights!" exclaimed the constable. "No wonder that every thing goes wrong, when the common

people talk about rights, of they know not what, derived from they know not whom."

"I will tell you from whom, my cousin," said the king : "from the kings my predecessors."

"Ah, well ! If your majesty will authorize me to retake possession of these rights, I will undertake the job forthwith."

"We will speak of that by-and-by, my dear constable ; let us at present attend to our affairs with Spain. There ought to be a good garrison at St. Quentin."

"This was the very subject which occupied the admiral's attention at the moment of my departure," said Theligny.

"And he ought to have succeeded by this time," said Yvonnet, "seeing that Jean Peuquet was on his side."

"And who is this master Jean Peuquet ?" asked the king.

"It is the uncle of Gudule, sire," replied Yvonnet, in a conceited tone.

"What !" cried the constable, "you pay court to the niece of a magistrate."

"Jean Peuquet is not a magistrate," said Yvonnet.

"And who the devil is he, then ?"

"He is the syndic of the weavers."

"Good God !" ejaculated the constable ; "upon what times are we fallen, that we are obliged to negotiate with a weaver when the king wishes to place a garrison in a city ! Tell your Jean Peuquet that I will have him hanged if he doesn't open, not only the gates of the city, but the doors of his house, to the soldiers whom I shall send to him."

"I think that the lord high constable had better leave the affair to Monsieur de Chatillon," said Yvonnet, shaking his head ; "he knows better than monseigneur how to manage Jean Peuquet."

“Do you presume to argue with me, fellow?” cried the constable, with a menacing gesture.

“Cousin, cousin!” said the king, “for heaven’s sake, leave us to finish what we have commenced with this brave fellow. You will be in a position to judge of the correctness of his information, when the army is under your orders, and I trust that will be very soon.”

“I hope not later than to-morrow, sire; I long to bring these bourgeois to their senses! A syndic of weavers! mordieu! A king of France negotiating with such an animal! Faugh!” and he walked off towards the window, biting his nails.

“Now, then,” demanded the king, “how about the approaches to the city: are they easy?”

“Yes, sire, on three sides: towards the faubourg d’Ile, Rémicourt, and the chapel d’Epargnemailles. But towards the Tourrival, you have to cross the swamp of Grosnard, which abounds in springs and pitfalls.”

The constable, interested in these details, returned slowly towards the speakers.

“And at need,” said he, “you would undertake to lead a body of men across this swamp?”

“Without doubt, monseigneur; but, as I have already said, one of my companions, named Maldent, would do it much better, as he has lived in St. Quentin three years, while I have scarcely ever visited it except at night, and have always travelled too quickly to make many observations.”

“And why was that?”

“Because I am afraid in the dark!”

“How!” cried the constable; “you afraid?”

“Yes, monseigneur, I am afraid.”

“And you confess it?”

“ Why not, since it is true ? ”

“ And what are you afraid of ? ”

“ Of the jack-o'-lanterns, the ghosts, and of the hobgoblins.”

The constable burst into a laugh. “ So,” said he, “ you are afraid of the jack-o'-lanterns, ghosts, and hobgoblins ? ”

“ Yes, monseigneur, I am horribly nervous ; ” and the young man shivered as if with a sudden chill.

“ Ah, my dear Theligny ! ” replied the constable, “ I congratulate you on your follower ! Being thus forewarned, I shall take care not to send him on any errands at night.”

“ The fact is, it is much better to employ me in the day.”

“ Yes—and to leave you the night to visit Gudule, eh ? ”

“ You see, monsieur, that my visits have hitherto been so fruitless, that his majesty has had the goodness to promise me a golden cross.”

“ Monsieur le constable, cause forty gold crowns to be given to this young man, for the information he has given us and the services he offers to render us. You will also add ten crowns, in a separate sum, for a cross for Mademoiselle Gudule.”

“ Forty crowns ! ” growled the constable, shrugging his shoulders ; “ forty lashes, rather, on the bare back ! ”

“ You have heard me, my cousin. My word is given—do not ask me to break it.”

Then, turning to Theligny, he said :

“ Monsieur de Theligny,” said he, “ the lord high constable will give you orders for horses from my stables, at the Louvre and at Compiègne, that you may travel as rapidly as possible. Do not spare them, and be certain to arrive to-morrow at La Fère. The admiral cannot be too soon

apprised that war is declared. God speed you, and good fortune to you."

Theligny and Yvonnet respectfully saluted the king, and followed the constable. Ten minutes later, they started full gallop on the road to Paris, and the constable rejoined the king, who had not quitted his closet.

CHAPTER V.

WHERE THE READER FINDS SOME OLD AC-
QUAINTANCES.

HENRY II. was anxiously waiting for the lord high constable, to whom he had most important orders to give.

The Count de Montgomery, who had already, some years previously, been sent to Scotland, to the assistance of the queen regent, was now gone to Edinburgh, to negotiate the marriage of the dauphin with Mary Stuart, and to announce formally that England had declared war with France. One of the conditions of this marriage was, that Mary should abandon to Henry her right to the throne of Scotland.

Immediately after her marriage with the dauphin, it had been decided, that Mary was to assume the title of queen of France, Scotland, and England; quartering with the arms of the Stuarts, the arms of the Tudors and the Valois.

In the evening, as Henry II. had said, there had been a revel and banquet held at court; so that the heralds, on their return to their respective sovereigns, were enabled to tell with what rejoicings their challenges had been received.

But long before the lights had gleamed from the win-

dows of the chateau of St. Germain, two cavaliers, mounted on magnificent horses, rode at full gallop out of the court of the Louvre. Taking the barrière of La Villette, they proceeded towards Compiègne. There they changed horses; and having rested an hour, pursued their journey, reaching Noyou by daybreak, and La Fère by eight in the morning.

Short as had been Yvonnet's stay in Paris, he had found time to replace his somewhat faded and worn suit, by one of green velvet, embroidered in gold, which looked so like new, even to the bright scarlet cap with its long white feather, that it would have been a sheer piece of ill nature, to presume that it did not come direct from the court tailor. It did not look at all *second hand*, particularly as Yvonnet wore it with an air and grace, which set it off to the best advantage.

As for the chain, after looking at it in all lights, he came to the conclusion that it could still pass muster as gold, when seen at a certain distance, at which he undertook to keep all prying and inquisitive individuals.

It must not be imagined that Yvonnet had neglected to buy the golden cross for Gudule; he had it safely in his pocket. But we will not undertake to say whether he scrupulously applied the whole of the ten golden crowns, given for that purpose, to this purchase. On the contrary, we should rather presume, that besides the cross, he had contrived to get all his new clothes, with a brilliant cuirass, which now hung at his saddle bow. But this was all perfectly fair; for did not he himself belong to Gudule, and had he not, therefore, a perfect right to spend in ornamenting his person, the money given by his majesty for the niece of Jean Peuquet?

Yvonnet was soon able to judge of the effect produced by his splendid acquisition; for scarcely was he within the

gates of La Fère, before he encountered Heinrich and Franz Scharfenstein. They were trying to drag to the slaughter an ox which they had just purchased. The animal resisted with all his might; but he had very little chance of escape, for Heinrich held him by one of his horns, whilst Franz goaded him on from behind.

At the sound of the horses, Heinrich looked up, and recognizing his friend, exclaimed :

“ Oh, Franz, only look ! how handsome and fine is Yvonne ! ” And lost in admiration, Heinrich let go the horn of the ox, who, thinking himself free, made one bound towards his stable ; but Franz was at his post, and snatching the animal's tail, held on, so that it plunged and reared in vain.

Yvonne, with a most condescending bow, passed on, and in a few moments attained the residence of the admiral.

Theligny entered immediately into the presence of the admiral, whilst Yvonne, who had acquired court manners, remained standing at the door.

They found the admiral poring over a geographical map, which was, however, insufficient to guide him, so incorrect and incomplete were the maps of those days. By him stood our old friend, Maldent, who by his information was trying to supply the deficiencies of the map.

At the noise made by Theligny on opening the door, the admiral looked up and recognized his messenger, whilst Maldent, looking slyly from under his eyelids, beheld Yvonne in the doorway.

The admiral held out his hand to Theligny, whilst Yvonne, with a slight nod of recognition to Maldent, half drew from his pocket the heavy purse it contained, to which action Maldent replied by a nod of satisfaction.

Theligny gave an account to the admiral of his interview

with the king and the lord high constable, and delivered his despatches.

“ Yes,” said the admiral, as he read his unclé’s letters, “ I agree with him ; St. Quentin is of the utmost importance. I have already taken measures to secure it ; your company is already within its walls, Theligny,—you must join it immediately, and announce my speedy arrival.”

With these words the admiral resumed his occupation, turning to Maldent for further information. Theligny, who knew the admiral well, left him to pursue his inquiries ; but presuming that when he had terminated them, he would have further orders to give him, he resolved not to depart immediately ; going up to Yvonnet, he desired him to proceed alone to the camp, and there to await his orders.

Yvonnet obeyed, and mounting his horse, proceeded to the camp which the admiral had placed at Pierre Pont, in order that its fortifications might protect his army, insufficient as it was to cope with the enemy in the open plain.

Yvonnet, as he proceeded, looked right and left to see if he could discover any of his companions ; and at last, in the middle of a group of people, he thought he recognized Procope, diligently writing, on his knees. Procope, taking advantage of his legal knowledge, was engaged in making the wills, at so much apiece, of those whom the approaching action rendered timid and prudent. A little further off, he beheld Franz and Heinrich Scharfenstein, carrying between them the ox tied to a pole—our Titans having found this the easiest way of bringing it to the camp. At last, at the entrance of a tent of no mean appearance, he spied Pilletrousse ; and directing his horse that way, pulled up before him. Pilletrousse gazed at him in silence ; then, without one word of welcome or recognition, he began to walk round

and round him, to the great satisfaction of Yvonnet, who put himself in a favorable attitude to be admired.

"Beshrew me, comrade," said he at last, "but you have a splendid horse! Why, he is worth forty gold crowns, at least. Where the devil did you get him?"

"I got him," replied Yvonnet, "from the royal stables; he does not belong to me, but to his majesty."

"I'm sorry for that, for I could have found you a purchaser."

"Indeed! and who may that be?"

"'Tis I," said a voice behind Yvonnet.

Yvonnet turned, and beheld a fine handsome young man, in the dishabille of the camp, whose fine face and stalwart figure he instantly recognized.

"My lord," said Yvonnet, "the horse does actually belong to his majesty, and if he claims it, must be returned to him. Should his majesty graciously leave him to me, then he is yours, provided we can agree about the price."

"Oh, we shall not quarrel about that, I am sure—you know I am rich and generous," replied the person Yvonnet addressed as my lord. "Besides," continued he, "I may have other business transactions with you. How many are you in all?"

"We are nine, unless in my absence any mishap has befallen one of our comrades," replied Yvonnet.

"All right," said Pilettrousse.

"Do those two giants form part of your troop?" said the nobleman, pointing to the Scharfensteins.

"They do," replied Pilettrousse.

"Well, then, we can make an arrangement."

"I beg your pardon," interrupted Yvonnet, "but we are engaged by the admiral, you know."

"All except two days in the week," said Pilettrousse:

“ you know Procope especially put into the treaty, that we might have two days of the week to work for ourselves.”

“ That is quite sufficient—I shall not want you for more than a day or a night. Where shall I be able to find you when I want you ? ”

“ At St. Quentin,” replied Yvonnet ; “ at least I, for one, shall be there to-day, and probably the whole of us—for the admiral himself is shortly to proceed there.”

“ Very well, then, we shall meet at St. Quentin.” With these words the nobleman left the adventurers, and Yvonnet, throwing the reins to a humble follower, who for his meat and drink served as groom to the association, got off his horse.

His first impulse was to talk with Piletrouse about the individual who had just left them ; but on reflection he deemed it better not to trust Piletrouse with so important a secret as the name of the nobleman in question—so that, changing his intention, he merely pointed to the Scharfensteins, who, puffing, blowing, and sweating, had just deposited the ox in front of the tent.

Having accomplished this feat, Heinrich entered the tent in search of his mallet, which consisted of a cannon ball into which a handle had been inserted. He found it, after searching some time, under the head of Fracasse, who, lost in poetic ecstasy, was reclining on a mattress, and had taken the mallet for a pillow. Spite of the expostulations of Fracasse, he had seized his mallet, and rushing from the tent, arrived on the scene of action just as Franz had loosened the fore feet of the ox. The animal was struggling to rise ; but Heinrich, taking deliberate aim, struck him with his iron mallet just between the horns, and the beast fell without a groan.

Piletrouse, who with glistening eyes and distended

nostrils had been watching this operation, then rushed on the fallen animal, and plunging his knife into the jugular vein, began immediately to cut him up. Pilettrousse was the butcher of the party, and so able a one, that, after providing the association with the most delicate morsels; he contrived always to sell the remainder of an ox for more than the whole had originally cost.

Pilettrousse was in the midst of his operations, when a cavalier galloped up to the tent. It was no less a person than Theligny, who had come to fetch Yvonnet.

He also brought the news that the admiral, as soon as he should be able to assemble his troops and to communicate with the lord high constable, intended to set out for St. Quentin. Theligny was proceeding thither to deliver dispatches from Coligny to Jean Peuquet, the governor of the town.

Maldent, Procope, Fracasse, and the two Scharfensteins, were to join Malemort and Lactance, both of whom were already in the town; whilst Yvonnet, accompanying M. de Theligny, would precede them there by three or four hours.

The adventurers lost no time in leave-taking—they were not naturally very demonstrative, particularly the two Scharfensteins. As for Fracasse, though he was very fond of Yvonnet, he was preoccupied in searching after a rhyme which he could not find—so that Pilettrousse alone grasping Yvonnet's hand, as he vaulted into the saddle, said,

“God speed you, comrade! and take care of your horse—and above all, don't give him up.”

CHAPTER VI.

S T. Q U E N T I N .

It was six leagues from Lafère to St. Quentin. The horses having rested three hours, after their long journey of the night before, were now as fresh as ever, and willingly obeyed the impulse of their riders. However, as there was no immediate hurry, except as regarded Yvonnet's impatience to see Gudule once again, it was not until three hours after they started that they attained the Faubourg d'Ile.

"Commander," said Yvonnet to Theligny, as they reined in their horses, "will you give me ten minutes leave of absence—or will you, in order to know exactly what is passing in the town, come for ten minutes with me?"

"Ah! ah!" said Theligny, laughing, "we are, I see, in the vicinity of Mlle. Gudule's dwelling."

"Precisely, commander," replied Yvonnet.

"Shall I be *de trop* if I come with you?"

"Certainly not. When Mlle. Gudule and I meet in the day, we are nothing more than mere distant acquaintances. Our intimacy might do her harm in the eyes of the world, and interfere with her settlement in life."

Yvonnet, followed by Theligny, now turned down a narrow street, along one side of which ran a long garden wall,

whilst on the other was the side of a large house. There was only one window on this side, but that was conspicuous, from the bright flowers which twined around it. Standing in his stirrups, Yvonnet just attained the window, which, as he approached, was thrown open, and in the framework of leaves and flowers a young, fair, smiling face appeared.

“What, my charming Gudule!” said Yvonnet, “how could you divine that I was here?”

“Oh, I did not divine it, Monsieur Yvonnet. I was looking from an open window, when I saw two cavaliers coming rapidly along the road from Lafère. As they advanced, I recognized you and this other gentleman—then, trembling with hope and fear, I hastened to this window. I scarcely thought you would come, however,—first, because you were not alone, and next, because you are so finely dressed that I was afraid you had become a great man.”

“The gentleman who is with me is M. de Theligny, whom I have the honor to serve, and who will shortly ask you some questions concerning the state of the town.”

Gudule looked towards the lieutenant with a blush, whilst he bowed to her most courteously.

“As for the change you notice in my appearance, Gudule, it is the effect of the king’s liberality; and his majesty, knowing I was acquainted with you, has requested me to offer you this golden cross.” With these words, Yvonnet drew the cross from his pocket, and offered it to Gudule; but the young girl, drawing back, exclaimed:

“How can you make fun of a poor girl, Monsieur Yvonnet.”

“I assure you, Gudule, that I am in earnest; and M. de Theligny will vouch for the truth of what I say.”

“I declare to you, on my honor, mademoiselle, that the

king did actually desire Yvonnet to present that cross to you," said Theligny.

"Then you actually know the king, M. Yvonnet?"

"Yes; and his majesty also knows all about you and your uncle, Jean Peuquet; for whom Monsieur de Theligny has a letter from Admiral Coligny." As he spoke, Yvonnet held out the cross, and the young girl, all confusion and blushes, extending her hand through the flowers, took it from him.

Theligny now drew near, and turning to Yvonnet, said:

"And now, Monsieur Yvonnet, will you ask Mlle. Gudule where is her uncle, and how he is disposed towards us?"

"My uncle," replied the young girl, still gazing on her cross, "is at the town hall, and, I fancy, is disposed to defend the town to the last extremity."

"Thank you, my pretty maiden," said Theligny. "Come, Yvonnet."

"Sir," said Gudule, addressing Theligny, "if my father should ask me where I got this cross—"

"You may tell him," interrupted Theligny, understanding her embarrassment, "that it was given to you by his majesty, Heury II. as a slight token of gratitude for the services rendered him by your father and uncle, and as an earnest of future favor. If, as I imagine, you would prefer not mentioning my friend Yvonnet's name in this transaction, you can say that I, Theligny, lieutenant in the regiment of the dauphin, brought it myself to you from the king."

"Oh, thank you! thank you!" exclaimed Gudule, joyously; "I should have been very much puzzled to account for my cross without your kind help." Then, leaning out, she said in a whisper to Yvonnet, "When shall I see you again?"

“ When I was four leagues off, Gudule, you used to see me every night : now I am in the same town with you— ”

“ Hush ! ” said Gudule, hiding her face behind the flowers ; and whispering still lower from behind them, she murmured :

“ Come early, love, for my father will pass the whole night in the town hall.”

With these words she closed the window and disappeared, whilst the two cavaliers, putting spurs to their horses, crossed the two bridges, and soon arrived in front of the gate of St. Quentin, called the Porte d’Ile. This gate was guarded by two sentinels, one belonging to the civic guard of the town, the other to Theligny’s regiment. The latter immediately recognized his commanding officer, and asked him news of the enemy. Report had declared the opposing army to be very near, and this small company of one hundred and fifty men felt ill at ease ; surrounded by timid burghers and awkward militia troops, who knew not how to act, and who spent most of the time in useless deliberation, instead of active preparation.

The whole town of St. Quentin seemed to be in a tumult. The lateral streets, as well as the principal ones, were crowded with people, and the great square was so closely packed that our horsemen could proceed no further.

Yvonnet then took his cap, and, placing it on the end of his sword, held it above the multitude, exclaiming—

“ Make room for the messengers of the admiral ! ”

At these words, the crowd, hoping that these messengers brought tidings of a reinforcement, opened a narrow passage, and Theligny, followed by Yvonnet, at length reached the Hotel de Ville, upon the steps of which they found the mayor, M. de Gibercourt, awaiting them.

Our two messengers arrived at a lucky moment. The

assembly, excited by the fervid eloquence of Jean Peuquet and his brother, had decided that the town of St. Quentin, faithful to its allegiance, and relying on its holy patron, should defend itself to the last extremity. The news of the admiral's approach was received with shouts of enthusiasm. The citizens, returning to the council chamber, immediately set to work to organize themselves into companies, and the mayor threw open the arsenal, which, to say truth, was but poorly furnished.

Jean Peuquet was named captain of one of the companies, and Guillaume Peuquet lieutenant of another. Honors fell thick upon this family, bringing, as honors are apt to do, great dangers with them.

The forces, being mustered, were found to consist of about five hundred men, divided into four companies.

Suddenly a fifth appeared, one totally unexpected, and which, from the elements which composed it, was greeted with enthusiastic cheers.

This troop consisted of one hundred monks of the Jacobite order. They were led by a man who held a drawn sword in his hand, and beneath whose monk's robe might be seen the glitter of a coat of mail.

Yvonnet, looking intently at the captain, exclaimed—

“ Devil take me, but it is my friend Lactance who leads them ! ”

And so, in fact, it was. Lactance, judging that the campaign would be a long one, and that he should send many souls to their account, had, on arriving at St. Quentin, resolved to make use of his spare time in laying in a store of prayer and penance for future crimes. For this purpose he had retired into a Jacobite convent. The monks had received him with open arms, and were exceedingly edified by his strict discipline and devotion. Suddenly it oc

curred to Lactance to make use of his influence to excite the monks to assist in the defence of the town. Pretending to be inspired by Heaven, he had communicated this idea to the prior; it had met with his holy approval; and Lactance proceeded immediately to drill his men, until, having formed them into a well-regulated corps, he now brought them to join the other troops.

Scarcely had the mayor, with the other authorities, taken note of their forces, than distant shouts were heard, and men running wildly were seen rushing down the streets towards the City Hall.

Their alarm, they said, was caused by the flight of numerous peasants, whom they saw flying with terror in the adjacent country.

Orders were instantly given to close the gates and to man the ramparts.

Lactance, who in the midst of danger preserved a true Christian coolness, immediately ordered his monks to drag the cannon to the most exposed portions of the town.

Theligny and Yvonnet, who felt that, in spite of their swift travelling, their horses had still mettle left, darted out of the town, across the country, to ascertain the cause of this panic.

The first man they encountered was holding, with both hands, his nose and his cheek, from which the blood was flowing in sanguinary streams.

Yvonnet recognized his unlucky associate, Malemort, and instantly dismounting, rushed up to him and beheld a wound which, on an unscarred face, would have been terrible to behold, but which on the seamed face of Malemort, was only one mark the more. Yvonnet, folding his handkerchief, and making a hole in the middle, to let through

his friend's nose, laid him on his knee, and dressed the wound as adroitly as though he had been a surgeon.

Theligny meanwhile inquired into the cause of the alarm.

Malemort related that early in the morning, the enemy had appeared in sight of the village of Origny. Incited by Malemort, the inhabitants had resolved to resist the enemy, and shutting themselves up in the castle, had held out four hours. But, closely pressed by the advance guard of the Spanish army, Malemort had been obliged, after prodigies of valor, to give in. Hotly pursued by three Spaniards, he had killed two ; but the third had inflicted that terrible wound by which he now suffered, and which, as it blinded him, prevented him from fighting. Malemort, therefore, judged it prudent to feign that the wound was mortal, and with a loud cry had fallen to the earth. The Spaniard, dupe of this stratagem, began immediately to feel in his pockets, and having abstracted the little they contained, left him on the field for dead. No sooner had he disappeared, than Malemort, replacing his cheek and his nose as well as he could, ran at full speed towards St. Quentin, in order to give the alarm ; and so it happened that Malemort, usually the first to attack, had been now found flying at full speed from the enemy.

Theligny and Yvonnet felt all the importance of this communication ; so, placing Malemort behind Yvonnet, they turned their horses' heads, and galloped into the town, exclaiming, " To arms ! to arms ! "

The whole multitude awaited them with impatience and anxiety. At the announcement that the enemy was approaching, the courage of the people acquired a fresh impetus. All and each flew eagerly to their posts—the monks, especially energetic and calm, seemed as though they had been artillerymen all their lives.

They were but just in time ; for scarcely half an hour elapsed before the Spanish troops came in sight.

The city authorities resolved on sending a courier to apprise the admiral of the event, but no one could be found willing to leave the city at the moment of action. Yvonnet proposed Malemort, but Malemort protested that his wound, so far from having disabled him, had, on the contrary, acted as a most sanitary blood-letting, most necessary to him, as he had not been wounded during the last fifteen months. But Yvonnet then told him that he would be well mounted, and that he might retain the horse as his property, and that decided Malemort to accept the charge. Yvonnet, too, exercised that influence over Malemort which weak and nervous natures ever do over strong and rugged ones.

Malemort started off at full gallop, so that there was no fear but that the admiral would be speedily advised.

The gates of the town had been thrown open to admit the frightened and scattered inhabitants of Origny, and then messengers had been sent to all the neighboring villages, to collect all the flour, wheat, and grain that could be found.

Meantime the enemy advanced in such dense and wide columns, that it appeared as if the whole assembled army of Spaniards, Germans, and Walloons was coming to the charge.

As the lava, in its rapid course down the sides of the burning volcano, marks its course by devastation and flames, so did the army trace their route by burning villages as they advanced ; and from the high towers of St. Quentin the inhabitants looked helplessly at this appalling sight. Still the poor peasants flocked within the hospitable town ; but soon even that refuge was denied them—the enemy was close at hand, and the gates were obliged to be closed.

Then the drums beat, and the ramparts were cleared of

all but the combatants, who remained, like all men of resolution at the approach of a great peril, silent and prepared.

The advanced guard could now clearly be distinguished. It consisted of a body of artillerymen, who, as they approached, spread themselves out and surrounded the walls of the town. Next followed about three or four thousand men, belonging to the old Spanish troops, so reputed for their bravery and discipline. They, after crossing the Somme, directed their steps to the gate d'Ile.

"Ah, ah!" said Theligny, "I think, Yvonnet, it is Mad'lle. Gudule who will hear the first rough music from the cannon's mouth. Shall we go and join in the concert?"

"Most willingly," replied Yvonnet, feeling the cold shudder come over him which always overtook him on the eve of action. Then, with trembling lip and pallid cheek, Yvonnet followed Theligny, with half his company, to the threatened post.

Theligny had left the other portion of his troops with the civic guard, in order to inspire them, by the example of the regular troops; but it will be seen that it was not the soldiers, but the civilians, who set the example of bravery.

As the troop passed by the residence of Gudule, Yvonnet rode forward and knocked at her casement window.

Gudule, pale and trembling, opened it instantly.

"Keep away from the windows, my child," said Yvonnet, "and go down in the cellar, for your house is one of the first to catch the enemy's fire." Even as he spoke, a shell whizzed past them, and bursting on a roof hard by, threw a shower of fiery hail over the young adventurer. Then Yvonnet, springing on to the post beneath the window of his mistress, sought, amidst the flowers, her pale but lovely face, and pressed his lips to hers.

"Farewell, Gudule!" said he; "farewell! If I fall

do not forget me too soon ; and above all, never allow either a German, a Spaniard, or an Englishman, to console you." Then, without staying to hear the young girl's protestations of eternal love, he started off, and rushed towards that portion of the wall which he had so often scaled.

The fire was incessant, and the Spanish soldiers scaled the walls in such rapid succession, that the townspeople were soon forced to abandon the outer wall, and to take refuge within the inner rampart, which they did in good order, bearing with them the wounded men, and leaving three dead.

Yvonnet followed, dragging with him the body of a Spaniard, whom he had killed, but whom he had not had time to search, and whom he did not feel disposed to abandon until he had searched his pockets. He was well rewarded for his pains ; for, besides three months' pay, which had been distributed to the troops on the eve of the action, Yvonnet found a great many valuables and money collected by the soldier during the present campaign.

No sooner was the outer wall evacuated, than it was taken possession of by two Spanish officers, named Romoron and Carondolet. They took, also, possession of all the houses between the outer and inner walls, and were proceeding to advance to the inner ramparts, when they were met by such a well-directed and well-sustained fire, that they were forced to retreat into the houses and fire from the windows, until darkness overtook them and rendered all further hostilities vain.

Then, and not till then, did Yvonnet turn his back on the enemy ; and the first person he perceived behind him was Gudule, trembling and haggard, who, under the pretext of looking for her father, had contrived to find her lover.

Yvonnet looked at Theligny, and that most intelligent of commanders immediately said,

“ Yvonnet, the fight is over for to-day. I am sure you must need rest, for you have been forty-eight hours in the saddle. Go and take some repose till morning—I know the first fire will bring you to your post.”

Yvonnet, without noticing Gudule, saluted his commander, and took the road into the town. But it was very dark, and he probably lost his way—for, instead of going into the town, if we follow him, we shall find him standing beneath the very window where we saw him in the morning. Standing on that most convenient post, he clasps two small white hands, extended to him, and by their help soon disappears through the flowery aperture—so quickly and so skilfully, that one would swear this was not his first attempt!

All this took place on the 2d of August, 1557.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ADMIRAL KEEPS HIS WORD.

MALEMORT, mounted on a swift steed, reached the camp at Lafère in less than an hour and a half. It was impossible to recognize Malemort, all covered with blood and bandages; but it was easy, from his condition and his haste, to divine that he was the bearer of important tidings. No sooner did he alight from his horse, therefore, than he was introduced into the presence of M. de Coligny. He found him with the lord high constable, who had just arrived.

Malemort rapidly related the events of the last few hours, and announced the speedy advance of the Spanish troops, whose track was marked by fire and smoke.

In a few seconds after receiving this intelligence, both the uncle and nephew had decided on their plan of action. Coligny, with his six hundred men, was to proceed to the relief of St. Quentin, whilst Montmorency, with all the other troops in the camp, was to go to the assistance of the Duke de Nevers, whose army of eight or nine thousand men was too weak to attack the Spanish army, fifty thousand strong, so that he was forced to content himself with watching it and harassing its flanks.

Following the advice of Maldent, whom he took for a

guide, the admiral, avoiding the high road, proceeded to St. Quentin by Ham, across a morass almost impracticable, except to those who knew it as well as Maldent.

The admiral took with him three companies of infantry, commanded by Saint André, Rambouillet, and St. Poy—the latter, however, who had but that day arrived from Gascony, was so tired that they were forced to leave him on the road. Just as the admiral and the lord high constable were leaving Lafère, the latter merely intending to go a short way with his nephew, they were stopped by a huge dog, which, stretched along the road, looked up at them and howled. They drove the dog away; but going a little further, he again lay down, and recommenced howling as before. Driven off a third time, a third time did he act in the same manner.

“What think you of this, my good nephew?” said Montmorency, looking at the admiral.

“I think,” replied Coligny, “that the comedy is going to begin.”

“Say, rather, the tragedy,” replied the high constable; and embracing his nephew, they parted.

Another omen awaited Montmorency himself. On the road to Laon, a pilgrim, wearing a long beard, called out to him—

“Montmorency, Montmorency, I tell you that in three days all your glory will be but dust!”

“So be it!” replied Montmorency; “but I tell you that, before three minutes, you will lie in the dust;” and, suiting the action to the word, the constable gave him a blow which felled him to the earth.*

* These two anecdotes are historical. Merzy, folio 250, and *Memoires de Melvil*.

The admiral reached Ham at five o'clock in the afternoon. There he rested an hour, and then continued his journey, accompanied this time by his gend'armes and two troops of infantry.

At Ham, Messrs. de Jarnac and Luzarche had done all in their power to retain him, even to offering to go in person to the relief of St. Quentin; but he had steadily persisted in his resolutions, saying,

“I would rather lose all I possess, than not go myself to the assistance of these brave citizens, who defend their town so well.”

At the gates of Ham, Coligny encountered the Abbé de St. Prie, Jacques de la Motte, canon of St. Quentin, Chartres, Mans, and Paris, and who, when he died, had been canon under five different kings, commencing under Francis I. The abbé, at the first fire had left St. Quentin, and was proceeding with all diligence to apprise the king of the danger of the town, and to solicit prompt assistance.

“Monsieur l'Abbé,” said Coligny, “when you see the king, I beg you will tell his majesty that you encountered me at the head of a goodly troop, and that with the help of God, I hope to be this night in St. Quentin, where I hope to do him good service.”

He had not proceeded far, before he encountered the inhabitants of Origny and other villages, who, unable to find refuge within the walls of St. Quentin, were now flying in all directions—many dying of fatigue and hunger by the road side. Coligny distributed what provisions he could amongst them, and then went on his way. Night now came on; but with Maldent for a guide, the admiral had no fears, particularly as Maldent offered to precede the admiral with a halter about his neck, so that a summary punishment might await any attempt at treachery

Captain Rambouillet followed Maldent's guidance, but St. André, pretending that he also had a good guide, insisted upon following his own route. The admiral consented, for he thought it right that every one should, as all shared the same peril, act for himself. So they separated. Coligny arrived in safety before St. Quentin, and just at the right spot by the Faubourg of Pontoilles, which was not surrounded by Spanish soldiers, but had been reserved for the English army, which was momentarily expected to arrive.

This one point appeared almost as though it had been prepared for the admiral—so much so that he almost feared an ambuscade, and sent Procope forward to reconnoitre; but in about three quarters of an hour Procope returned, declaring that the road was entirely free. Procope had been so close as to distinguish the sentinel on the wall; and emboldened by security and silence, he had whistled a low whistle, to attract his attention. The sentinel had paused and listened; then Procope, in a low tone, announced the vicinity of the admiral.

Coligny, lauding Procope's ingenuity, then gave the signal to proceed.

Within a few paces of the gate, a man suddenly rose from the moat, and presenting a pistol, exclaimed,

“France and Theligny!”

“France and Coligny,” replied the admiral.

The gates were then thrown open; for Theligny, dropping his pistols, had signed to those within that they were friends, and no traitorous enemy, who stood before them. The news of the admiral's arrival with one hundred and fifty men, soon spread through the town; the inhabitants rushed from their houses to welcome him with shouts and illuminations. But, fearful of apprising the enemy as well as his friends, the admiral forbade all public manifestations.

Towards morning, St. André and his troop not having been heard of, the admiral began to fear that they might have fallen in with some Spanish outposts. Lactance, hearing of this dilemma, advanced with eight of his Jacobins, and proposed that under the protection of their frock and cowl, they should scour the country round in search of the missing troop. The admiral consented, and the worthy fathers sallied forth. In a few hours they returned, bringing with them all the wanderers, whose guide had lost his way.

Then Coligny called the muster roll, and found that he had brought a reinforcement of two hundred and fifty men. Little enough, but rendered of the very greatest importance, by the presence of the admiral himself within the walls.

Coligny was of opinion that the Faubourg d'Ile must be defended to the last, and he concentrated all his energies on that point—determining at nightfall to make a sortie, in order to set fire to and destroy the houses between the two ramparts, of which the Spaniards had taken possession, and from which they poured on the besieged such a destructive fire.

Coligny then, in order to ascertain against whom he had to contend, took a survey of the enemy. From the banners which floated over their tents, it was easy for him to recognize the commanders. From an angle of the old bastion, he could distinctly see that the army was divided into three camps.

The farthest was commanded by Count Schwarzenberg; the next by the Counts Egmont and Horn, those two friends whom not even death could separate. The nearest to the town was commanded by Emmanuel-Philibert.

The Duke of Savoy's camp was planted between the walls of the town and the river Somme, which here formed

a semicircle. There was also, a few days later, another camp established along the banks of the Somme, under the walls near the Faubourg St. Jean. This encampment was the head quarters of the Field Marshal de Benicourt, of the Margrave de Berg, of the Margrave de Valle, of the Duke de Salmona, the Count de Schaumbourg, of the Count de Mansfeld, of Bernard de Mendoza, of Ferdinand de Gonzaga, of the Bishop of Arras, of the Count de Feria, of the Count Rinago, the Duke of Brunswick, etc., etc.

From the tower of St. Jean to the great tower, that is, at the point diametrically opposed to the Faubourg d'Ile, lay the Flemish camp, which sent forth such a continued and destructive fire, that the place where the artillery stood is to this day called the "Infernal Alley" (Ruelle d'Enfer).

The whole town, in fact, was surrounded, with the exception of that portion which had been left for the English, and by which the admiral had so fortunately entered.

Having made his observations, the admiral descended from his post and proceeded to the Town Hall. There he had a list made out of all the able-bodied men in the town; ordered that all available arms should be collected, and a number of workm^{en} should be assembled ready to work at the fortifications, together with all the implements for their use. A strict account was then demanded of all the provisions, both in the public granaries and in private houses, so that the admiral might be able to distribute all fairly and in a way to make the provisions last the longest. Lastly, the number of cannon and the quantity of fire-arms was ascertained. Then the admiral expressed his fears that the grain could not be ground in time for a population of twenty thousand people, by the only two windmills he had seen in his rounds; but the inhabitants soon reassured him, by

showing him that they had mills worked by horses, which would more than suffice for the necessities of the place.

Coligny then proceeded to billet his troops in the various parts of the town, each division having officers to preserve order. He appointed his most tried troops to do duty on the ramparts. The municipal council constituted itself into a permanent government, ever ready to follow the suggestions or to forward the views of the great commander. Coligny then presented to the city authorities his own staff, who were to be the means of communication between the civil and military powers. Languelot, one of his favorite captains, was appointed to distribute the gunpowder and to watch over the safety of this precious element of warfare.

Coligny, in his survey of the town, had remarked, within a few paces of the walls, many thickly-wooded orchards and gardens, which might serve as ambuscades for the enemy. They belonged to the principal inhabitants of the town, but at the first word he said of the probable dangers they entailed, orders were given to have every tree instantly felled.

Satisfied with the unanimity shown by the three classes which so rarely agree—namely, the citizens, the nobility, and the military—Coligny left the Town Hall and proceeded to the house where he lodged, in the Rue de la Mannaie, where he had appointed all his officers to meet him. From each captain he required a detailed account of the number of soldiers under his command, so that he might complete his statistics of the town, as to the number of soldiers of whom he could dispose, and for whom he had to find rations.

Now, taking with him an engineer, Coligny surveyed the fortress, and pointed out the different works to be done. This done, he decided with the aide-de-camp he was about to send to the lord high constable to ask for reinforcements, which would be the best route to bring the troops into the

town, which was settled to be the vine-clad path St. André had in open day followed unperceived up to the very gates ; and then, all being foreseen, pre-ordered, and accomplished, the admiral, overwhelmed with fatigue from both mental and physical exertion, retired to the governor's house to repose for a few hours.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ADVENTURERS' TENT.

WHILST all this was going on, and the admiral, deeply impressed with the responsibility which weighed upon him, was pursuing all the measures we have detailed for the safety of the town, our adventurers, on whom weighed neither anxiety nor responsibility, were quietly reposing themselves in their tent. Ready they were to fight for the admiral, since they were in his pay, at the first sound of the trumpet; but also totally unconcerned were they as to the ways and means which were racking the brains of the whole population, authorities and all included.

Our adventurers, since the arrival of Coligny in St. Quentin, were once more all reunited, and the moment was therefore deemed favorable for settling accounts and looking into the financial affairs of the association.

Yvonnet had just handed over the half of the sum given him by Henry II.; Procope the half of what he had made in his law business; Maldent the half of what he had received for serving as guide to Coligny; Malemort the half of what had been given him for going, all wounded as he was, to warn Coligny of the approach of the enemy; and Pilletrousse laid down the half of what he had made by the

sale of the odds and ends of the ox recently slaughtered. As for the two Scharfensteins, they had nothing to give. Having contributed the ox itself, they now sat roasting the portion which had been allotted to them—never thinking of the necessity for husbanding their provisions, which so much preoccupied the admiral and the municipal authorities.

Lactance, for his share, contributed, as an offering from the monks who had chosen him for their captain, two sacks of flour and a sack of dried beans.

As for Fracasse, he had never yet succeeded in finding a rhyme to the verb *to lose*, so that he was still lost in thought.

In a little out-house adjoining the tent, the horses ridden by Yvonnet and Malemort were quietly discussing their oats and hay. In this temporary stable, was a mill for grinding the corn of the association—an operation performed by the two Scharfensteins.

The pecuniary affairs of the society were in a most prosperous condition, as might be seen by the goodly piles of crowns ranged on a table before them. Counted by Procope, re-counted by Maldent, they were now about to be consigned to the strong box of the firm, by Pilletrousse. Many were the projects formed by the adventurers as they looked at the money. Should this association continue in the same prosperous way for another year, Procope proposed to establish himself as a lawyer; Maldent to buy a farm near Lafère, on which he already had his eye; Yvonnet to marry a rich heiress, to whom his good looks and good fortune would give him a double claim. Pilletrousse determined he would open a butcher's shop in some large town; Fracasse, that he would get his poems printed, like M. Ron-sard and M. Jodelle; Malemort, that he would fight as much as he pleased, without incurring the reproaches of his

employers. As for the two Scharfensteins, being incapable of any ideas, they were incapable of forming any plans.

Just as Maldent had finished counting the last pile, and Pilettrousse was extending his hand to put them away, a shadow fell across the table, indicating the approach of a stranger. Procopé instinctively grasped a handful of money, whilst Maldent covered the rest with his hat, and Yvonnet, turning round, recognized the young nobleman who had bargained for his horse, standing in the entrance of the tent.

"Ah! ah!" said he, "it appears that you have been in luck;" for the visitor had a quick eye, and spite of Maldent and Procopé, had seen the gold. "I am afraid the moment is unfavorable for proposing a bargain."

"That's according to what kind of a bargain you are about to propose," replied Procopé.

"Is there any thing to be made, over and above what you will give us?" inquired Pilettrousse.

"If there's any fighting;" said Malemort, "we shan't haggle."

"If it is nothing against the church," said Lactance, "I am ready."

"I hope it is an expedition that can be undertaken at night," chimed in Fracasse; "moonlight adventures are the only ones I like—they are so poetical and picturesque."

Yvonnet said nothing, but looked steadily at the stranger. The Scharfensteins never spoke, or even once lifted their eyes from the ox roasting before them.

The young nobleman smiled as the observations so well portraying the character of each were uttered; and looking alternately at each of the adventurers, he replied:

"The affair is of the utmost importance; and although there are great chances of making something handsome, over and above our bargain, I am disposed, as there may be some

hard fighting, to be very generous. We have nothing to do with the church, so our devout friend need have no fears. I intend the expedition to be undertaken in the night; though with all due deference to that gentleman," pointing to Fracasse, "I should prefer its being a dark to a moonlight night. Are you satisfied?"

"Perfectly," replied Procope, who always made the bargains; "at least, so far—now let us proceed to business."

"I want you to promise," said the young nobleman, "that you will give me your services, whether by night or day, for an expedition, whether it be a mere skirmish or a regular battle."

"And what are we to do in this skirmish or battle?"

"Attack where I attack, strike where I strike."

"And in case of surrender?"

"I admit of no quarter."

"Hem!" said Procope; "it is, then, some mortal hatred you seek to gratify?"

"It is, friend—a mortal and implacable hatred."

"At last," said Malemort, rubbing his hands with delight, "this is a fight of the right sort."

"But," said Maldent, "supposing our adversary should offer a handsome ransom—it would be expedient for us, at least, to allow him to buy his life."

"No—for I will pay you both for his death and his ransom."

"Which means that you buy the man of us, dead or alive."

"Dead or alive, I do."

"How much will you give for him dead—how much will you give for him alive?"

"Exactly the same price."

“And yet,” said Maldent, “I always thought a live man was worth more than a dead one.”

“Not when one only wants the live man to make a dead one of him.”

“Come, then,” said Procope, “to the point. How much will you give?”

“Stop!” interrupted Yvonnet; “before we proceed any further, I request M. de Waldeck to state who is his enemy.”

“What do you mean by pronouncing that name?” said the young nobleman, with a start.

“Is it not yours?” replied Yvonnet.

“How did you know me, sir?” asked the young man, with a scowl. “Where did you see me?”

“Do you wish to know, M. de Waldeck?” Waldeck made a sign for him to proceed.

“Do you remember the Chateau du Parcq?” pursued Yvonnet. “Do you remember the Forest of St. Pol?”

“It is because I do remember it,” replied Waldeck, “that I am here.”

“Then,” said Yvonnet, “it is against the life of the Duke Emmanuel-Philibert that you wish to employ us?”

“The devil!” said Procope; “the Duke of Savoy!”

“You see how necessary it was to have an explanation,” said Yvonnet, turning to his comrades.

“And why shouldn’t we kill the Duke of Savoy, as well as any body else?” suggested Malemort.

“I did not say we shouldn’t,” said Procope, apologetically.

“On the contrary, the Duke of Savoy is the enemy of our admiral, and therefore ours. I think we ought to kill the Duke of Savoy,” persisted Malemort.

“True, Malemort,” said Procope; “but then you see

the Duke of Savoy is a great personage; it will be a very dear job."

"Of course. One must be well paid to kill a duke," said Maldent.

"And the crime, too!" said Lactance; "think of that!"

"Bah!" said Waldeck, with a coarse smile; "do you think Benvenuto Cellini went to hell for killing the Connétable de Bourbon?"

"The Duke de Bourbon was a rebel—that was quite another thing."

"And had been excommunicated by the pope, against whom he fought—which alters the case materially," added Lactance.

"Well—your duke of Savoy is no great friend to the present pope Paul IV.," said Waldeck.

"All this has nothing to do with business," said Pilletrousse; "come to the point. How much will you give?"

"Yes," said Waldeck, "that is the point. What do you say to five hundred golden crowns—one in advance, and four after the job is done?"

Procope shook his head. "I say that you are far from the mark—very far."

"I am sorry for it," replied Waldeck. "Five hundred golden crowns is all I possess. If you won't take them, I must seek elsewhere some one who will."

The adventurers looked at each other. Five out of seven shook their heads. Malemort was alone disposed to accept, for the sake of the fighting. Fracasse, unable to listen to so long a discussion on material interests, was again absorbed in his poetical abstractions.

"Well," said Waldeck, "there is no hurry—you can think of it. We are in the same town, and not likely to

get out of it in a hurry—so I take my leave ;” and bowing to the adventurers, Waldeck left the tent.

“ Shall I call him back ? ” said Procope.

“ Hum ! ” said Maldent ; “ five hundred golden crowns are not to be found every day.”

“ And then, if he has got no more,” suggested Yvonnet, “ why, he can give no more.”

“ My brothers,” said Lactance, “ the life of sovereigns and princes is in the hands of God, and is only to be attempted at great risks, or at any rate, for such a sum as will allow of our buying such indulgences as will put our souls out of peril, whether we fail or whether we succeed. The intention, my brothers,—the holy prior of our convent told me so,—is imputed by God as a fact.”

“ We cannot do it for the price offered,” said Pilletrousse. “ Suppose we do the job on a private speculation ? Eh ? ”

“ Yes,” said Malemort, “ let’s undertake it, any how.”

“ Gentlemen,” said Procope, sententiously, “ the original idea of this expedition belongs to M. de Waldeck. To take it from him, and act upon it, would be stealing. You all know my scruples in points of right.”

“ Then,” said Yvonnet, “ if the idea belongs to him, and can only be executed for him, I advise that we should take the five hundred crowns.”

“ Agreed,” said Malemort ; “ agreed.”

“ Don’t let’s be in a hurry,” said Maldent.

“ And if he treats with other parties ? ” said Yvonnet.

“ Yes, suppose he treats with another party ? ” repeated Procope.

“ Let’s make an end of it, and fight it out,” howled Malemort.

“ Yes, let us accept,” said all with one accord.

"*Agzept, agzept,*" chimed in the two Scharfensteins, who were dishing up their beef, without having the least idea what was the subject in discussion, but who, as they always did, sided with the majority.

"Somebody run after him then," said Procope.

"I will," said Malemort, and he rushed out.

But at the same moment a discharge of musketry was heard in the direction of the Faubourg d'Ile, and Malemort, unable to resist the temptation, and forgetting all about the bastard of Waldeck, darted off to the scene of action.

"Oh, oh," said Yvonnet, "that is near Gudule. I must go and see what has become of her."

"But what about the bargain?" said Procope.

"Do what you please. I shall abide by your decision," said Yvonnet, rushing after Malemort towards the Faubourg d'Ile, whither, with the reader's permission, we will follow them.

CHAPTER IX.

A FIGHT.

IT will be remembered that the admiral had confided to Messrs. de Theligny, de Jarnac, and de Luzarche, the task of making a sally out of the town, to burn the houses situated between the outer and inner walls, and of which the Spaniards had taken possession, and from which they fired on the town.

Accordingly, at six o'clock in the evening, these officers had assembled a hundred picked men from their own companies, whilst Jean and Guillaume Peuquet had gathered together one hundred and twenty volunteers from the citizens.

These two hundred and twenty men were going to attack two thousand.

It was arranged that, once outside the gates, the little troop, dividing itself into two, one turning to the right and the other to the left, should proceed to fire the houses to the right and to the left, at the same time.

Guillaume and Jean Peuquet, well acquainted with the locality, undertook each of them to direct one of the bands.

The troops had sallied forth noiselessly and unexpectedly, and were already rushing to their work, when they were signalized by the Spanish sentinels to Carondelet and Don

Julian Romeron. Consequently the French were opposed by double their number, and death descended on every side. Yet, notwithstanding, a few forced themselves through the clusters of soldiers, and succeeded in firing some of the houses.

Malemort, shouting, yelling, striking right and left, was of course amongst the most desperate. Reaching one of the houses, and forgetting every thing but his passion for fighting, he rushed wildly through the house, up to the topmost story, in search of an adversary. Those who followed him, forgetting that they had seen him enter, but remembering that their orders were to fire the house, heaped the fagots and furniture, and all they could find that was combustible, and began immediately to set the house on fire. At the sight of the flames, the Spaniards divined the intention of the French; and falling upon them, ten to one, they were at last forced to retreat. Still, they had partially succeeded; for the flames began to rise from the houses of the old bastion, and to threaten destruction to all.

Yvonnet, meantime, not being ordered out on this expedition, had determined to make the best of his time to visit his fair young mistress.

He found her overwhelmed with anxiety and terror, for both her father and her uncle were out on the sortie. Yvonnet soothed and consoled her as best he could; but at length the fusillade became so loud and continued, that he himself grew anxious, and went up into the loft to look out at what was going on. Gudule followed him, as much from love as from fear.

Yvonnet, from his elevated position, beheld the retreat of the French, closely pursued by the Spaniards. Then he saw the flames burst through the roofs and windows of the houses, and saw the terrified Spaniards, who had been en-

gaged in firing from the upper windows, rush frantically, as they found the flames reached them, on to the roof.

In one house, especially, Yvonnet perceived signs of unusual terror. It was in this house that Malemort was laying about him. The Spaniards, having both fire and a demon, as Malemort appeared to them, to contend with, many of them threw themselves out of the windows.

Others tried to fly by the roof; and from where he stood, Yvonnet saw two escape out of the small window of the loft, and then half of a third appeared, but no more—and even that half disappeared, with yells and contortions, for Malemort was behind him, belaboring the lower extremities to his heart's content.

Then Yvonnet saw Malemort himself rush out on the roof, and with the agility of a rope-dancer, dash along the roof in pursuit of his enemies.

One Spaniard, who had already experienced the strength of Malemort's arm, having reached another house, disappeared through one of the chimneys; while Malemort, caring little for the one which had escaped, hotly pursued the other from roof to roof, till he reached the last house—an old broken-down building, standing on the brink of the river, and now enveloped in flames. Both the combatants disappeared in the fire and smoke. Presently, one was again visible. Rushing to the verge of the roof, he leaped into the river beneath.

Yvonnet and Gudule, who had been watching these perilous gymnastics, one with curiosity, the other with fear, now instinctively drew back.

Who was it, the Spaniard or Malemort? This question, which he put to himself, again brought Yvonnet to the window. He looked down, and presently the man rose to the surface, and began to swim towards the shore nearest

the ramparts. It was Malemort; Yvonne could now see him plainly. Gudule and Yvonne hastened to his assistance; and Malemort, dripping and exhausted, issued from the stream, and fainted in their arms, still murmuring, "Come on! come on!"

Repulsed and assailed by the Spanish troops, our brave soldiers were unable to preserve much order in their retreat; and trying still to execute their purpose, closed the door of the old wall. This caused a confusion, and gave the Spaniards an opportunity of wreaking their vengeance upon the French soldiers, thirty of whom were killed, besides twenty of the volunteers.

And now the Spaniards, pressing on towards the inner gates, began to cry, "The town is taken!" when, luckily, Yvonne, being within hearing, rushed through the town to the camp of the adventurers, crying, "To arms! to arms!" and bringing his comrades, with the Scharfensteins at their head, to the rescue, the Spaniards were happily repulsed. Still, many had already got under the vault of the gateway, and opposed, with strength of hand and weapon, the closing of the gates, on which depended the salvation of the town. But the two Scharfensteins, getting behind the gates and leaning against the wall for support, began to push them to with a slow, steady movement, which cleared all obstacles and soon brought them together, when a hundred ready hands passed the iron bars through the stanchions.

Scarcely had they accomplished this feat, and simultaneously drawn a long breath, when a cry arose of "To the walls! to the walls!" and, turning round, the two Scharfensteins perceived that a breach had been made on each side of the gate, and that the Spaniards were beginning to mount, threatening to take the town by a *coup de main*.

Exchanging rapidly a few words, the uncle and nephew

ran, one to the right and the other to the left. The Spaniards were already on the walls, driving the crowd before them with the long pikes which were then the arm of the Spanish infantry. Heinrich Scharfenstein, perceiving, as he ran, that his mallet would avail him little against such a hedge of pikes, snatched up a heavy mass of granite, and rushed towards the breach, crying, "Look out! look out!" Yvonnet, who stood in the breach, drew back to let him pass, and Heinrich, with all his force, hurled his mass of granite, into the midst of the assailants. On it rolled, crushing, killing, tumbling down all in its way. Then, seizing his faithful mallet, which was hanging at his girdle, he soon freed that side from the enemy, and the breach was repaired instantly by the workmen and numerous ready hands.

On the other side Franz had been met with the same rows of pikes. Drawing his two-edged sword, he lay about him, knocking off the steel pikes as easily as Tarquin knocked off the poppy-heads in the garden of Gabia, as his reply to a message. The men then being only armed with pike handles, Franz set about knocking off the men, in the same way that he had the pikes, and in a few seconds the enemy on that side retreated.

Franz, however, was very near losing the fruits of his bravery by an unforeseen accident. A man, gliding under his uplifted arm, and roaring, "Come on! come on!" rushed after the Spaniards. It was Malemort, who, having swallowed a bottle of wine given him by Gudule, now found his way into the thick of the fight. Now the Spaniards, perceiving that they were pursued by only one man, turned, and, though armed only with staves, gave Malemort such a succession of hard blows that he fell stunned to the earth. A cry of pity and regret arose amongst the spectators; but Franz, who knew by experience the thickness of his com-

rade's skull, dashed down the breach, felled a Spaniard with his sword, and, taking Malemort by the feet, dragged him up the breach, and threw him, bleeding and bruised, but still alive, into the arms of Lactance, who with his monks had just come up.

Coligny now arrived with his arquebusiers, whom he ordered to fire on the walls and into the houses which the Spaniards still retained. So great had been the loss, that many of his officers suggested that it would be wiser to give up this faubourg to the enemy; but Coligny refused, thinking that if not the safety of the city, at least the prolongation of the siege, depended on its possession.

Night was now approaching. The Jacobins set steadily to work to repair all the breaches, protected by their dark gowns from the sight of the enemy. The arquebusiers remained on the ramparts, and, to avoid all nocturnal surprises, sentinels were placed along the marshes.

It was a terrible and memorable night for the inhabitants of St. Quentin—this of the 4th of August: one in which they buried and wept over their dead.

The inhabitants, too, of the faubourg, fully aware of their perilous position between the besieged and the besiegers, were moving away all their household goods and forsaking their houses to take refuge in the town. Amongst these was Guillaume Peuquet, who with his daughter was proceeding to take up his abode in his brother Jean's house, situated at the corner of the Rue de Vicux Marché.

Gudule left the house where she was born with many tears, and turned often to look at it with lingering regret. But, in reality, her greatest anxiety was lest Yvonnet should lose trace of her.

But Yvonnet was close at hand, watching the progress of his mistress, with her father and the weavers sent by her

uncle to move the household furniture. Gudule, to her great joy, saw him follow her, through all the intricacies of the town, to the door of her uncle's house, known in the town by its sign of the *Crowned Shuttle*.

No sooner had Gudule entered the house, than, pretending great fatigue, which she easily could be imagined to feel, she asked leave to retire. Great was her joy when she discovered that her uncle had assigned to her and her father a small pavilion at the end of the garden. Gudule, closing her door, extinguished her light and opened the window. She found that it opened on to a deserted little street immediately in connection with the ramparts, and that a ladder of eight or ten feet would make this window quite as accessible as the one in the Faubourg d'Ile.

But there was another difficulty. The partition between her room and her father's was very slight, and would admit of no talking. What was to be done? Must Gudule descend into the street? that would be very dangerous, too. How was it to be managed? and Gudule, leaning from her window, was as much absorbed in her tactics and stratagems as the admiral himself.

But Yvonnet, too, had surveyed the place, and now there he stood under her window. A few whispered words of love, and they came to a clear understanding. It was not difficult to take the citizen's house by storm—seeing it had such a pretty traitor within; and so, all was settled for the following night.

Then Gudule, hearing her father's heavy step upon the stairs, threw a kiss to her lover, and closed her window.

CHAPTER X.

MONSIEUR DE THELIGNY.

THE admiral was on the ramparts by daybreak. Gaspard de Coligny, nowise cast down by the failure of the last night's expedition, had decided upon attempting another. "The enemy," said he, "knows that we have received fresh troops. If we are bold, he will imagine that they are more numerous than they really are. Emmanuel-Philibert would then be led to undertake a regular siege of the place, and thus abandon all attempts to carry it by storm. Now, a regular siege might last from a week to a month—which will give time for Montmorency to come up, and for the king to decide on further measures."

In this frame of mind the admiral sent for Theligny. The young lieutenant, who had greatly distinguished himself in the affair of the previous evening, and had escaped unhurt—from which the soldiers gave him the name of the invulnerable—hastened to obey the summons of his commander.

"Monsieur de Theligny," said the admiral, "I have sent for you to inform you of what I am resolved. You see from here the outposts of the Spāniards. I think, that with thirty or forty well-mounted men, it would be easy to sur-

prise them. Order out, therefore, some forty or fifty of your men, and appoint some commander of whom you are sure."

"Sir," said Theligny, smiling, "why should not I command this sortie? Although I am sure of my officers, I am still surer of myself."

"My dear Theligny," replied the admiral, putting his hand on the young man's shoulder, "men like you are rare, and their lives are not to be risked in every little skirmish. Give me your word that you will not head this expedition, or I shall feel bound to remain here on the ramparts, although I am dying with fatigue."

"If that is the case," replied Theligny, "I beg your lordship will retire, and I will see to this enterprise, and give you my word of honor that I will not go out of the gates of the city."

"I rely on it, then," answered Coligny; "and now, so tired am I, that I cannot even go as far as the governor's house. I shall just throw myself on a bed at Monsieur de Jarnac's, and return in an hour or two."

"Sleep in peace," replied Theligny; "I will see to all."

The admiral, leaving the ramparts, proceeded to Monsieur de Jarnac's; while Theligny, turning to one of his ensigns, said,

"Order out forty men."

"They will be here instantly," replied the ensign.

"How is that? I have not yet given any orders."

"That is true; but your conversation with the admiral was overheard by a man who stood near, and he rushed to the barracks and gave the order."

"And who may this man be, who executes orders before they are given?"

"A queer sort of fellow," replied the ensign; "his face

is covered with bloody bandages ; his hair is singed ; his cuirass is battered to pieces, and his clothes are in rags."

" Oh, I know who it is," said Theligny.

" Here he comes," exclaimed the ensign.

" Theligny looked, and perceived Malemort, half-burned, half-drowned, half-killed, coming towards him at full gallop, ready to begin another fight. He had been to the camp to fetch his horse, and now came to Theligny, to request that he might be allowed to join the expedition.

Theligny consented, but on condition that he should remain in the ranks, and not run a muck at any and every thing, as was his habit.

Malemort promised ; and the gates being thrown open, the little troop passed out.

No sooner was Malemort fairly beyond the walls, than, forgetting his promise, instead of following the stealthy course of the troop, who intended to surprise the outpost, he galloped straight across to the Spaniards, shouting, " come on ! come ! "

Meantime the admiral was trying in vain to sleep. An unaccountable anxiety kept him awake ; and, unable to resist it, thinking he heard an unusual noise near the ramparts, he seized his sword and rushed out.

Scarcely was he in the street before he met Monsieur de Luzarehe and Monsieur de Jarnac, coming towards him with an air of consternation.

" Ah," said Jarnac, " do you already know —— "

" What ? " said Coligny.

" If you have heard nothing, how is it that you are out ? " said Monsieur de Luzarehe.

" Some irresistible presentiment made me get up. "

" Come, then, to the ramparts. "

They were crowded with spectators. Malemort's ill-

judged assault had roused the Spaniards—so that, by the time the French soldiers arrived, they found double their own number of Spaniards, on horseback; all armed and ready to receive them.

This sight discouraged the little troop. Many turned and fled, leaving the few really brave ones to struggle with an overwhelming number of the enemy. At the sight of this, Theligny, forgetting his pledge to the admiral, jumped on to the first horse he could find, and rushed to the rescue.

At the sight of Theligny, some few of the soldiers had rallied round him; but Theligny was soon surrounded by the Spaniards, and now, the remnant of his soldiers, diminished to one third their number, were returning to the gates—but without Theligny.

It was at this juncture that Coligny arrived on the ramparts. He interrogated the soldiers as to the fate of their commander; but all he could learn was that they had seen Theligny dash into the midst of the Spaniards, and fall beneath innumerable stabs. One soldier affirmed that, as he fled past where Theligny lay, he had seen him move. Slight as was the hope this afforded, Monsieur de Coligny gave orders that a company should be sent to bring Theligny, dead or alive. But before the order could be executed, a sort of Goliath stepped from the crowd, and, after a most awkward military salute, said:

“If you please, my lort amiral, we ton't want a whole gompany to fetch one lieudenand. If you bleaze, Mr. Amiral, my nephew Franz and me will pring him pack, tead or alive.”

The admiral looked at the speaker, and recognized him as belonging to that association of adventurers whom he had taken into his service, and who had fought so bravely for

him. Franz stood near, like his uncle's shadow. Coligny had seen them at work, and knew how to appreciate them.

"I do please, my good fellow," said the admiral; "and what do you want for the job?"

"I want a horse for me and a horse for my nephew Franz; and den I want two men to go with me."

'Well—what more?"

"Notting more: only, I want two pig horses and two thin men."

"You shall have your choice of men and horses—and now, how much money do you want?"

"Monish! Dat ish Brogobe's business."

"We can settle it without Procope. If you bring back Theligny alive, you shall have fifty crowns—dead, twenty-five."

"Oh," said Heinrich, with a chuckle, "at dat brice, I will pring you all the Spanish army, one after another." So saying, Heinrich proceeded to select his horses; and having chosen them, he began looking out for his men. Suddenly he uttered a cry of joy—for he perceived near him Lactance and Fracasse. A devotee and a poet! Where could he find two thinner men?

So the four adventurers started on their expedition—watched with the most intense interest by all on the ramparts. Every heart beat, as they watched the adventurers stealthily disappear behind a rising ground near the Spanish camp. In an instant, Franz Scharfenstein reappeared, on foot, holding in his arms, not one man, but two. Behind him came the cavalry and the infantry of the expedition, covering his retreat. The cavalry consisted of but one horse and one man—probably the other horse had been killed. The infantry consisted of Fracasse and Lactance, each with an arquebus in hand. When the infantry was too

closely pressed, Heinrich cleared the way with his mallet. If it was the cavalry that was embarrassed, then two shots fired at the same time, and with unerring aim, laid two Spaniards in the dust, giving Heinrich time to breathe.

Meantime Franz, with rapid strides, was soon out of the enemy's reach. Shouts of joy and admiration greeted him as he clambered up the ramparts, carrying the two men in his arms, as a nurse carries two children. He deposited half his burden at the feet of the admiral. "This is yours," said he; "he is not quite dead."

"And that one?" asked Coligny.

"Oh, dat one is nopoty—it's only Malemort—he'll pe all right in a minute. The tevil is in him—he can't be kilt."

At this moment, amidst the acclamations of the spectators, the other adventurers triumphantly entered the town.

As Franz had said, Theligny was not dead; he still breathed, spite of the numerous wounds he had received. He was immediately taken to Monsieur de Jarnac's, and laid on the bed. Then he opened his eyes and fixed them on the admiral.

"A surgeon! a surgeon!" cried Coligny, almost venturing to hope.

"It is useless," said Theligny; "I have only time to beg your forgiveness for having disobeyed your orders."

"My dear fellow," said the admiral, "I have nothing to forgive. If you have any thing on your conscience, ask pardon of God, and not of me."

"My conscience is clear," replied Theligny, "of all but of having forfeited my word to you, and infringed the discipline of a soldier. Forgive me, then, that I may die in peace."

The admiral, who knew so well how to appreciate true

courage, was deeply moved, when he saw this young man, who, in the moment of death, thought only of having disobeyed his general.

“Since you exact it, then,” said he, “I freely forgive you for a fault of which all brave soldiers might well be proud. Now rest in peace, worthy follower of the illustrious Bayard, the model of a true French knight.” Then, bending down, he put his lips to the pale forehead of the dying youth.

Theligny, with a last effort, rose to meet him; then, uttering a feeble farewell, he fell back and expired.

“Gentlemen,” said Coligny, closing the young officer’s eyes, “we have lost a brave and noble officer; may our last end be like his!”

CHAPTER XI.

THE LORD HIGH CONSTABLE WAKES UP.

HOWEVER glorious had been the two last defeats, still the admiral could not disguise from himself that they *were* defeats; and he every hour felt the necessity of a reinforcement. He therefore resolved to take advantage of the non-arrival of the English troops, to send messengers to his uncle, the constable; and he determined to confide this mission to Maldent and Yvonnet—Yvonnet, who had served as a guide to Theligny, and Maldent, who had been his own guide. The constable, he knew, was either at Ham or at Lafère; he resolved, therefore, to send to both places the news of the events at St. Quentin, and to indicate to him the best way for the troops to be sent; Coligny proposing, whilst they should enter by the Faubourg de Pontoille, to make a sortie, so as to engage the attention of the enemy.

The two messengers departed in the evening—Maldent, besides his official despatches, having strict charge laid on him by Malemort to bring him the herbs necessary to the manufacturing of the balm of Ferragus, so efficient in wounds, and of which he was always in need—especially at the present moment, when he had received a deep sabre cut in the side exactly on the scar of a former one.

Gudule, whose heart had received a far more dangerous wound than Malemort's, entreated Yvonnet to take care of his life on which hers depended. And so they departed—Yvonnet for Lafère, and Maldent for Ham. It is Yvonnet whom we will follow, for it was at Lafère that the lord high constable was to be found.

At three in the morning, Yvonnet reached the gates of the city, which were closely barred, and it was not until he declared whence he came, that he obtained admittance, Montmorency having given strict orders that any messenger who should come from his nephew, should be instantly brought into his presence.

Yvonnet was accordingly conducted, notwithstanding the hour, into the chamber of the old soldier.

The indefatigable old man was in bed, with his broadsword under his pillow, and his helmet and cuirass on a chair by his side, so as to be ready at the first alarm. Indeed, his household were accustomed to be called at all hours of the night, either to receive orders or to give opinions.

Hearing whence Yvonnet came, he sat up in bed, and said, with his usual abrupt tone :

“ Well, fellow, come forward, can't you ? ”

Yvonnet advanced, and the constable, taking up his lamp, examined him from head to foot—shaking his head, as though the inspection was not satisfactory.

“ I have seen this jackanapes before,” said he, setting down the light. “ Are you going to give me the trouble to find out where it is that I have seen you ? Where the devil was it ? Speak, sir, can't you ? ”

“ I do not know why I should remember, any more than your lordship,” replied Yvonnet, paying the constable in his own coin

"I'll tell you why, sirrah. Because you can't see more than one high constable of France, whilst I see such fellows as you every day."

"Then I will tell your lordship where it was that we met. It was at St. Germain, at court."

"At court! Why, do you go to court, then?"

"I was there the day I had the honor of meeting your lordship," retorted Yvonnet, with great courtesy of manner.

"Hum!" said the constable; "I remember now; you were with a young officer sent by my nephew."

"I was, my lord, with Monsieur de Theligny."

"Yes, yes. Well, sir, is all right at St. Quentin?"

"On the contrary, my lord, all is wrong."

"The devil, sir! What do you mean?"

"I mean, my lord, that yesterday morning, in a sortie which we made, we had sixty men disabled; and that yesterday evening, in trying to carry a redoubt, we lost fifteen men of the Royal Dauphin, besides the lieutenant, M. de Theligny, who was killed."

"Theligny was killed, was he?" said the constable, shrugging his shoulders: having passed unscathed through so many battles, he had a great contempt for any one who got killed. "More fool he, that's all! Well, go on."

"Here is a letter from the admiral, my lord, which will explain all"

"Why the devil didn't you give it before?" exclaimed Montmorency, snatching it out of his hands and tearing it open.

He began to read it aloud, interrupting himself to give orders and to make observations, at every paragraph, as was his custom:—

"I shall defend the Faubourg d'Ile to the last extremity, [and he'll do well—send for M. d'Andelot!] for, from

the heights of this faubourg, the enemy's artillery could make a clean sweep of the town. [Send for the Marshal St. André.] But, in order to defend the faubourg, I require at least two thousand men, and I have not more than six hundred in all. [By the Lord, I'll send him four thousand. Fetch the Duke d'Enghein! What right have these gentlemen to be asleep, when I want them? Fetch them directly! Now, what more does my fine nephew say?] I have only sixteen pieces of cannon; I have only forty cannoneers; I have only sixty arquebuses, and provisions not more than will last three weeks."

"Is this all true, sirrah?"

"The exact truth, my lord."

"I should like to hear you say that any thing my nephew affirmed, wasn't."

Yvonnet bowed, and stepped back.

"What are you moving away for?"

"I thought your lordship had done with me."

"I haven't done with you; stand forward, sir."

Yvonnet obeyed.

"How do the citizens behave out there?"

"Admirably, my lord."

"I'd soon settle them if they didn't."

"Even the monks have taken arms."

"A set of bigots! And do they fight?"

"As well as the best of us. Even the women"—

"O yes, the women! They of course cry and scream: that's all women are good for."

"On the contrary, my lord, they encourage the soldiers, attend the wounded, and bury the dead."

"Sly rogues!" At this moment, a gentleman, armed all but his helmet, entered the room.

“Come here, M. d’Andelot,” said the constable; “here’s your fine brother sending fine accounts of St. Quentin.”

“If my brother, who is your nephew, sir, sends any accounts of his proceedings in St. Quentin, I am sure they are such as he need not be ashamed of.”

“Who said he need? Where is St. André?”

“Here, my lord,” said the marshal, entering the room.

“I suppose I shall never get the Duke d’Enghein.”

“I am here, my lord,” said the Duke d’Enghein, approaching the bed.

“*Tripe and bowels!*” * said the constable, angry that he had no longer an excuse for being in a passion. “Tripe and bowels, gentlemen! but I imagine you think you are in Capua, to be snoring in this way!”

“I was up, my lord, when your message reached me,” said St. André.

“And I had not yet gone to bed,” replied D’Enghein.

“I meant M. d’Andelot,” replied Montmorency, doggedly.

“I was going the rounds, my lord; and if I was here before these gentlemen, it was because I was on horseback when your messenger reached me, and was thus enabled to come quicker.”

“Then I suppose I meant myself,” replied the constable, “for it appears that I was the only one in bed. Humph! I’m old and good for nothing. Blood and thunder! Is that what you all mean?”

“Who the devil ever said so?” exclaimed D’Andelot.

“I should hope no one; for, if any body did, I’d break his head, as I did that cursed prophet’s on the high road the

* History records this phrase as a favorite oath with M. de Montmorency.

other day. Well, gentlemen, something must be done for Coligny here. He's got fifty thousand men on his hands. Fifty thousand men! I dare be sworn there isn't half that number, and that Coligny's fears have made him see double."

The three gentlemen smiled incredulously.

"If my brother says fifty thousand, you may be sure that there are fifty thousand."

"Or more likely sixty thousand," added St. André.

"And what do you think, M. d'Enghein?" inquired Montmorency.

"Exactly the same as that gentleman, my lord."

"Of course; all to contradict me. That's all you care for," said the constable.

"No, my lord, for we imagine that you know as well as ourselves that the admiral speaks the truth."

"Well! Are you inclined to risk any thing to come to the admiral's succor?"

"I would risk my life"—"And I"—"And I"—replied the three gentlemen in a breath.

"Then all's right." At this moment a loud noise was heard in the ante-room. "What the devil's that?"

"My lord," said one of the officers on guard, entering the room; "here is a man who has just been arrested at the gates of Ham."

"Send him to prison."

"He looks like a soldier in the disguise of a peasant."

"Hang him directly: that's all."

"He says he comes from the admiral."

"Has he got a letter or a pass?"

"Neither, my lord; that is what led us to suspect him."

"A spy, is he? Oh ho! Put him on the rack."

"Take care!" said a voice from the ante-room;

“you’ve no right to do that, though you were ten times high constable ;” and, after a struggle and a scuffle, a man broke into the room.

“Oh !” said Yvonnet, “give no such orders, my lord ! This is Maldent.”

“Who the devil’s Maldent ?” asked Montmoreney.

“Maldent is the other messenger sent by the admiral to you. He is two hours after me, though we started at the same time, because he went to Ham first.”

It was indeed Maldent, who, not having found the high constable at Ham, had taken horse and come on to Lafère, for fear any thing might have happened to Yvonnet. How he came to be in disguise and without credentials, we will explain in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ESCALADE.

WE trust that the reader will be grateful to us for following the siege of St. Quentin in all its details—a siege equally glorious for the besiegers and the besieged.

Besides, in our opinion, the glory of a nation is as much shown by its defeats as by its victories, and true valor is never greater than after a defeat.

What other country could have existed after Cressy, Poitiers, Agincourt, Pavia, and Waterloo? But God is with France, and after each defeat she arose more glorious and more powerful than before. It was not until he had sunk seven times under the weight of his cross, that Christ accomplished the salvation of the world.

France is the Christ of nations, and St. Quentin is one of the stations under which it bent, and the cross of France was the monarchy. But, behind the fallen monarchy, there stood, immovable and erect, the people.

The night that Yvonnet left St. Quentin, the sentinels on guard in the Faubourg d'Ile, sent word to the admiral that they heard a noise, as of undermining the walls.

Coligny rushed to the ramparts, and lying down flat on the ground, listened attentively.

“It is not the noise of undermining; it is the noise made by the rolling of heavy cannon. The enemy is bringing its artillery close to the walls.”

There was a pause—then Fernac, speaking most emphatically, said:

“You know, admiral, that our opinion is, that the place cannot hold out.”

“That is my opinion also; and yet we have held out now for five days. If I had yielded to this general opinion, the Faubourg d’Ile would have been for the last five days in the possession of the Spaniards, giving them time to complete all their preparations, and establish their batteries to storm the town. Depend on it, every day is as precious to us as every moment is to the hunted deer.”

“What, then, is to be done?”

“This is to be done, gentlemen. We have defended this faubourg as long as possible. By morning the enemy will have his batteries close to the walls, and there will be no resisting. What we have to do, is to take all our forces to some other point. First, however, let all the arms, munitions, horses, powder, tools, barrows, and so on, be taken away, and then let the houses be filled with fagots, and set on fire. I will myself direct the retreat of the soldiers, and see that the bridges are destroyed after they have passed over.” Seeing, then, the consternation of those to whom the houses belonged, he added: “Friends, if I were to spare your houses, the Spaniards would destroy them. Give them up, then, to your countrymen, and fire them yourselves!”

There was a whispering amongst the inhabitants; then one of them, advancing towards the admiral, said:

“My lord, my name is Guillaume Peuquet. My house is one of the largest in the faubourg. I promise myself to

set fire to it; and here are my neighbors ready to do the same."

"Is this true, friends?" said the admiral, turning to the people.

"Is what you desire for the good of our king and our country?" replied Peuquet, who was spokesman of the party.

"Keep by me ten days more, and we shall save our king and our country," replied Coligny.

"Then, if we sacrifice our houses, do you promise to hold out?"

"I promise to do all I can, with God's assistance. Whoever speaks to me of surrender, shall be thrown from the walls. If I speak of surrender to you, hurl me from the ramparts."

"But," said a voice in the crowd, "I hope the abbey of St. Quentin will be spared?"

The admiral recognized the speaker; and turning towards him, said, "Less than any other edifice, for it would be the best station for the Spaniards to fire down on us."

Lactance, for it was he, raised his eyes to heaven with a sigh.

"Besides," continued the admiral, "St. Quentin is the patron of the town, and he would rather lose his abbey than sacrifice the town, you may be sure."

Taking advantage of the good will of the people, the admiral began to give orders for removing every thing—enjoining the most profound silence. By two in the morning, the work was accomplished, and there remained in the Faubourg d'Ile but the sentinels necessary to lead the enemy to suppose that all was as before; and the men prepared to fire the houses at a given signal. At six o'clock the Spaniards fired their first battery, as the admiral had fore-

seen. Immediately the inhabitants threw their torches into the fagots, and in a few minutes there arose, first a heavy smoke, and then a broad sheet of fire, mounting above the houses. The whole faubourg was in flames; the abbey of St. Quentin alone, though several attempts had been made to fire it, appeared incombustible, and stood erect and safe amidst the flaming ruins around.

The admiral was watching the work of destruction from an eminence, when Jean Peuquet advanced towards him.

“Admiral,” said he, “there is a man here who pretends that he heard his father say, that there was a provision of powder hidden in one of the towers, or perhaps in both of the towers, of the Gate d’Ile.”

“Where are the keys?—let the towers be opened.”

“The keys! Heaven knows! It is, perhaps, a hundred years since the towers were entered.”

“Then get the proper instruments, and open the door.”

“We want no *implements*, admiral,” said a well-known voice, with a well-known accent; “I bush de door, and de door oben.”

“Oh, there you are, my good giant!”

“Ya, here I am, mit my nephew Franz, and we will oben de door.”

With these words, Franz and Heinrich advanced, and leaning with all their weight, each against one of the doors, they said, “*Ein, swei, drei!*” and at “drei,” the doors fell in with a crash, and the men upon them. Nothing appalled by their fall, however, the giants gravely rose, and saying,

“That’s done!” they disappeared.

In one of the towers was found, as Jean Peuquet said, a quantity of gunpowder, but it had been there so long that when they attempted to raise the kegs, they fell into pieces.

Then the admiral gave orders that sheets should be

brought, and that the powder should be in this manner transported to the arsenal. After this, he withdrew to take some repose and refreshment. As he was about to sit down to breakfast, Yvonnnet was announced. He brought news that a reinforcement of four thousand foot-soldiers would arrive by the road indicated by the admiral, commanded by Marshal St. André, the Duke of Enghein, and M. d'Andelot.

Maldent was to be their guide, and had remained at La-fère for the purpose.

Yvonnnet had just finished his recital, and was putting to his lips a glass of wine, which the admiral had offered him, when a detonation, as of a hundred pieces of artillery, shook the house to its foundations.

Yvonnnet put down his glass; the admiral started up, and exclaiming, "They have blown up the tower by some awkwardness!" he rushed out, and met a crowd, all flying in the same direction. It was but too true. A piece of flaming wood from the burning house had fallen into the tower, and igniting the powder, had caused this tremendous explosion—destroying the tower, killing fifty or sixty people, including four or five officers, and making a large breach in the ramparts. Fortunately, the smoke and flames of the burning houses concealed it from the enemy, and Coligny immediately called on the inhabitants to repair it. Amongst the foremost who offered themselves, were the two Scharfensteins. With their powerful assistance, in three hours the damage was repaired.

During the whole of this day, which was the 7th of August, the Spaniards remained perfectly passive—waiting, probably, the arrival of the English troops. Towards evening, however, some of the soldiers of the division commanded by Romeron and Carondelet, began to be seen in the Faubourg d'Ile. The forces were, therefore, all concen-

trated on that side of the city. In the evening the admiral assembled the officers, and communicated to them the constable's message; and as it was probable that D'Andelot and his troops would arrive in the night, it was deemed expedient that soldiers should be placed on the wall, in order to be in readiness to assist him, in case of an ambush.

Yvonnet, who from his knowledge of the place was admitted into the council, took care that the portion of the rampart of the Vieux Marché, on which Gudule's window opened, should be left entirely free.

It was about eleven o'clock. The night was dark and foggy, the weather so favorable to secret expeditions both in love and war, when our adventurer, followed by Heinrich and Franz, armed to the teeth, noiselessly crossed the Rue des Rosiers, the Rue de la Fosse, and St. Jean, and proceeded to within a hundred paces of the tower Demeure, where it joined the Vieux Marché, in which there were no sentinels. The boulevard was deserted; but, although they had no hostile intentions, Yvonnet had taken Franz and Heinrich with him—for of all his associates they were his favorite companions, from the natural law that weakness seeks to ally itself with strength. The two Scharfensteins, rough and inelegant as they were, adored Yvonnet, and were proud of being taken notice of by him. They had replied with alacrity to his request that they would come with him that evening,

“Ya, mynheer!” for they never addressed Yvonnet, as they did their other companions, by the Christian name. They loved to listen to his adventures—to the accounts of his various intrigues; and, though inwardly persuaded that they were bent on some gallant adventure, they never once questioned him, but followed him as satellites follow a planet. Still, it seemed strange that, in going to a rendezvous,

Yvonnet should wish to have witnesses with him. But then, such witnesses as these were not inconvenient; for they would shut one, two, three, or even four eyes, at a single sign from Yvonnet, and keep them closed till the day of judgment, unless he desired them to open them.

Now it will be remembered that in order to reach Gudule's window, it was necessary to have a ladder. Yvonnet had found it more convenient to bring the two Scharfensteins, than to carry a ladder.

Gudule was waiting at her window, but drew back, when, instead of one man, she saw three. But at the sight of Yvonnet, she took courage and advanced. Yvonnet then explained to her that, to have brought a ladder on his shoulders would have excited great attention and aroused suspicion, which would have compromised not only him, but likewise Mademoiselle Gudule's reputation. But how his two friends were to supply the place of the ladder, was what Gudule could not understand. Yvonnet, thinking it better to lose no time in theoretical explanations, set immediately to work to furnish a practical demonstration. Placing the uncle against the wall, he made signs for Franz to advance. Franz in an instant placed one foot in the hand of his uncle, and in another, was on his shoulder. Then, having attained the window, he took Mademoiselle Gudule round the waist, and, before she was aware of his intentions, she found herself deposited on the boulevard, by the side of Yvonnet.

"Here is the young girl for you, Mynheer Yvonnet."

"Thank you," said Yvonnet; and, drawing Gudule's arm through his, he led her to the darkest part of the boulevard, which was the summit of a tower, surrounded by a parapet.

As for the two Scharfensteins, they sat down and went to sleep.

It is not our intention here to detail the conversation of Gudule and Yvonnnet. They had not met for three days and three nights, and therefore had so much to tell each other, that all that they said in the short space of a quarter of an hour, would fill a whole chapter.

In the middle, however, of a most interesting sentence, Yvonnnet placed his hand on his mistress' mouth, and paused to listen. It seemed as though he had heard the sound of footsteps on the grass; and as he looked, he thought he perceived a long black line, like a serpent, moving at the foot of the walls. But the night was so dark that it was impossible to see any thing distinctly—and presently the noise seemed to cease. Still, Yvonnnet, holding Gudule in his arms, continued to look out through the embrazures of the parapet.

As his eye got accustomed to the darkness, he saw distinctly, as we have said, a black line like a serpent, reach the foot of the wall, and creep up its surface, evidently with the intention of attaining the parapet.

Yvonnnet understood instantly the meaning of this vision. Taking Gudule in his arms, he threw her to Franz, who in an instant replaced her in her room, and rushed back to the parapet, just as the first Spaniard had set his foot on the rampart. In an instant, in spite of the darkness, Yvonnnet's sword might have been seen to flash. A loud cry followed, and the Spaniard fell from the walls.

By this time two other ladders had been placed against the wall; but Heinrich, arriving in time to take hold of one of them before any one had reached the top, threw it by main force to the ground, heaping the Spaniards beneath it. Franz, who of course had followed the footsteps of his uncle, had seized an immense log of wood, which happened to

be near, and with it broke the third ladder in two, precipitating both men and ladder into the trenches.

Yvonnet, however, was closely engaged with three Spaniards, whom he fought, crying all the time, "To arms! to arms!"

His friends soon rushed to his aid, and one of the assailants instantly fell beneath the sword of Heinrich—while another died by the hand of Franz, and the third—Heinrich having settled his first man—was seized by him and thrown over the wall.

Just then appeared, at the end of the street, Jean and Guillaume Peuquet, attracted by the cries of the adventurers; and presently afterwards, a number of soldiers and citizens came to the rescue. At the same time—as if the night were destined to be an eventful one—a loud report was heard in the direction in which the French troops were expected. Chance had defeated the attempt of the Spaniards to storm the city—the same chance had defeated the purpose of D'Andelot to succor the French.

CHAPTER XIII.

SHOWING THE GREAT ADVANTAGE OF SPEAKING THE DIALECT OF PICARDY.

WE have until now limited our interest and our attention to the besieged ; it is now but fair that we should go for a short time under the tents of the besiegers.

At the very moment that Coligny and his staff were inspecting the walls within, and planning means for the defence of the town, a no less important group was reviewing the walls from the exterior, and arranging a plan of attack.

The party on the outside of the walls consisted of Emmanuel-Philibert, the Counts Egmont and Horn, the Count Schwartzenburg, the Count de Mansfeld, and the Dukes Ernest and Eric, of Brunswick. In attendance upon Emmanuel was our old friend Scianca-Ferro. Leona, by the express orders of Emmanuel, had remained with the duke's household, in security at Cambrai.

The result of Emmanuel's inspection was, that the walls of the town were so deteriorated, and the garrison so insufficient, that the town could not hold out more than four or five days longer. This opinion he communicated to Philip II., who, from motives of extreme prudence, had not advanced nearer to the scene of action than Cambrai. The

residence of the king at Cambrai, necessitating frequent visits from the generalissime of the Spanish troops, had been one of the reasons for Emmanuel's leaving Leona at Cambrai, and for Leona's consenting to remain. Besides, too, a distance of six leagues, though it virtually separated her from her lover, seemed as nothing to her; for preserving still the secret of her sex from all but Scianca-Ferro, she could mount her horse, and in less than two hours be at the Spanish camp.

Since the commencement of the campaign, Emmanuel-Philibert, though only thirty-one years old, had become grave; and, impressed by the importance of his position, had kept his passions under severe control. He had contributed, by his attacks on Metz and Bordeaux, to the renewal of hostilities; and now, in invading France, he felt he was reconquering Piedmont. After all, notwithstanding his position, Emmanuel felt that he was nothing more than a royal condottiere, and that he would never assume his real rank, until he commanded troops of his own, and resumed his own possessions. King Philip, however, out of respect for the personal merit of his cousin, as well as in obedience to the recommendations of Charles V., treated Emmanuel with the greatest consideration, and had been the first to confide the army to him—placing all the princes and dukes we have enumerated, under his command.

Emmanuel-Philibert felt that St. Quentin was the key which would open to him the rest of France. It was but thirty leagues from Paris, and once taken, there would remain but Ham, Lafère, and Soissons, between his armies and the capital. But Emmanuel felt that to be of any avail, St. Quentin must be carried in a few days—for if he lingered, it would give time for one of those armies which in France seem to rise as by enchantment, to form living bulwarks

against invasion, as fast as the stone bulwarks were destroyed by the enemy.

From the survey of the town, Emmanuel had concluded that the Faubourg d'Ile was the most pregnable side. Having, as we have seen, been repulsed on that side, Emmanuel had determined on attempting an escalade, and fixed upon the night of the 7th and 8th of August for the attempt.

He had been induced to choose this particular night, from information he had received from a peasant, who most urgently had asked to speak with him.

The peasant, admitted to his presenee, delivered into his hands a letter, which he had found in the pocket of a Spauish uniform jerkin. As for the jerkin, he had found that on the foot of his wife's bed. The letter was the duplicate of the one the admiral had sent by Yvonnet to Montmorency, and had been confided to Maldent. Consequently, the jerkin found by the peasant had belonged to Maldent. How Maldent's jerkin came in so extraordinary a place, has now to be told; and as the destiny of nations depends on slight causes, we must trouble the reader with the adventures of Maldent.

After taking leave of Yvonnet, Maldent had journeyed on, without any adventure, as far as Savy. There he encountered a night patrol. To fly, was imprudent, and would have been useless; so Maldent, knowing the customs of Picardy, took shelter in the door-way of a house, lifted the latch, and entered.

"Is that you, good man?" said a female voice, in a strong Picard dialect.

"Yes," said Maldent, replying in the same language; "it is I."

"Why, Gossen, where have you been? do come to bed."

Maldent, who knew that the soldiers were hard by, and had found out that the master of the house was absent, thought that the wisest thing he could do would be to take his place, and so, in case of accidents, convince the patrol that he actually was no other than a Picard peasant. Hastily undressing himself, he slipped into bed. Scarcely had he laid his head on the pillow before a loud knocking was heard at the door.

"Holy Mother!" said Maldent's bed-fellow; "what can that be?"

But before Maldent could reply, the soldiers entered, bearing a light.

The light of course revealed to the woman that it was not her husband who was by her side; but a hint from Maldent as to the exceedingly awkward position she would place herself in by betraying him, soon silenced her. Maldent, looking around him, found that he was in a comfortable four-post bed, with serge curtains; that near him, carefully laid out, were the Sunday clothes of the real Gossen. Maldent began immediately to address the soldiers, in the Picard dialect; and they, deceived by appearances, entertained not the slightest suspicion of Gossen's identity. After consulting together for some time, in Spanish, one of the men, who spoke a little French, advanced towards Maldent, and asked him if he would serve them as a guide from Savy to Gallon.

"I cannot," replied Maldent, shaking his head; "I fell down to-day and hurt my leg."

"Hurt your leg, did you? Well, you shall have a horse."

"I can't ride," said Maldent.

"You can't! Well, I'll teach you, then," said the Spaniard, raising his whip.

“ Well, don't get angry, Mr. officer ! I'll get up and try ; and please don't make such a noise, for you'll disturb my wife, who's got a swelled face and a bad tooth-ache.”

With these words Maldent arose, and throwing the bed-clothes over Catherine, donned the peasant's Sunday clothes, pushing his own at the same time under the bed—congratulating himself all the time on having by this operation acquired, from his peasant dress, greater personal security, besides a suit of new clothes.

As for Catherine, all she wanted was, that her pretended husband should go away before her real one arrived.

The soldiers, in haste to reach Gallon, kept hurrying him ; and Maldent, taking up the light, said, in a tone of sorrow,

“ Good-bye, Catherine ! good-bye !” Then, going out with the soldiers, he allowed himself to be lifted into the saddle, as if he had never before been on horseback. All the way they went, Maldent kept crying out, and holding on to the bridle and mane, until the horse, exasperated, tried all in his power to get rid of so troublesome a customer. At last, one of the soldiers, losing all patience, gave a cut of the whip to the horse, whilst Maldent let go the reins and buried the spurs in its sides, and the horse started off at full gallop, taking Maldent out of sight in a few minutes. The soldiers then began to find out that they had been played upon ; and Maldent, making the best of his way to Lafère, narrowly escaped being hanged by Montmorency.

In due time, the real Gossen returned, and found his wife surrounded by her neighbors and crying bitterly, as she related how a rogue had entered the house by the door, which she had left open for her husband, and presenting a pistol to her head, threatened to shoot her if she did not immediately give him a suit of her husband's clothes. How,

out of her mind with terror, she had tremblingly complied, and then the man had hastily changed his clothes, leaving his own rags, and carrying off Gossen's Sunday suit. Gossen, angry as he was at being thus robbed, began by consoling his wife; and then he bethought himself of looking in the pockets of the audacious thief who had committed the robbery. There he found the letter addressed by Coligny to the lord high constable. His first impulse was to carry the letter to Montmorency; but that he thought would be serving the thief—so, listening to the suggestion of hate and revenge, he resolved on taking the letter to Emmanuel-Philibert, in the hope that, the letter falling into the hands of Montmorency's enemy, the original possessor might get into trouble.

Gossen, unconsciously following the advice given three centuries after by Talleyrand, to beware of his first impulse, resolutely resolved to obey his second—although his wife, with the charity of her sex, interceded for the man who had so alarmed her.

And so Gossen took the letter to Emmanuel-Philibert, and the Duke of Savoy, opening it without any scruple, all being excusable in love and war, discovered the road indicated by Coligny for the succors he expected the constable to send him.

Emmanuel-Philibert, presuming that Coligny had sent more than one messenger to his uncle, concluded that the troops would come by the route traced in the letter. Calculating the time for preparation, he reckoned that they could not reach the town before the night of the 7th; accordingly, as until that time, he heard nothing of them, on that evening he sent forces to intercept them. Imagining, too, that the garrison would all assemble at the gate by which the reinforcements were expected, in order to protect

their entrance, he decided on making an attempt at scaling the town by the ramparts of Vieux Marché, which the Spaniards had not yet thought of menacing. This attempt had failed, as we have seen—thanks to Yvonne and the Scharfensteins. But the interception of the reinforcement was completely successful—so much so, that after three distinct charges, d'Andelot was obliged to return, with great loss, to the constable, and relate his discomfiture. The constable, swearing his biggest oaths, vowed he would come down upon the Spaniards himself, with the whole of his army, which, after all, was not one half as numerous as that of the enemy.

The next day this terrible news was brought by Maldent, who was enjoined to say, that if Coligny could find any other way of receiving reinforcements, he might rely that his brother, d'Andelot, would send them.

And so St. Quentin was left to its own resources. The admiral, therefore, assembled the town council, and laid the state of things before the civic authorities.

The worthy citizens were rather embarrassed, and somewhat discouraged; but at length, encouraged by the admiral, they began to devise fresh measures of defence and resistance. Amongst those who, at the approach of the Spaniards, had from the neighboring villages taken refuge in the fortress, were two noble gentlemen—Monsieur Caulaincourt and d'Aureval. They were men of great personal valor, and accustomed to war. The admiral commissioned these two gentlemen to raise recruits—promising to give every man who enlisted, a crown and a quarter's pay in advance.

In this manner, two hundred and twenty were enlisted. Coligny, seeing that things had arrived at the last extremity, thought it advisable to rid the town of all the useless mouths. He accordingly issued a proclamation by which,

under pain of death, those who had taken refuge in the town, and were not citizens, whether men, women, or children, were ordered to form themselves into a body for the repairs of the town and the care of the wounded: unless they preferred leaving the city before evening.

Most of these poor people preferred leaving the town; but as they were about to leave the city, they beheld the English troops coming to the assistance of the Duke of Savoy. Taking the place which had been reserved for them, they completed the investment of the town.

The English force was about twelve thousand strong, and was commanded by the earls Grey and Pembroke. They had twenty-five pieces of cannon, and besides, a force of artillery-men double that of Coligny.

The inhabitants of St. Quentin looked with dismay at this fresh accession of foes; but the admiral declared that it should never be said that he had sacrificed so many men for nothing, and that he did not as yet consider the case hopeless.

The soldiers and townsmen, emulating the example of the admiral, once more decided to hold out. But the peasants had no desire to remain within the walls. Accordingly, one of the gates being opened, seven hundred of them issued forth.

These unfortunate people remained during twenty-four hours hidden in the trenches; but on the third day, incited by hunger, they determined on facing the enemy. Forming themselves in procession, in an attitude of humility and supplication, they approached the Spanish camp.

The soldiers received them with every kind of indignity, and drove them before them into the camp like cattle.

The inhabitants of St. Quentin watched these poor creatures with great commiseration; but the admiral declared

that they were better off than if they had remained in the town, where they must have died with hunger.

Coligny now called a consultation, to discover some way of bringing troops into the town. It was at last decided that a passage could be made across the marshes of Gros-Nard to the river Somme. These marshes were very dangerous, owing to the bogs and springs with which they were filled. But some of the inhabitants, who had been in the habit of hunting in these marshes, undertook, provided the admiral would furnish them with planks and fifty men, to make a road across them, so that the troops could reach the river in safety.

This being settled, the admiral gave Maldent a letter to the constable, in which the route was traced—desiring him to bring boats for crossing the river, as there were none to be had.

Maldent was to swim the river with the message, and return in the same manner, in case of an urgent reply.

At two in the morning, the workmen with their leaders returned, having accomplished in safety the work they had undertaken—for the engineers of the Duke of Savoy, having declared the marshes impracticable, the Spaniards had no suspicion in that quarter.

By daylight, the admiral was on the tower, watching the works of the besiegers; and he grew alarmed at what seemed to him an attempt to undermine the town. He sent for an English engineer named Langford, who reassured him on that point—telling him that he had within the last few days made a countermine. But what he could not prevent, and what the admiral saw with regret and anxiety, were the trenches, three in number, which the Spaniards were making close to the walls, threatening the rampart de Remirecourt.

All, therefore, that the admiral could do, was to keep on the watch, and repair the damages as fast as they were made. But soon even that became impossible; for, towards the middle of the day, a loud report of artillery was heard, which was found to proceed from a battery which had been erected on the platform of the abbey de St. Quentin-Ile, raking the rampart Remirecourt in such a manner as to entirely preclude the idea of repairs. So dangerous was the exposure, that no workmen could be found.

Meantime, Maldent had arrived in safety at Lafère; and having had an interview with the constable, Montmorency determined upon visiting the scene of action himself. Accordingly, within an hour, he left the town, at the head of two thousand cavalry and four thousand infantry, and marched as far as Essigny le Grand. Here, having placed his troops in order of battle, he sent three officers to reconnoitre the position of the enemy and examine the general disposition of the ground—while he himself, attended by a favorite captain, pushed on to the village of Genois, near the marsh, awaiting the report of the officers.

Every thing had been examined, and found exactly as Maldent had said; and the latter was immediately despatched with a letter to the admiral, conjuring him to hold out at least for another day or two, and announcing that the reinforcements he required might be looked for every moment.

The admiral accordingly doubled the posts on the side of Tourrival, so that, at whatever hour of the day or night the reinforcements should arrive, they might not be detained a moment outside of the walls.

Montmorency's intention was to come to the assistance of St. Quentin in open day. All the secret expeditions by night had succeeded so badly, that the constable determined

to take for his auxiliaries courage and daylight. He therefore returned to Lafère; and having gathered together all the forces in his power, he gave orders to the Marshal de St. André to join him with the rest of the troops, on the 10th of August.

Maldent, after delivering his message to Coligny, repaired to his own tent. Every thing here was going on prosperously. Yvonnet prospered in his love, as we have seen, and Fracasse had actually found the rhyme he had been so long in search of. The two Scharfensteins kept up a perpetual little chuckle over the success of some nocturnal expeditions which they had themselves contrived. These expeditions consisted in stealing out at night, and watching round the Spanish camp for soldiers or officers going from one tent to another. They had invented a kind of flail, about twelve feet long, with which they struck their victims with a single blow senseless to the earth. Having done this, the Scharfensteins would proceed to rifle the pockets of their patients, and they generally brought a pretty round sum to be added to the general fund of the society. Procope continued to make wills; and, in the present precarious situation of affairs, he had more than he could do. Lactance was gradually bringing all the wine from the cellars of the convent, into the tent. Pilletrousse was perpetually coming home with money, cloaks, arquebusses and swords, which he declared he had found on the high road. In fact, the treasury increased so rapidly, that, provided the war lasted two years longer, each of the partners would be able to retire to a comfortable and peaceful plenty for the rest of his days.

Malemort, however, formed an exception; for he was still suffering from his wounds—and, although they were rapidly getting better, he could not hope that they would

be cured in time for the decisive action which he saw was drawing near. Maldent's intelligence, of Montmorency's approach, sent him into a paroxysm of despair.

The adventurers sat down to supper. Thanks to the resources of their eight imaginations, their table was certainly better than that of the admiral. The wine especially, furnished by Lactance, was abundant and delicious, and was not sparingly used by the company. First, they drank to the health of Maldent; then to the happy issue of Fraeasse's eternal sonnet; then to the speedy recovery of Malemort; then to the health of the king; then to the health of the admiral; then to the health of Mademoiselle Gudule;—then Maldent proposed the health of Catherine Gossen. The two Scharfensteins alone, who had no great facility of elocution, had not proposed any toasts—but had contented themselves by drinking double at each one proposed by their companions.

At length, however, Heinrich rose; and holding a bumper in his hand, and smiling from under his thick moustache, said:

“Gombanions, I brobose a health.”

“Silence, gentlemen!” cried all: “Heinrich is going to give us a toast!”

“And I brobose one oder,” said Franz.

“Franz, too!” cried the others.

“Ya,” said Franz; “I brobose the doast what mine uncle is going to brobose.”

“Bravo! bravo!” cried all.

“I brobose,” said Heinrich, “the health of that nice young man vot did offer us five hundred growns for dat leetle chop.”

“Ah, yes,” said Yvonne; “Monsieur de Waldeck By the by, we have never seen him again.”

“No matter,” said Heinrich; “he has kiffen his wort, and a Charman always geeeps his wort. He will gome—you shall see.”

“Thank you, Heinrich, for your good opinion,” said Monsieur de Waldeck, entering the tent. “Gentlemen,” added he, advancing, “I bring you the hundred crowns I promised you, and I engage your services for the whole of to-morrow—or rather, for to-day, for it is past twelve o’clock.” With these words he threw a hundred gold pieces upon the table; and taking up a glass of wine, he put it to his lips, saying,

“Gentlemen, in the words of my friend Heinrich, I drink to the success of the ‘little chop!’”

The adventurers joyfully joined in the toast—the “little chop” being neither more nor less than the death of Emmanuel-Philibert.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BATTLE OF ST. LAURENT.

ON the 10th of August, 1557,—the very day for which Monsieur de Waldeck had engaged the adventurers, the troops of the Marshal de St. André, led by the Count de Rochefaucauld, joined the army of the constable. This made, in all, a force of about ten thousand men.

It was with this force that the constable proposed to attack an army of sixty thousand. The Marshal de St. André had taken the liberty of suggesting to Montmorency the imprudence of such an enterprise. But the constable had replied, with his usual forbearance,

“Blood and thunder, gentlemen! You think I don't know what I am at? Are you going to teach me my own trade?”

The constable left during the night, intending to be at Gauchy by four o'clock in the morning. He did not, however, reach it till ten. But so inefficient were the Duke of Savoy's scouts, that the appearance of the French army on the heights of Gauchy took him by surprise, and the constable was enabled to take the two outposts, consisting of six hundred men.

And now the French army was within sight of the Span-

iards ; but the river Somme, and the marshes of La Biliette were between them.

After all we have said of the siege, a few words will suffice to explain the position of the constable, and to show the immense fault he committed on that fatal day. The united army of the Spaniards, the Flemish, and the English, occupied the right bank of the river. The company commanded by Jules Romeron and Carondelet occupied the Faubourg d'Ile, whilst two companies were stationed at the mill of Gauchy—being the only Spanish troops on the left bank of the river.

Now, having reached the mill of Gauchy, and taken, as we have said, the two outposts, there was a very simple manœuvre to execute. It consisted in surrounding the two Spanish companies in the faubourg, in blocking up, with six or eight pieces of artillery, the only outlet, and then, keeping up a regular fire, to march his entire army into St. Quentin.

Montmorency surrounded the Spanish companies ; but, forgetting the outlets, he ordered the boats to be launched on the river. But the boats, instead of being in front, were in the rear, and much time was lost in getting them afloat. When they were afloat, the soldiers precipitated themselves so rapidly into them, and so overloaded them, that they got aground. Meanwhile, one of the men who had been taken prisoner in the morning, pointed out to the high constable the Duke of Savoy's tent, and the constable had a battery directed towards it.

In a few minutes, by the movement around the tent, Montmorency perceived that the balls had taken effect. The boats now advanced, making the signals agreed on between Coligny and the admiral.

No sooner was the admiral apprised of these signals,

than he rushed to the platform of Tourrival, and ordered a sortie by the gate of St. Catharine, intended to protect the disembarkment of the troops. At the same time he had ladders placed against the walls, so that the soldiers might enter the town in the shortest possible space of time.

At this moment, Procope advanced towards the admiral, and, reminding him of the conditions of their treaty, asked and obtained leave of absence for the whole day. The adventurers, therefore, accompanied by M. de Waldeck, wearing his vizor down, left the town at the same moment as the men ordered out to meet Montmorency.

Four of the adventurers—Yvonnet, Lactance, Procope, and Maldent—were on horseback: the others on foot. But it was agreed that Piletrousse and Fracasse should mount behind Yvonnet and Lactance, when they got fatigued. The Scharfensteins, of course, were not likely to feel fatigue; so no provision had been made for them. Malemort, totally disabled, was left to take care of the tent.

The adventurers directed their steps to the place where the troops were about disembarking. The same confusion and want of discipline which had attended their embarkation now presided at their landing. The soldiers precipitated themselves out of the boats; and, never heeding the signals made to them by the admiral to follow the plank-road laid for them across the morass, they stumbled into the mud, or floundered through the clayey soil in the wrong direction.

D'Andelot alone, with his four hundred men, followed the route prepared for them. The admiral, in despair, called to these reckless men, who were thus annihilating his last hopes, and uselessly sacrificing their own lives.

D'Andelot, having rallied all he could, arrived in safety at the gate of the town, with his troops and some gentlemen who had joined him, together with three gunners, who were

more welcome to Coligny than all the rest. Monsieur de Waldeck withdrew, with the adventurers, under a small grove of silver ashes, which spread like a canopy over one arm of the river. There he gave to each of them a Spanish scarf, and told them to remain quiet until further orders. His plan was easy to understand. He had known, since the previous evening, of the constable's expected arrival, and concluded that Emmanuel-Philibert would lead the charge, on to the left bank of the Somme, near the place where he had stationed his men, which was called La Biliette. In those days the soldiers wore no regular uniforms, and were only recognized by their scarfs. The adventurers therefore, being provided with red and yellow scarfs, like the Spaniards, would create no suspicion, and would have every opportunity of approaching Emmanuel-Philibert.

The Duke of Savoy, rising from table at the unexpected news of the constable's approach, hastened to the door of his tent. Being on an eminence, it commanded a view of the French army, and from it he plainly saw the embarkation of the troops and the safe arrival of D'Andelot, and his men. At this instant he heard a whistling sound, with which every soldier is familiar, and presently a cannon-ball buried itself at his feet, covering him with sand and pebbles. He changed his position in order to obtain a better view, when a powerful hand drew him back. It was Scianea-Ferro, ever on the watch. Another cannon-ball now whizzed through the air, piercing the tent fore and aft.

It was evidently a folly to remain where he was: so, giving orders to have his arms prepared and his horse saddled, he went up into the turret of a little chapel hard by to reconnoitre the position of the enemy. From here he perceived that the French troops did not extend beyond St

Lazare, and that the village was only protected by a small troop of cavalry.

Having made these observations, he called the Counts Egmont and Horn, and sent messengers to the Duke Eric of Brunswick, and the Count de Mansfeldt, to reconnoitre the roads in all directions, and to see that no masked batteries had been established,—ordering them to meet him at the quarters of Marshal Binincourt to give him their report. Mounting his horse, the duke then rode round the town, and one hour afterwards met his officers at the place appointed. Being told by them that the road to Rouvroy was entirely free, and that the line of the French troops did not extend to Neuville, Emmanuel-Philibert ordered out two thousand men, placed himself at their head, and proceeded to Rouvroy. He was the first to cross the road, and was immediately followed by his troops. These he arranged so as to protect the arrival of the other troops, fifteen thousand of whom he sent to Le Mesnil by a circuitous way, which entirely hid them from the French.

Meantime, Montmorency was amusing himself by firing on the now deserted tent of Emmanuel-Philibert. All at once, the Duc de Nevers, who had been sent by the constable to scour the plain of Neuville, discovered from an eminence the disposition of the Spanish army. Fifteen thousand men were already ranged in formidable array behind Mesnil-St.-Laurent, inclosing the French army in a semi-circle.

At this discovery, the Duc de Nevers was on the point of engaging the enemy with his handful of men, so as to give Montmorency time to retreat. But Montmorency had enjoined him, as he valued his life, not to come to an engagement, and the duke, knowing how inexorable Montmorency was in matters of discipline, feared to take the responsibility.

Putting spurs to his horse, therefore, he proceeded himself to convey these terrible tidings to the constable.

No sooner did he hear them, than, calling his officers together, Montmorency declared that, satisfied with having seen the reinforcements under the command of d'Andelot enter the town, he thought prudent to retreat; and, ordering every one into the ranks, he commanded his army to be placed in marching order. Montmorency, however, forgot to place a company of artillerymen in two or three mills adjoining, which would have harassed and occupied the enemy. The troops, however, retreated in good order though at a quick pace, towards a wood, which could alone shelter them from the charge of the cavalry. But it was too late. The French troops were already enclosed in a circle by their enemies, and the two armies were in presence of each other.

Montmorency now halted, and prepared for the encounter,—the superior numbers of the Spanish cavalry rendering it impossible to attempt to force his way into the wood.

Emmanuel-Philibert divided his army into three divisions—giving to the Count d'Egmont the command of the one to the right, and to Ernest and Eric of Brunswick that to the left, whilst he himself took command of the centre. In the midst of his troops were assembled a numerous body of vivandières, valets, adventurers, and hangers-on of the armies of those days. Emmanuel-Philibert, when he had planted his troops in battle array, ordered a volley of cannon to be fired into the midst of this harassing multitude. As he had foreseen, the whole band rushed frantically into the midst of the French troops, breaking the ranks and causing great disorder. Then, turning to Scianca-Ferro, he said:

“Order the Count d'Egmont to fall on the rear of the French with his Flemish cavalry. Now is the time!”

Scianca-Ferro dashed off; then, turning to Ernest of Brunswick, who was near him, Emmanuel said,

“ Duke, whilst Egmont is charging in the rear, do you attack the head of the French columns. As for the centre, leave that to me.” Having waited some few moments, to give his aides-de-camp time to communicate his orders, Emmanuel drew his sword, and exclaimed—

“ Sound trumpets, and forward ! ”

The Duke de Nevers, who had to sustain the attack of the Flemish cavalry, found himself impeded by a crowd of the rabble from the opposing army, who, dashing amongst the horses, prevented the manœuvres, and frightened the animals. A company of English, too, in the service of France, turned their horses and went over to the enemy: so that, spite of all efforts, and the prodigies of valor he performed, Nevers was entirely overwhelmed.

But the front of the army, not having the obstacles to contend with which so embarrassed the rear, made a vigorous resistance,—so as to give time to the constable to reform his army in close battalions, and to come to the assistance of the other troops. Montmorency drew up his soldiers in the plain between Essigny and Gibercourt, and, forming them into squares, prepared for battle. He was completely surrounded. There was no alternative but to conquer or die. The old soldier was not afraid to die; but he expected to conquer. Montmorency relied on his infantry — old French troops, whom he knew, and who now received the enemy in a manner to sustain their reputation; whilst the Germans in the service of France, on the contrary, threw down their arms at the first onset.

The Duke d'Enghein rushed to the aid of the Duke de Nevers, whom he found preparing, in spite of a pistol wound

in the thigh, to mount his third horse, two having been already killed under him.

The constable still kept his ground; and the Duke of Savoy, finding he could make no impression by charging, ordered the cannon to be placed in front, to demolish this living rampart. Ten pieces of artillery, fired at once, made a direful breach in the opposing troops. Then Emmanuel-Philibert himself led on the charge. Montmorency, diligently murmuring his *pater noster*, and killing a man at every word, was overpowered. Emmanuel-Philibert, recognizing him, cried to the soldiers who surrounded him, "Take him alive! It is Montmorency!" Scianca-Ferro and the Baron de Batembourg then rode up to the constable, entreating him to surrender, as all further resistance was vain.

Montmorency consented to be taken prisoner, but refused to give up his sword to any but the Duke of Savoy himself; for his sword, emblazoned with the royal fleur-de-lys, was that of the lord high constable of France.

Emmanuel-Philibert, then coming up, received this sword from the hands of the constable, and the victory was achieved. The fighting, however, continued till nightfall,—many refusing to surrender, and preferring death. Amongst these were Jean de Bourbon, Duc d'Enghein, François de Latour, Vicomte de Turenne, and eight hundred gentlemen.

Some of the first nobility of France were taken prisoners. The Duc de Nevers, and the Prince de Condé, together with the son of Montmorency, returned to Lafère.

There remained but ten thousand men to oppose the entrance to St. Quentin. Night having now arrived, Emmanuel-Philibert, accompanied by his staff, returned leisurely to the camp; when, as he passed by the mill of Gauchy, eight or ten men, some on foot, some on horseback, mingled themselves unnoticed amidst his escort. The duke pursued his

route in silence, no doubt thinking of what still remained to be done ; when suddenly, just as he was passing a dark portion of the road, near a little grove of trees, his horse started, neighed, snorted, and then fell to the ground. This event was followed by a noise of arms, and then the words, " On ! on ! 'tis the duke ! " gave the duke to understand that he had fallen into a snare. Scarcely, however, had Emmanuel time to collect his thoughts, when the well known voice of Scianca-Ferro shouted—

" Keep your hold, Emmanuel ! I am here ! " and Scianca-Ferro was seen making his way towards the prince with his battle-axe.

But Emmanuel did not want any assistance—for, seizing one of his adversaries, he held him down over him, thus interposing him between himself and his enemies. His horse, too, although he had been ham-strung in one leg, kicked vigorously with the three others, knocking down one of the ruffians who had assailed his master.

Scianca-Ferro, fighting right and left, called at the same time, " Gentlemen, to the rescue of the duke ! to the rescue ! "

But the escort had already drawn their swords, and were laying about them, though, from the darkness, they knew not where to direct their blows. Soon, however, a gallop of cavalry was heard, and, from the sudden light which followed, it was ascertained that the approaching troop carried torches. Then two men on horseback, disengaging themselves from the *melée*, started off at full speed, whilst the others on foot disappeared within the grove. All the assailants had disappeared. Scianca-Ferro's first care was to assist the duke to rise. Emmanuel was but slightly wounded,—the man he had pertinaciously held in his arms having shielded him from most of the blows aimed at him. This individual lay now senseless, having received a blow on the

head from the battle-axe of Scianca-Ferro. Three other men were found, either dead or insensible, on the ground, but none knew them.

The man whom the duke still held in his arms wore a helmet with the vizor down. This was speedily unloosed, and revealed the pale features of a young man of about five and twenty. His hair and long beard, which were of a sanguine red, were both dabbled with blood, which flowed from his mouth.

Spite of his livid pallor and his disfigurement, Emmanuel-Philibert and Scianca-Ferro recognized him instantly.

“ Ah ! ah ! ” said Scianca-Ferro, “ the serpent ! He is not yet dead : shall I finish him ? ”

But Emmanuel-Philibert, making a sign to him to desist, dragged the man to the foot of a tree, and setting him up against it, he placed his helmet beside him. Then, turning to his escort, the duke said :

“ Gentlemen, God alone can judge between me and this man ; and you see that God is on my side.” Then, as Scianca-Ferro still murmured, Emmanuel said, “ I entreat, Scianca-Ferro, let him live ; the father’s death was sufficient.”

“ Gentlemen,” then added the duke, preparing to mount a horse which was now brought for him ; “ I desire that, in commemoration of the patron saint of this day, the battle we have gained may be called the battle of St. Laurent.”

Then, followed by his escort, Emmanuel-Philibert returned to the camp, without again referring to the skirmish which had nearly cost him his life.

CHAPTER XV.

IN WHAT WAY THE ADMIRAL GOT NEWS OF THE BATTLE.

God appeared to have declared himself against France, or rather if we can sound the ways of Providence, God by the means of Pavia and St. Quentin, prepared the way for Richelieu, as by Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, He had prepared the way for Louis XI.

Or, perhaps, his inscrutable design was to give a great example to the world, of a nation lost by the nobles, saved by the people. Be this as it may, the blow was nevertheless a terrible one for France, and greatly rejoiced the heart of Philip of Spain. The battle had taken place on the 10th, but it was not until the 12th that Philip deemed it safe or expedient to cross the field of battle, and to join Emmanuel-Philibert.

The Duke of Savoy, determined to attack St. Quentin by the ramparts of Remirecourt, if St. Quentin, at the news of a battle so completely and disastrously lost, did not surrender.

The second encampment was almost within cannon shot of the town. Philip II. having given due notice of his coming, arrived with an escort of a thousand men under the

walls of St. Quentin on the 12th, at eleven o'clock in the morning.

Emmanuel-Philibert assisted him to descend from his horse, but when he bent down, according to the etiquette of the day, to kiss his hand, Philip prevented him, saying :

“ ’Tis I should rather kiss your hand, which has procured us such a glorious victory at so little cost.”

The loss, according to the chroniclers of the day, was indeed incredibly small—the Spaniards having lost but sixty-five men, and the Flemish but fifteen, whilst the bodies of the French strewed the whole extent of the plain between Es-signy and Gibercourt. It was indeed a most pitiable sight, and one calculated to excite pity in every heart. So touched by it was a noble lady named Catherine de Lailleur, that she caused a field to be consecrated, and there had buried as many as it would hold, naming the ground from that day the *Cemetery of Mercy*.

Whilst this tender-hearted woman was burying the dead, Emmanuel-Philibert was presenting the prisoners to Philip II. After this ceremony was concluded, all the banners taken in the battle were planted in the trenches, and guns were fired as a sign of rejoicing.

Philip II., sending for his cousin, asked him what were his intentions in making such loud rejoicings.

“ I intend,” said Emmanuel-Philibert, just as his cannon saluted the royal standard, now hoisted on Philip’s tent ; “ I intend to force St. Quentin to surrender, without further delay—so that we shall have time, by this means, to reach Paris about the same time as the news of the battle of St. Laurent. I think they cannot now intend to hold out.”

As if in reply to this observation, a ball at this moment whizzed over the head of the king. He turned pale.

“ What is that ? ” said he.

“Sire,” replied the constable, laughing, “that is a message from my nephew.”

Philip said no more; but gave instant orders to have his tent moved beyond the reach of the French guns—making a vow, at the same time, that in order to testify his gratitude to St. Laurent, for the victory obtained through his favor, he would raise to his honor the most magnificent monastery ever erected. The result of this vow was the Escorial—that sombre and magnificent pile, so in keeping with its master, and which was built in the form of a grid-iron, in commemoration of the martyrdom of the saint.

At this edifice, which cost about a hundred millions of francs, three hundred workmen were employed constantly for twenty-two years. It has eleven thousand windows: fourteen thousand doors; and the keys alone weigh five hundred quintals.

A gentleman from Gascony, being shown over the edifice, and asked what he thought of it, replied:

“I think that King Philip must have been deucedly frightened, to have built such a monastery as this to the saint who had saved him.”

And now let us see what was going on within the town, which, from the message of Monsieur de Coligny, did not seem at all inclined to surrender.

The admiral had heard the cannon in the direction of Gibercourt during the whole day, but knew nothing of the issue of the battle. Towards thrée o'clock in the morning, he was told that three men had presented themselves at the gate of St. Catherine, desiring to be admitted to his presence. They were instantly admitted, and recognized by the admiral as Yvonnet and the two Scharfensteins. The latter, as usual, said nothing. But Yvonnet gave all the de-

tails of the battle—telling the admiral that all was lost, and that the constable had been wounded and taken prisoner.

The admiral asked Yvonnet how it came that they had gone out and joined in the battle; but Yvonnet reminded him that, by their treaty, one day of the week belonged to them, and that Procope had obtained the admiral's permission.

They had evidently taken part in the battle, for Yvonnet had his left arm in a sling; Heinrich Scharfenstein showed a sabre cut on the face, and Franz, having received a kick from a horse, which would have killed an ordinary mortal, was quite lame.

The admiral enjoined the adventurers to keep silence, and they withdrew to their tent. There they recounted the details of the battle to Malmort, whose sufferings were increased at the recital, and at the thought that he had not been there.

Towards evening Maldent returned, having been left on the field for dead; and in the course of the night, Pilletrousse came home, having, thanks to his knowledge of Spanish and his uniform scarf, escaped unharmed and unsuspected. Pilletrousse had even joined a troop sent by Emmanuel-Philibert in search of the body of the Duke of Nevers, whom he could not imagine had survived the fatal day. Pilletrousse, in searching for Nevers, had not forgotten to look in the pockets of the dead, and came home with his own pretty well filled, and without a single scratch or bruise.

He gave the admiral a succinct account of the battle, together with the names of the prisoners, and the killed and wounded.

Towards daybreak the Jacobins were advised that one of their brothers, killed in the exercise of his religious duties, was waiting at the chapel door.

The body had been put into a bier, with a cilice worn by the reverend brother nailed on the outside. The devout Spaniards had every where allowed the procession to pass, making the sign of the cross as it went by.

The body was deposited in the chapel of the convent, and the brothers gathered round, anxious to ascertain which of their number they had to mourn; when suddenly a voice from the coffin said :

“ It is I, Lactancee, your captain ; open the coffin, or I shall suffocate.”

The monks, after the first movement of terror and surprise, obeyed ; and Lactancee, freed from his bier, prostrated himself before the altar. Then, rising, he related to the admiring fathers that having formed part of an unsuccessful expedition, he had taken refuge at a carpenter's, who, to save him, had suggested the stratagem which had so well succeeded.

The good monks, delighted to see their captain, paid liberally both for the coffin and the bearers, and the latter, entreating Lactancee's custom the next time he should wish to be buried, left the convent well satisfied with their job.

Lactancee, who had received no instructions to keep the defeat secret, began then to relate all he knew of it, so that the news spread rapidly through the town.

At about mid-day arrived Procope, who proceeded instantly to the admiral, for he had a letter from the constable to give him.

Now this is how Procope became possessed of such a valuable credential.

Having missed one job, Procope, who always had his wits about him, repaired immediately to the camp of Emmanuel-Philibert, claiming to be one of the burnishers of Montmoreney's arms. The post was so humble a one that

it was not denied him to attend on his master, and accordingly he was sent to the lodging assigned to him. Once in the presence of the constable, Procope soon made him understand that he had something to say to him.

Montmorency then sent all present out of the way, and demanded an explanation of Procope.

Procope of course made out a good story, exalting his own devotion and valor, and terminating by saying that if the constable would give him either a letter or a message, he would find means of delivering it.

“But,” said Montmorency, “do you know, rascal, that if you are taken, and such a message is found in your possession, you will be hanged?”

“I know it,” replied Procope, coolly; “I know it, but I will take pretty good care not to be taken.”

Montmorency, reflecting that after all it was not his business whether Procope was hanged or not, wrote the letter, desiring his nephew to hold out as long as possible. Procope then concealed the letter in the lining of his coat, and polished away as hard as he could, until the constable's armor was more brilliant than it had ever been, waiting for an opportunity to escape. This very soon offered, and during the rejoicings in the Spanish camp, Procope slipped out unperceived, and quietly walked up to the gates of the town. The admiral, as we have said, was on the ramparts, watching the rejoicings, of which he knew not the cause. Procope soon explained it, declaring to the admiral that the personage in black, who stood in the entrance of the tent, was the king himself. It was then that Coligny bethought himself of sending the messenger that had so alarmed the king. Procope himself asked permission to fire the piece; and if the ball passed three feet above the head of Philip,

we may be sure it was no fault of Procope's intention, but a proof of his want of skill.

The admiral, satisfied with Procope and his message, counted him out ten golden crowns ; and Procope, delighted, joined his companions, who were now all united, except Fracasse, for whom they waited in vain. He did not return. All that could be heard of him was, that a body had been found by the peasants, hanging to the trees, near the place of the skirmish, and they presumed it to be the body of Fracasse.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ASSAULT.

FROM the moment that the victory of St. Laurent, and the presence of the king, had not induced the admiral to surrender, it was evident that the siege was to be continued. Emmanuel-Philibert had already been ten days before the place—far too long a time for so small a town; and he resolved, therefore, to terminate it as quickly as possible.

The greatest difficulty the admiral experienced, was in finding workmen to repair the damages done to the walls. The rampart of Remirecourt was already useless, and was now exposed to a double battery from the enemy, so that the workmen refused any longer to work upon it. At last D'Andelot suggested that all the old boats that could be found, should be taken, and that the workmen should work beneath their shelter. Franz and Heinrich, therefore, each carrying a boat on his head, placed them edgewise on the ramparts, when they were immediately filled with earth, until a complete line of protection to the workmen was formed.

Philip II., to encourage his workmen, would sometimes come down amongst them. One day, as he was there with his confessor, without whom he never went—so that he

might have an absolution *in extremis* always at hand—Coligny recognized him, and sent a shower of balls at him.

“Holy father,” said Philip to his confessor, “what do you think of this music?”

“I think it very discordant,” replied the monk.

“And I,” said Philip, “cannot imagine why my father, the emperor Charles V., liked it so much.” And the King of Spain rode off, and never visited the works again.

It took nine days for the Spaniards to complete their works. But when, on the 21st of August, the batteries were unmasked, the inhabitants of St. Quentin saw how hopeless was their condition. The whole town was enveloped in a circle of fire, which poured on it on all sides, as from a volcano. St. Quentin, like the fabled salamander, seemed to exist in an atmosphere of flames. The Faubourgs d’Ile and Remirecourt were in ruins, and the inhabitants carrying with them whatever valuables they could, fled into the interior of the city.

Still, not a word was said of surrendering. On the contrary, every one seemed inspired by the momentousness of the occasion. “We will sacrifice all, even our lives,” cried they; “but we will save France!”

This storm of fire lasted from the 22d to the 26th of August. Suddenly, at half-past two, on the 26th, the enemy ceased their fire. A cannon ball had just set fire to some houses, and the inhabitants were busy trying to extinguish them; when the cry arose, “To the walls! to the walls!” Leaving their houses to burn, all rushed to the walls, led by the admiral in person.

But it was a false alarm. The besiegers had not yet decided on storming the walls, and had only advanced for the purpose of setting fire to the mines. The explosion of the mines of course added to the damage of the city; and

the houses having been left to burn by themselves, thirty were destroyed by the flames. The night was spent in repairing the breaches.

Our adventurers, foreseeing that they would soon be obliged to change their quarters, set about dividing their spoils. Procope, having made up the accounts, it was found that the share of each amounted to fifty crowns—including Fracasse's share, which was divided amongst them all. Twenty-five crowns was given to each, and the rest was buried in the vaults of the Jacobite convent; and they took an oath, not to touch this sum, under a year, and in the presence of all who might then be living.

On the morning of the 27th, the cannonading was resumed, and in the course of the day, eleven breaches were effected. The firing continued until two o'clock—destroying every thing, even in the remotest streets of the town. To such a fire as this it was useless to reply. The admiral, therefore, contented himself by ordering the bell of the city hall to be rung during the entire day. At this call to arms, all who were able to bear weapons, assembled around the admiral.

At length the firing ceased, and a flag was hoisted by Emmanuel-Philibert. This was the signal for the assault. The walls were scaled at three different points; and it would be impossible to describe the confusion, the slaughter, the carnage, when besiegers and besieged met, on the platform of the ramparts.

And then, on all three points, at the first encounter, the besiegers were repulsed. At the gate d'Ile, the presence of Malemort and the two Scharfensteins, had contributed to this result. Malemort had wounded Carondelet; whilst Heinrich Scharfenstein had hurled the other commander, Jules Romeron, from the top of the walls.

Then there was a moment's respite, during which nothing was heard but the solemn pealing of the alarm bell. All knew that the struggle was desperate, and all resolved to resist to the last.

Nothing could be more terrible than this second encounter, where there were neither drums nor trumpets—where all partook of the solemnity of death and despair.

Coligny, who stood by a breach not yet attacked, gazed around him with dismay; when suddenly there arose a cry that the breach at the Red Tower was taken. Rushing from the ramparts, he exclaimed, "Come on, friends! Our time has come!" and all hurried in the direction of the Red Tower.

On the way, he met a soldier of the dauphin, flying towards the Jacobite convent. At this, Coligny deeming his presence still more urgent, redoubled his pace—reached the rampart of the Red Tower—mounted it in haste—and saw that he had rushed into the midst of a Spanish battalion. The tower was in the possession of the enemy.

Two men threw themselves upon the admiral with drawn swords. At this juncture, a little page, who, with two other persons, had followed Coligny, exclaimed, in Spanish, "Do not kill the admiral! do not kill the admiral!"

"Are you indeed the admiral?" said one of the soldiers. "If you are, you are my prisoner," cried the other, extending his hand to take Coligny by the shoulder. But Coligny, shaking him off, exclaimed:

"I am Coligny! Do not touch me, and I will find such ransom as shall satisfy you both."

The soldiers then spoke together, and at last asked him if those who were with him belonged to him.

"They belong to my household," said he, "and their ransom shall be paid with mine. Only take me away from

the Flemish battalions—I do not wish to have any thing to do with them.”

Coligny then, giving up his sword, was assisted by the soldiers down the walls, to the entrance of a mine. There they met Don Alonzo de Caziera. Approaching Coligny, he saluted him courteously; and pointing to a group of gentlemen who were approaching, said,

“My lord, here is the Duke Emmanuel-Philibert. If you have any thing thing to say, you can address yourself to him.”

“I have nothing to say,” replied the admiral, “excepting that, as these two soldiers took me prisoner, I desire that they may receive my ransom.”

Emmanuel, who had heard this speech of the admiral, replied :

“If the ransom of such a prisoner were set at his full value, these two soldiers would be richer than some princes of my acquaintance.”

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FUGITIVE.

THE inhabitants of St. Quentin were perfectly well aware of all the risks they ran, and had no more idea of asking for quarter than their enemies had of giving it them. The wars in those days were wars of extermination ; and the troops, ill-paid, relied upon pillage for their compensation. So the fighting went on, long after the town had been taken and the Spanish banners had been planted on the walls. The massacre which accompanies such scenes lasted five days. All those whose appearance did not seem to insure a good ransom, were mercilessly butchered ; and for five days the houses burned unceasingly. In spite of Philip's command to spare the sacred edifices, the churches were demolished and pillaged.

As for the inhabitants, when they found that the town was irrevocably in the power of the enemy, some submitted to their fate, and perished without a murmur ; some took refuge in caves and cellars, whilst others, sliding down the ramparts, strove to escape into the open country ; but almost all who had attempted this last means of escape, perished by the sword of the army outside the walls.

Towards night, however, the musketry ceased to fire ;

then the rushes by the river-side near the trenches of the town were agitated, but so slightly, that the movement might have been mistaken for the effect of the wind, but that the noise of a weight falling into the water, and the bubbling of the waves, led one to suppose that it was caused by the presence of a human being. Following the movement of the waters, the form of a human head might be seen stealthily rising above the surface, and finally a man could be distinguished, climbing up the opposite bank, and landing under a knot of trees, which sheltered the shore in that particular spot. Being in safety, the swimmer turned with an expression of regret towards the burning city, and murmured a name; and then assuring himself that his belt and his poniard were in safety, he set off at full speed for the marshes. These marshes were dangerous for travellers ignorant of the small roads which intersected them, but for one well-acquainted with their labyrinths, they afforded a great resource, for it was impossible that any one should follow.

Our traveller, however, soon crossed them, and attaining the fields, was soon in the midst of the harvest, half destroyed by the enemy, who had cut down the corn for their horses. Soon the fugitive gained the high road, and there stopping to take breath, he looked around him. As he paused, he heard the sound of horses' feet near him, and beheld a ray of light penetrate from the windows of Gauthy. This mill, looking in the obscurity twice its natural size, was not by our traveller, as by Don Quixote, taken for any thing but what it was, but the indications that near by was a night patrol, made our fugitive instantly look around for another shelter.

He was just by the spot where the adventurers had attempted the life of Emmanuel-Philibert; an attempt which had been so disastrous to them all, and so fatal to our poor

Fracasse. The fugitive looking around him espied the little grove of trees, and hearing the horses' footfalls draw nearer and nearer, he withdrew quickly beneath the shadow of these trees for greater security ; and after he had gone a few rods, he threw himself on the ground.

Our fugitive's ears had not deceived him. In a few moments a numerous patrol of Spanish soldiers passed by the wood where he lay, going, as he gathered from their conversation, to take their share in the sack of the burning city. Immovable, scarcely breathing, lay the fugitive, till all sound died away, and he could hear nothing but the beating of his own heart. He then crawled along, until he felt, by the roots, that he was near one of those old patriarchal forest trees, of which there were several in the grove. Against this tree he now leaned, and passing his white and elegant hand through his long hair, notwithstanding his wet clothes still dripping from the Somme, for the first time he began to breathe freely. As he did this he felt another object caress his hair from above. Leaning back, he tried to penetrate through the darkness, so as to discover what it could be. All he could distinguish, was a dark object suspended from one of the branches. His sight being insufficient to satisfy his curiosity, he extended his hand, when, to his horror, he took hold of a foot, and pursuing his investigation still further, he found that the dark object was no other than the body of a man suspended from the branch of a tree. Forgetful of his own dangerous and precarious position, the fugitive, with a cry of horror, fled from the wood.

Of course our readers will have guessed that the body was no other than that of our friend Fracasse, whose rhymes and sonnets had all come to a sudden conclusion on the evening of the catastrophe of the Waldeck expedition.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TWO FUGITIVES.

No hunted hart could have started at a quicker pace across the plain than did our young fugitive ; the only precaution he took being to turn his back on St. Quentin ; and his only desire appearing to be to get as far as possible from the dead body ; having, it would seem, like many others, a nervous susceptibility with regard to hanged people—who, however, seem to us often much more dangerous before than after.

In three quarters of an hour, at the rate at which he went, he had traversed a space of two leagues, which brought him beyond Essigny, and almost to Gibercourt. Here he halted momentarily, for two reasons : first, he was out of breath ; and next, the ground became so unequal, that he could only proceed with extreme caution. He therefore threw himself along a bog, palpitating like a deer driven to cover. He consoled himself, however, by reflecting that he must already have passed the Spanish posts ; and as to the body of the hanged individual, he had, at all events, nearly an hour the start of him.

The young man made still another reflection on this subject,—reasoning, with what appears to us great justice, that if an individual who has been hanged, either on a regular

gibbet or from the branch of a tree, has the power of descending at will from his "bad eminence," he will be very likely to avail himself of it at the earliest possible moment, instead of waiting.

Now twenty days had elapsed since the taking of the town and the accident to poor Fracasse ; so that, if he had hung quietly for that length of time, there was little likelihood of his now coming down to make any disturbance.

Whilst our fugitive thus reflected, half-past eleven struck from the tower of Gibercourt, and the moon began to appear above the wood of Remigny. By her light he was enabled to take a view of the country around, which seemed to be occupied by himself alone. He was in the cemetery newly made by Catherine de Laillier, and the eminence on which he was standing was the mound made by the bodies of the French soldiers. It seemed that a funereal circle surrounded him—that death pursued him at every step. Still, as it appears that for some organizations the dead, who sleep three feet under ground, are less terrible than those suspended three feet above, our fugitive, at this discovery, merely shivered and shuddered, but did not fly. Throwing himself down on the earth, he gave himself up to the security and rest this spot appeared to promise, listening to the cry of the screech-owl, so much in harmony with the place. Presently, however, another sound appeared to mingle with this funereal cry. Our fugitive raised his head and frowned, for the noise assumed the character of the gallop of a horse, which, two thousand years ago, Virgil described in a line over which even the hypercritics of the present day go still into ecstasies :—

"Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum."

Our fugitive is, however, not likely to have known this

verse; but most assuredly he knew the gallop of a horse, however distant.

The fugitive arose and gazed around. He could see nothing; but still the measured tread of the horse, so distinct yet so muffled—as though it trod on soft ground, it was impossible to mistake. For an instant, our fugitive, whose nervous susceptibilities were strongly excited, imagined that he was to have revealed to him some visionary steed with a ghostly rider—an unshriven soul which could not rest in the grave which the compassion of Catherine de Laillier had provided for the slain.

Vision or reality, both horse and rider were now distinctly visible in the moonlight; and our fugitive, casting a look around him for a refuge, his eyes alighted on the outskirts of the forest of Remigny, and towards that haven of safety he now prepared to fly.

As he started off, he heard the visionary rider utter a cry, which appeared to him to have nothing in it human.

So, on he sped, frightening the screech-owl as he went, when to his horror he perceived that, bounding over the graves, following his very footsteps, came both horse and rider, the horse neighing, and the rider shouting.

On, on, they sped. The fugitive, still ahead of the horse, was but a few yards from the shelter of the forest; but, like the last waves to the exhausted swimmer, these few yards appeared unattainable. The man was ready to drop with fatigue; his arms extended, his throat parched, his mouth open, he still made superhuman efforts; but the steed and his rider came rapidly on. Now they were within twenty paces! But another effort, and he is in the wood! But now he feels on his shoulder a breath like a living flame! A blow like a thunderbolt fells him to the earth,

and he falls into the ditch which alone intervened between him and safety.

Presently, he opens his eyes, and sees dimly, as in the midst of flames, the rider—man or ghost—descend from his horse. He feels him come to him, raise him, place him against a tree, and at length exclaim, in a voice with nothing ethereal in its tone,

“By the soul of Luther! it is my good friend Yvonnet.”

Then the fugitive, rubbing his eyes and collecting his scattered senses, looked straight at the cavalier, and in a voice hoarse from fatigue and excitement exclaimed—

“By the soul of his holiness the pope! if it is not Monseigneur d’Andelot!”

Now we all know why Yvonnet was flying before M. D’Andelot, but we do not yet know why D’Andelot was flying after him.

To account for this, we must go back once more to St. Quentin, at the very moment when Emmanuel-Philibert set foot on the walls of the town.

CHAPTER XIX.

ADVENTURER AND COMMANDER.

YVONNET, Maldent, and Procope were defending the breach commanded by Coligny in person. The breach had not been difficult to defend, for the simple reason that it had never been attacked.

The admiral resolved, as we have said, to conquer or die; and when he rushed up the rampart he had exclaimed, "The time is come!" But the time had not come. Providence, either in its anger or its mercy, had reserved him for a more terrible fate—the massacre of St. Bartholomew; and he, as we have seen, was taken prisoner.

Our adventurers had no intention of conquering or dying. They cared not for so heroic a fate; and seeing, as they said, that the game was up, they made the best of their way out of the carnage and strife.

Maldent and Procope rushed off in the direction of the Jacobite convent, where we will leave them, and ourselves follow the fortunes of Yvonnnet.

It is but just to him to say, that his first impulse was to proceed to the Vieux Marché, and to offer his protection to Gudule Peuquet; but of what use could his single arm be against so many? and then, would not her youth and beau-

ty, in themselves, defend her better than swords or poniards? Besides, he knew that Guillaume and Jean Peuquet, her natural protectors, had prepared in the cellars of the house a retreat for themselves and their niece. He knew that in these cellars were also deposited their most precious treasures, together with provisions for eight or ten days. Therefore, leaving his mistress, like the early Christians in the catacombs, in peace and security under ground, while carnage and death were busy over her head, Yvonnet, who did not care to share her captivity, resolved to fly as far as possible from danger.

Accordingly, arranging in his head a plan of flight, Yvonnet began, even while running towards the gate of St. Catherine, to unbuckle his cuirass and his helmet, throwing them on the ground, as he went. Then he fastened his poniard to the chain he habitually wore round his neck; and more effectually securing the waistband, in which he carried his twenty-five golden crowns, he reached the ramparts. There, letting himself down, he plunged into the moat, and hiding himself in the rushes and reeds which grew by its side, remained up to his chin in water, until the shadows of evening should allow of his leaving his retreat, unseen by the sentinels.

As he lay *perdu*, the bodies of soldiers and citizens shot down by the victorious troops, floated past him; and Yvonnet, who was an expert swimmer, thought it would be no bad idea to float down with them, lying flat on his back, immovable, as though he himself were dead. This manœuvre succeeded very well, till, opening his eyes, Yvonnet perceived that he was in the Somme, and that the English troops, having no living enemies to combat, were amusing themselves by firing at the dead ones as they floated by. Seeing this, Yvonnet dived, and so gained a quiet spot on the shore

where we saw him land, and whence we have followed him to the moment when he so unexpectedly found himself in the presence of Coligny's brother.

D'Andelot had fought like a lion, until, by dint of numbers, he was overpowered and taken. Conducted to the camp, he had been recognized by the constable and the admiral, both of whom, without saying who he was, had become responsible for his ransom.

Emmanuel-Philibert, however, soon discovered his rank; and though he invited his three illustrious captives to supper, he enjoined the guards to watch them closely. At his own table, however, the prisoners were treated with the courtesy and hospitality with which the English victors treated the captive French king after the battles of Cressy and Agincourt. Neither St. Laurent nor St. Quentin had been referred to.

At half-past ten, taking leave of their host, the prisoners were conducted to a tent prepared for them, surrounded by palisades, and guarded by a double row of sentinels. Often had d'Andelot, from his watch on the walls of St. Quentin, gazed on the camp at his feet. He knew its position; he knew the very inequalities of the ground on which the tents were placed; and since he had been prisoner, the whole plan of the encampment appeared to display itself distinctly in his memory. Now, ever since d'Andelot had been taken prisoner, his ruling thought had been freedom. To obtain that, at any risk, he had determined; and the sooner he set about obtaining it, the greater chance he thought he had of success. He was bound by no parole, for he had not surrendered himself; he had been taken.

On his way from the tent of the Duke of Savoy to his own, d'Andelot had looked around him, with the vague hope that some favorable opportunity might offer. When they

left Emmanuel, a courier was about to be sent to Cambrai, announcing the storming of the town, and giving a list of the prisoners. This list had been increased by fresh prisoners, taken whilst Emmanuel-Philibert had been at supper.

One of the fleetest horses from the stud of Emmanuel was waiting outside the tent, held by the bridle by a groom. D'Andelot drew near, as if to examine the horse, and to admire his fine points; when, snatching the bridle from the groom, with one bound he leaped into the saddle, and digging his spurs into the horse's sides, knocked down the groom, and started off at full gallop.

The groom, of course, cried out for help; but d'Andelot passed on like a flash of lightning before the sentinels; and before the soldiers could turn out and get to their arms, he had passed, and was gone. Some attempted to stop him by putting halberds and pikes across the road; but over these his charger vaulted. Then on he sped, till, coming to the Somme, he jumped into it, followed its current, and, amidst a shower of balls, which, however, did him no greater damage than to deprive him of his hat and tear his cloak, he arrived safe on the opposite bank.

He was now comparatively in safety, for he knew by this time enough of his horse's mettle, to be sure that he had nothing to dread from pursuit; and now, having ascertained that his horse was as sound as himself, he had but one difficulty to contend with—that was his entire ignorance of the country. Paris, he knew, was only thirty leagues off; but in what direction? Whilst hesitating, and seeking right and left for some safe person of whom to inquire, d'Andelot had encountered Yvonnet; but Yvonnet had taken him for an enemy or a ghost, and had fled—so that, in order to obtain what he wanted, he was obliged to pursue

him and knock him down, before he could convince him of his friendly intentions.

Great was his joy and his surprise when, in raising the fugitive, he recognized Yvonnet.

Equally great, too, was the delight and surprise of Yvonnet, when, dreading to encounter either a spectre or a Spaniard, he recognized the brother of the admiral, M. d'Andelot de Coligny.

CHAPTER XX.

THE SUSPENSE.

THE news of the loss of the battle of St. Laurent resounded like a clap of thunder throughout all France; echoing in the most fearful manner in the court of St. Germain. Never had the lord high constable so much need of the favor and protection of Diana de Poitiers, as he had in the present crisis, not to fall entirely in disgrace with Henry II.

This defeat was in fact a most terrible blow. One half of the nobility was with the Duke de Guise at Naples; the other half annihilated before the walls of St. Quentin, or prisoners of the Spanish king. Some few, wounded and disabled, grouped around the Duke de Nevers, were all that remained of the nobility of France. Three foreign armies menaced France; and between its capital and their eager opposing forces, were but four small, ill-defended towns, of which St. Quentin had been the best. Amongst the foes, too, was an army of English, who, remembering Cressy and Agincourt, coveted that Paris, which one of their kings, a century and a half before, had wrested from the feeble hands of Charles VI.

The king, too, who now reigned in France, though personally brave, capable of being an excellent soldier, was in-

capable of being even a mediocre general—having for counsellors Catherine de Medicis and the Cardinal de Guise—that is to say, the personification of Italian treachery, French cunning, and the pride of Lorraine.

He was surrounded, too, by a court composed of frivolous and intriguing women—the young queen of Scotland, the Princess Elizabeth, his daughter; Diana de Poitiers; her daughter, betrothed to the Connetable de Montmorency; and the Princess Margaret, his sister.

The news of the loss of the battle seemed to threaten still more disasters.

The king determined on retreating to Orleans, which once had been, under the sacred banner of Jeanne d'Arc, the bulwark of the French monarchy. The queen and the court prepared to quit Paris at a moment's notice. As for the king, he resolved to join the remnant of the army, and to fight to the last drop of his blood, against the invaders of his kingdom.

Measures had been already taken to insure the succession to Francis, the dauphin, appointing Catherine de Medicis regent, and the Cardinal of Lorraine counsellor.

Couriers had been sent to the Duke de Guise, to hasten his return, with all the troops under his command.

These preparations had been made immediately after the news of the defeat of St. Laurent. The next courier had, contrary to his expectation, brought news that St. Quentin still held out. Anxiously did the king wait for the intelligence he dreaded. Four, five, six, eight days; but each courier brought the same news—St. Quentin still held out. Then, to this was added, that D'Andelot had entered the town with a reinforcement of several hundred men, and that he and his brother had sworn to bury themselves under the ruins of the town. The king began to be reassured; for he

had great reliance on Coligny and his genius. All eyes were now directed towards St. Quentin. So impatient was the king, that, in order to be nearer the seat of war, he went to Compiègne, where the couriers reached him some hours sooner than in Paris. Catherine de Medicis went with him; for whenever the king wanted advice in a critical moment, it was of Catherine de Medicis that he asked it. In moments of happiness or love, it was Diana de Poitiers whom he sought.

The Cardinal de Guise remained in Paris, to sustain and encourage the Parisians.

In case of a continuation of the war, the king's intention was to proceed to the army, whilst Catherine would proceed to St. Germain, in order to attend to affairs at home.

Henry found the population much less alarmed than he had imagined. The custom of the wars in those days, to trace their way by taking all the fortified towns on their path, gave them great security—for Ham, le Chatelet, and Lafère had to be taken before Compiègne could be reached.

Henry took up his residence at Compiègne. He sent scouts to St. Quentin, and the scouts returned, with the news that St. Quentin did not seem disposed to surrender. Then he sent couriers to know what had become of the army; and the couriers returned with the news, that all that remained of the army was at Laon, with the Duke of Nevers. This most efficient and able general, foreseeing that after the fall of St. Quentin the Spaniards would march up to the walls of another town, prepared to fortify those within his reach. He sent the Count de Saucerre to Guise, Captain Bourdillon to Lafère, the Baron de Polignac to the Chatelet, Monsieur d'Humieres to Peronne, Monsieur de Chausues to Corbie, M. de Sevois to Ham, Clemeut d'Am-

boise to St. Dizier, Bouchavannes to Coucy, and Montigny to Channy.

The duke himself remained at Laon, with about a thousand men. It was there that the king was to send all the reinforcements, as well as advices of what was going on.

Nothing could be more solemn or more gloomy than the aspect of the Chateau of Compiègne at the present time. The king and queen, anxious, preoccupied, and full of care, had come hastily, almost without any attendants. At other times, when Henry II. would visit these old walls, as was his custom, twice or thrice a year, the castle was filled with that splendid and gorgeous court of France, which had no equal. The old town was taxed to its utmost to find lodgings for squires and cavaliers, and the forest re-echoed with the horn of the hunter and the flourish of the royal trumpets.

Now, late in the evening, an old leather-covered vehicle had stopped at the principal entrance. From it had descended a dark, care-worn gentleman, in a dark unornamented dress; then a lady, as simply attired, preoccupied and silent, followed, with four or five gentlemen in waiting. Scarcely did the porter recognize the king; and but that Catherine's bright eyes and fair skin were unchanged, he never would have known the queen. Almost did he forget the usual salutation; but they passed on, signing to him to close the gate; and without further ceremony, Henry and Catherine took possession of their apartments.

Soon, however, it was known throughout the town that the king and queen were at Compiègne, and the whole population turned out to greet them. Henry was greatly beloved by his people, and Catherine as yet had not taught them to hate her.

At the repeated cries of "*Vive le Roi!*" the king and

queen appeared on the balcony, and the king, bowing, thus addressed the multitude :

“ My friends,” said he, “ I come here in order myself to defend the entrance to France. I trust the enemy will not advance as far as Compiègne ; but if they should, we will imitate the brave inhabitants of St. Quentin, and defend ourselves to the last. From here I can watch St. Quentin ; any who may have news from that town, will, I trust, hasten to bring it to me. The gates will be open to my people at all hours.”

Then, in reply to the renewed exclamations of “ Vive le Roi ! ” Catherine and Henry bowed, and placing their hands on their hearts, as sovereigns have so often done, as a delusive pledge of faith to the people, withdrew, and the windows closed on them. The king, full of anxiety, paced the gardens with restless step—sometimes pausing as if to listen, and putting his ear to the ground, in order to catch the distant roar of the cannon. But nothing was to be heard—for Emmanuel-Philibert, resting after the battle of St. Laurent, was making preparations for the attack of St. Quentin.

From the long alleys of the park, the king would mount to one of the towers, and there watch every traveller that came along the road, hoping, yet dreading, to see a messenger from the camp.

In this state of anxious suspense did Henry remain, till the 24th of August, when, as he was as usual pacing the long avenue leading to the castle, the sound of distant cannon broke on his ear. For three days did this continued cannonade resound, bringing terror and anxiety to every heart. At last, at two o'clock in the day of the 27th, the firing ceased. What did it mean ? Was it a sign of victory ? The king, who knew the feebleness of the walls, and

the weakness of the troops, as well as the number of the besiegers, dared not hope it. No—probably it meant that St. Quentin, like the salamander, which Francis I. in his pride had taken for his device, had perished in the flames. The king waited till evening, in the hope that some tidings would reach him. At length, unable to endure the suspense, he sent scouts on various roads leading to St. Quentin, to gather some intelligence. In vain, having sought his couch, did he try to sleep; he could not even close his eyes. As soon as morning dawned, he arose, and mounting the tower, resumed his post of observation.

Scarcely had he reached the tower, before he perceived, coming at full gallop along the road, lighted by the first rays of the morning sun, a horse with two riders. There could be no doubt, these were messengers from the scene of warfare. Henry sent instantly one of his officers to meet them, with orders to bring them forthwith to his presence; and ten minutes afterwards, to the surprise and joy of the king, D'Andelot stood before him, accompanied by a young cavalier, whose name the king could not recall, but whose face he well remembered.

And now, as we see them together, the intelligent reader will imagine how it came to pass that Yvonnet and D'Andelot reached Compiègne together, after their meeting, which we related in our last chapter. The adventurer, who knew the country well, offered to serve as a guide to the commander; and though the noble steed might have preferred some other arrangement, yet even with his double burden, he had contrived to come in less than four hours from Gibercourt to Compiègne, a distance of more than eleven leagues.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE PARISIANS.

THE news brought by the messengers was speedily told, but the details were never-ending, and Henry's anxiety kept ever suggesting fresh questions. The adventurer and the captain, however, between them, contrived to relate to the king all that our reader already knows respecting the eventful siege of St. Quentin.

St. Quentin was taken; the day was lost, and the two most distinguished generals of the army, the Duke de Guise being absent, were prisoners. The enemy had opened a road to the capital. Would they proceed to Paris direct—or would they make their way there by degrees, besieging all the small fortresses as they went? The former was more suited to the character of Emmanuel-Philibert, whilst the latter appeared more in harmony with the cautious and timid policy of the king.

D'Andelot, however, was of opinion that the Prince of Savoy would lead the army on immediately to Paris, overcoming the scruples and fears of the king, by the influence of his recent victories. Henry II. thought this most probable, also, and accordingly decided on acting as if in expectation of this event.

The two messengers, each in accordance with his social position, were given immediate employment. D'Andelot was charged to accompany the queen to Paris, where she was to repair in order to make an appeal to the patriotism of the Parisians.

Yvonnet, meanwhile, having first taken the king's orders to the Duke de Nevers, at Laon, was to proceed under a safe disguise to the vicinity of the Spanish camp, and to endeavor to discover the plan of their future movements. Now this last mission was a most perilous one; for it was clear that a spy, if taken, would inevitably be hanged. This impending doom, though it would have had great effect on Yvonnet in the darkness, had no power over him in broad daylight—so he accepted the mission with great alacrity.

D'Andelot had orders from the king to treat with the cardinal of Lorraine, then minister of finance, for the ransom of his brother and himself—whilst Yvonnet received for past and future services the sum of twenty golden crowns, besides the choice of the best horse from the king's stable. Having rested some five or six hours, our two messengers departed on their different ways. Yvonnet we will allow to travel on alone; but M. d'Andelot we will follow, for he accompanies Catherine de Medicis, now journeying to Paris as fast as she can, in a heavy leather carriage, drawn by four horses.

The Parisians, like all removed from the scene of action, had exaggerated the danger. The panic was far greater in Paris than at Compiègne. Since the days when the English had been within sight of the towers of Notre Dame and of St. Denis, the terrors of the people had never been so excited. The streets were thronged with people; it seemed as though all the Parisians had deserted their homes, to cluster together in the streets and public squares.

But, with the characteristics of a Parisian crowd, there was more laughter and merry-making, than any sign of despair. Many of those who had fled from the city at the first news of the battle of St. Laurent, seeing that no army had as yet appeared, were returning within the walls, amidst the jibes and jeers of those who had taken the news more calmly, and waited for further events to take measures of flight. All, however, seemed disposed to meet the invaders with spirit and bravery.

Such was the state of things when, on the 28th of August, 1557, the queen and D'Andelot entered Paris, bringing the formidable news of the taking of St. Quentin. But the effect of a disastrous event depends much on the way in which it is told. D'Andelot, aware of this, addressed the first group of citizens he encountered.

"Friends," said he, "all honor to the citizens of St. Quentin! They have defended the place for one month, when many a soldier would have hesitated to hold out a week. By this heroic conduct, they have given the king and the Duke de Nevers time to raise troops enough to repel the invaders. And here is her majesty, the queen, come herself in person, to make an appeal to the valor and patriotism of her good Parisians."

At these words, the queen herself put her head out of the carriage window, and took up the cue.

"Yes, friends and faithful citizens, his majesty has sent me to tell you that all our towns are in an attitude of defence, and that every measure for the safety of Paris has been taken. Illuminate your streets, then, in honor of the heroic inhabitants of St. Quentin, and to testify your love for the king. To-night, at the Hotel de Ville, I myself will meet you, with the cardinal of Lorraine and the burghers

of the city, in order to deliberate on what remains for us to do, to repel the invaders from our gates."

Admirably had Catherine and D'Andelot contrived these short addresses to the people, announcing to them the most disastrous news that ever was communicated by a sovereign to a people. Had the simple truth been thundered forth to them, "St. Quentin is taken, and the Spaniards are on their way to Paris!" the population would have flown like frightened sheep from the slaughter. As it was told them now, they began to shout, with all their might, "Long live the queen! Long live the king! Long live the cardinal! Long live D'Andelot!" and pressing round the coach, they formed a festive escort, from the barrier St. Denis to the Louvre.

Arrived at the Louvre, M. d'Andelot once more turned to the multitude. "My friends," said he, "her majesty desires me to remind you that she will be at the Hotel de Ville in an hour, and that she will judge of your love by the number of citizens who meet her. Now go, friends, and forget not the torches and the illuminations."

With shouts of enthusiasm, the people departed, and Catherine, as she watched them, might be sure that by a few words she had won over to her a whole population, ready to die for her, as the inhabitants of St. Quentin had died for their country and their king.

D'Andelot and the queen, then entering the Louvre, sent for the cardinal of Lorraine, and desired him to send word to the magistrates, burghers, and syndics of the city, that the queen would meet them at the city hall at nine in the evening. D'Andelot, who was fond of dramatic effect, had chosen this hour; and the people outside, when they heard it announced, resolved, in order not to miss being of the es-

sort, not to move from their post until the queen should go out—sending deputies to procure torches for them all.

Meanwhile others, proceeding along the principal streets, cried out in a loud voice :

“ Light up, citizens ! light up your houses ! for her Majesty, Queen Catherine de Medicis, is going to the Hotel de Ville to-night ! ”

At these words the citizens, anxious to testify their loyalty, hurried to and fro, collecting all their candles, lamps, or any thing, from the majestic wax light to the sputtering tow, smouldering in fat, so that Catherine might judge by the illuminations, of the extent of their devotion. The multitude waited along the street, for the queen, in a perfect orgasm of enthusiasm. They had instinctively divined that she would choose the streets in preference to the quays, because in the streets she could pass between two lines of her faithful subjects ; whereas, on the quays, the river would flow silently on one side, unmoved from its wonted course by any earthly prince or potentate.

Accompanied by D'Andelot and the Cardinal of Lorraine, followed by a very thin escort, as befitted her fallen fortunes, the queen advanced majestically through the streets. There had been time to send to St. Germain, for the Dauphin Francis, whose pale and suffering countenance represented well the dynasty of the Valois, so soon to become extinct, though richer in progeny than any former sovereign, excepting old Priam of Troy.

Four brothers there were ; but three were poisoned, and one assassinated, making short work of four promising young princes. But the future was not unveiled on this night of loyalty and enthusiasm, when ten thousand people followed the queen and the prince with loud huzzas, and a hundred

thousand showered blessings on them from the illuminated windows.

The multitude on foot carried torches; the multitude in the houses threw flowers as she passed; all shouted, "Long live our queen!" Sometimes, amidst all these exclamations might be heard a threatening voice, crying—

"Death to the Spaniards! Death to the English!" and a clang of swords would respond to it.

The queen and the dauphin left the Louvre at nine o'clock; but, owing to the crowd, they did not reach the Hotel de Ville before half-past ten. The queen proceeded very slowly, so that her good people of Paris might all behold her, might touch her palfrey, her flowing robes, and even her royal hands—those hands which were about to take from them their last penny. But the people loved the soft velvet and satin, and the white hands, of the queen, and shouted for joy, when they should have yelled with agony.

It was, therefore, as a triumph that the procession arrived in front of that magnificent specimen of architecture of the Renaissance, the Hotel de Ville, which Louis Philippe, with his inartistic hand, contrived to spoil, as he did all the monuments he touched.

On the steps stood the magistrates, the citizens, and the officers of state. So densely crowded were the approaches to the Hotel de Ville, that it took the queen and the dauphin a quarter of an hour to ascend them.

The lights gleamed around, from the sides of the river, making it look like molten fire, to the summit of the towers of Notre Dame.

The queen and the dauphin, having entered the Hotel de Ville, immediately appeared on the balcony. There she harangued the people, and her concluding words were every where repeated :

“ If the father should die in defending his good citizens of Paris, to you I will confide his son.”

And at this presentation, the presentation of that weak and pitiful prince who was to be Francis II., the enthusiasm knew no bounds. Catherine, clever woman as she was, remained on the balcony, feeding by her presence the love of her people; whilst D'Andelot and the cardinal managed the business matters with the magistrates and authorities of the city, in the council chambers.

And well these two clever diplomatists managed the affair, for—“ well,” says the Abbé Lambert, in his history of Henry II., “ did Messrs. Lorraine and D'Andelot represent the immense sacrifices made by the king for the safety of his people—how, having, to spare them, mortgaged his royal domain, he had nothing left but in the present emergency to appeal to them—an emergency which, though great, could by timely assistance be successfully met, for by means of the help of the good citizens of Paris, a force equal to that of the enemy could be raised.”

This discourse produced great effect, for then and there the good citizens voted three hundred thousand francs towards the expenses of the war, inviting the principal towns of France to follow their example.

As for the immediate means of defence, this is what was decided on.

1st. The immediate recall of the Duke de Guise, for which, as we know, measures had been taken.

2d. An immediate levy of thirty thousand French, and twenty thousand foreign troops.

3d. The civic guards and military companies to be doubled.

In order to meet these gigantic outlays, at a time when

the king's domain was mortgaged and the royal treasury empty, D'Andelot proposed :

That the clergy, of whatever rank in the church, should offer to the king, for the carrying on of the war, one year's revenue :

That all noblemen and gentlemen, who from their privileges were exempt from all taxation, should tax themselves, each according to his own revenue. ¶

To give the example, D'Andelot declared that he would only reserve for himself and the admiral two thousand crowns for the coming year—bestowing all the rest of their revenue on the public treasury.

It was also proposed that the cardinal should make a calculation of the resources of the *tiers-état*, and that it should be taxed accordingly.]

Some of these resolutions went by acclamation ; the others were set aside for deliberation. Among those adjourned was of course the proposal that the clergy and the nobility should contribute to the expenses of the war. What was immediately decided on was, that fourteen thousand Swiss and eight thousand Germans should be enlisted, and that all men capable of bearing arms throughout France, should be enrolled.

By twelve o'clock the whole business was accomplished, and the queen, graciously smiling, leading the dauphin, who though half asleep still bowed, plumed hat in hand, descended the steps of the Hotel de Ville, and returned to the Louvre,—being able to say, as her countryman Mazarin did a hundred years later, “ They have had their shouting ; they shall give me my money.”

“ Oh people ! oh people ! Your very weakness proved your strength, and your prodigality, in giving both your gold and your blood, showed how inexhaustible were both.

Those who tyrannized over you still had recourse to you in the days of darkness and danger. The haughtiest monarch and the proudest queen, that ever sat on the throne of France, came, with the plumed cap of their heir in hand, humbly to beg for help from you.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SPANISH CAMP.

Now, having seen what the Duke de Nevers was doing in Paris, what Henry II. was doing at Compiègne, what queen Catharine and M. d'Andelot were doing in Paris, let us now see what Philip II. and Emmannel-Philibert were doing in the Spanish camp, losing the time their enemies were making such good use of elsewhere.

Having described the aspect of the sacked city of St. Quentin, we will suppose five days of violence, rapine, and carnage to have elapsed, and imagine that, on the 1st of September we are in the Spanish camp, and then proceed to describe it to our readers.

Every thing since morning had begun to assume the usual aspect. The fever of carnage had subsided, and each was employed in counting his prisoners, rejoicing over what he had gained, or lamenting over what he had lost.

At eleven o'clock, a council was to be held under the tent of the king of Spain.

This tent was situated at the extremity of the camp. We have explained how it came to be thus situated, and how little the whistling of bullets round his ears was agreeable to king Philip.

At the entrance of the tent sat a messenger covered with dust. By him stood a valet in the king's livery, pouring out a bumper of wine, which from its dark and sparkling color revealed its Spanish origin.

In the tent, king Philip stood, holding an open letter in his hand. This letter, sealed with a large red seal, bearing a mitre and two pastoral crooks for arms, seemed singularly to preoccupy Philip II. He had just finished reading it for the third time, when a hasty gallop, approaching and stopping before the door of his tent, made him raise his eyes to see who entered his presence so hastily. In a few moments, the valet, who had brought to the camp the etiquette of Burgos and Valladolid, announced

“His excellency Don Louis de Vergas, secretary of his grace the duke of Alba.”

Philip uttered an exclamation of satisfaction: then suddenly, as if ashamed of having manifested any emotion, he recomposed his features into an expression of absolute unconsciousness.

“Admit him,” said the king, and Don Louis entered.

The person thus admitted into the king's presence was covered with perspiration and dust. His face was pale from fatigue, and his riding-boots were covered with flakes of foam, from his horse's mouth. Yet, overpowered by fatigue, as he seemed, and laden with important tidings, ever mindful of the laws of etiquette, which ruled supreme at the court of Spain, he bowed respectfully to the king, and then stood, awaiting the king's command, before addressing him.

“Don Louis,” said Philip, with a faint smile, “you are welcome. What news do you bring?”

“I bring both good and bad news, your majesty. We

are masters in Italy, but the Duke de Guise is about to return to France with the whole of the French army."

"Were you sent by the Duke of Alba to announce this news to me, Don Louis?"

"I was, your majesty; and his excellency bade me make all speed, that I might precede the Duke de Guise by at least ten days. Consequently, making all haste from Genoa, I crossed Switzerland to Strasbourg, and so by Metz and Mezières, thus reaching your majesty's camp in fourteen days; and it will take at least double that time for Monsieur de Guise to reach Paris."

"You have done well, Don Louis; but did the Duke of Alba give you no letter for me?"

"The Duke of Alba, your majesty, fearing that I might be taken, did not venture to intrust me with any written message; but he desired me to remind your majesty of Tarquin, cutting off the heads of the poppies in his garden; for nothing should raise its head too high in the court of a king—not even princes. Your majesty, he added, would know perfectly to what and to whom he alluded."

"Yes," murmured the king; "I recognize in this message the prudence of my faithful Alvarez. I do understand, Don Louis. And now, we will not detain you longer from the repose you so much need: you may retire."

Don Louis bowed and withdrew, leaving the king to meditate over the letter with the ecclesiastical seal, and on the mysterious message of the Duke of Alba.

Meanwhile we will see what is passing in the tent of Emmanuel-Philibert, which was within a stone's throw of that of the king.

The prince in great anxiety was leaning over the couch of a wounded man, from whose wounds the surgeon had just removed the bandages. It is our old friend, Scianca-Ferro.

who is suffering with a wound caused by a violent blow in the side.

"Well, how is he?" asked Emmanuel of the surgeon.

"Better, much better," answered the surgeon; "he is out of danger."

"I told you so, Emmanuel," said Scianca-Ferro, in a voice, which, spite of all his efforts, was weak and wavering. "I told you it was nothing."

"Nothing!" said Emmanuel. "A blow that broke four ribs, and made you spit blood at every breath!"

"Well, it was a good stout blow," replied Scianca-Ferro, with a smile. "Let me have a look at the machine that inflicted it."

Emmanuel-Philibert, going to the corner of the tent, brought with great effort, in spite of all his strength, the *machine* Scianca-Ferro desired to see.

It indeed deserved that name. It consisted of a large-sized cannon-ball, into which had been fixed an iron handle—the whole weighing from thirty to forty pounds.

"Corpo di Baceo!" exclaimed the wounded man. "This is a pretty plaything, Emmanuel! What have you done with its owner?"

"As you requested, Scianca-Ferro, nothing has been done to him. He has given his word not to attempt to escape, and is now probably within a stone's throw of the tent, with his head on his hand, sighing and groaning as usual."

"Poor devil! I broke his nephew's head, you tell me? A brave German, who swore like a devil, and fought like one, too. By my troth, if there had been many such men as this in the breaches, we should have had a war like that of the Titans, about which you used to read in those abominable Greek books, which I never could get into my head. By heavens, Emmanuel!" continued he, after a moment's

pause, "there is some one quarrelling with my worthy Goth—only listen!"

Emmanuel listened, and heard a most extraordinary combination of Spanish, German, and Picard oaths. Leaving the tent, he proceeded to ascertain the cause of this dispute.

Now, this was the moment in which, like Virgil's Neptune, Emmanuel-Philibert ought to have pronounced the *quos ego!* which calmed the agitated waves.

But we will relate to our readers the cause of this disturbance, which, with all due deference to the reader, was an ass—a magnificent ass—loaded with cabbages, carrots, and turnips, who was vigorously kicking all within his reach, scattering around him his vegetable stores in all directions.

The next most important actor was our old friend Heinrich Scharfenstein, who, with a short wooden club, was laying about him, to the destruction of the Flemish soldiers near him; for grief had not impaired the vigor of his arm.

The third personage in this quarrel was a handsome young peasant-girl, who was most heroically defending herself against the too familiar advances of a Spanish soldier.

In the midst of these was the peasant who owned the donkey, who was trying to rescue as many of his vegetables as he could from the hands of the soldiers.

The presence of Emmanuel-Philibert produced the effect of the head of Medusa upon the actors in this scene. The soldiers dropped the cabbages and turnips; the peasant-girl freed herself from her persecutor, who rushed off with the blood streaming from his nose; and the ass ceased to kick and to bray.

Heinrich Scharfenstein alone, like a machine in motion which could not be suddenly stopped, continued his occupation.

“What is the matter?” said Emmanuel-Philibert; “and why are you ill-treating these good people?”

“Ah, monseigneur!” said the peasant, coming up to the prince, with his arms full of carrots and cabbages, holding his hat between his teeth, and speaking with the broad Picard dialect; “let me tell you how it all happened.”

“I am afraid I shall find it rather difficult to comprehend you, my friend. Is there no one here who can translate, into Italian, Spanish, German, or French, what this good man says?”

“French is it you want?” said the peasant; “here’s my daughter Yvonne, who was at school at St. Quentin for a whole year. Come forward, girl, and speak to his highness.”

Yvonne, with her eyes cast down, doing all she could to blush, advanced timidly towards the prince.

“Your highness must excuse my father,” said she; “but he is from a village in Picardy, where they only speak the Picard dialect. Your highness understands” —

“I understand,” said Emmanuel, “that I comprehend nothing.”

“Well then, your highness, this is what occurred. You must know, my lord, that yesterday we heard in the village that the fields and gardens round St. Quentin had all been laid waste by the siege and the battle of St. Laurent, and that there was a dearth of fruit and vegetables in the Spanish camp, even at the tables of the king and yourself.”

“Quite true,” replied Emmanuel. “Although we are not without provisions, I must say we have very little variety, particularly as regards fruits and vegetables.”

“Yes,” said the peasant; “and so” —

“Let your daughter speak, friend; ‘twill save interpreting.”

“ Well, then—so my father,” continued the girl, “ said to me, ‘ suppose we load the donkey with nice fresh vegetables, and take him to the camp? Who knows but the King of Spain, and the Duke of Savoy, may like some fresh vegetables?’ So this morning we went into the garden and gathered the best of every thing we had—I hope we didn’t do wrong?”

“ Wrong! On the contrary, it was very right.”

“ But scarcely had we arrived here, before your soldiers fell upon the donkey, and began to take away our vegetables—though my father called out, as loudly as he could, ‘ it is for the King of Spain! it is for the Duke of Savoy!’ It was all of no use; and if it hadn’t been for that kind young man, who is sitting in the corner there, we should have lost all our vegetables, my father would have lost his donkey—and I don’t know what I might have lost! But that kind gentleman came to our assistance; and you see what he has done!”

“ I do indeed!” said Emmanuel, looking round—“ two men killed, and five badly hurt! and all for a few miserable cabbages. However, the man’s intentions were good. Besides, he is under the protection of one of my friends—so, we will say nothing about it.”

“ I hope no misfortune will happen to us for venturing into the camp.”

“ On the contrary, my pretty maid.”

“ But,” said the girl, “ we are tired, my lord; we would like much to be permitted to wait till evening.”

“ You shall go when you please,” said the prince; “ here, Gaetano, take these provisions to the king’s kitchen, and see these people comfortably bestowed. And here, my pretty girl, here are three gold pieces to pay for the damage done to your father’s property.”

As the hour of council now approached, Emmanuel-Philibert withdrew—first passing through his own tent, to see Seianca-Ferro ; whilst the peasant-girl and her father exchanged a sly glance with a miserable looking fellow who was standing by, furiously furbishing some of the pieces of Montmorency's armor.

CHAPTER XXIII.

YVONNET OBTAINS ALL THE INFORMATION HE DESIRED.

THE pretext of the peasant and his daughter for obtaining entrance to the camp, was not ill chosen ; for it was perfectly true that provisions were somewhat scarce in the Spanish camp ; and if we are to believe the Count de Merzy, who was taken prisoner at the battle of St. Laurent, even the wine gave out—so that Monsieur de la Rochefoucauld and himself were, to their great regret, obliged to drink water.

Indeed, the fare of the prisoners, altogether, seems to have been such as would have justified the soldiers in falling upon this welcome supply of vegetables.

Although under the special care of Gaetane, both the peasant and his daughter appeared to have great trouble in recovering from their fright. The donkey, however, who was of a less nervous temperamout, soon recovered his composure, and set deliberately to work to devour what vegetables still remained on the field of battle.

It was not until Emmanuel had been seen a second time to issue from his tent, and to repair to that of the King of Spain, that the peasant and his daughter showed signs of recovery ; although it would have appeared that, having

been so graciously received by the prince, they ought rather to have preferred his presence to his absence. But no one appeared to notice this anomaly, excepting the furbisher of the constable's armor, who also watched Emmanuel with great interest.

As for Heiurich, he had gone back to the corner where he always sat, and had returned to that melancholy which was habitual to him since the death of Franz.

Some curious and inquisitive people, to the great annoyance of the peasant and his daughter, still surrounded them—when Gaetano came to their relief by desiring them to go, with their donkey, within the enclosure which surrounded the Duke Emmanuel's tent.

The donkey being unloaded, the peasants received from the munificent hand of Gaetano, a loaf of bread, a large piece of meat, and a piteher of wine—which was more, we have seen, than had been given to the Count de la Rochefoucauld.

Fearing, no doubt, to excite the envy of the soldiers, our peasants took every precaution to avoid observation. When they issued from the enclosure, there was no one near, but the armorer, who was still rubbing away with redoubled fury, and Heinrich Scharfentsein, who had not moved a muscle since they had been away.

Yvonne repaired to a small out-house with the provisions—no doubt to prepare the repast; whilst her father, advancing towards the giant, invited him to partake of it.

“Dank you,” said he with a sigh; “since Franz is dead, I am never more hungry.”

The peasant, exchanging a look of sympathy with the armorer, repaired to his daughter, who, having made a table of an old chest, had seated herself on a truss of straw

Scarcely had they begun their meal, before a shadow was thrown across the table; and, looking up, they discovered the indefatigable armorer.

“By the mass!” said he, “but you have a splendid repast! I’ve a great mind to invite the lord high constable to join you.”

“I beg you don’t,” replied the peasant, “for he would eat it all up at a mouthful.”

“Besides,” added the girl, modestly; “I have heard that the old soldier is not fit company for a young girl.”

“And much you seem to care for old or young gallants! By the mass! That was a good blow you gave the Spanish soldier when he tried to embrace you. I had my suspicions from the first; but at that majestic blow, I had no longer any doubts. But what the devil brings you here, into the camp of these beggarly Spaniards?”

“First of all, the pleasure of seeing you, Monsieur Pilletrousse,” replied Mademoiselle Yvonne, politely.

“You are too good, mademoiselle!” replied Pilletrousse, in the same tone; “and if you will just hand me over one of those glasses of wine, I shall have the honor of drinking to your maidenhood; and afterwards to the health of our other companions, who, I regret to say, are not all as well as ourselves.”

“And I,” replied Yvonne, whom, notwithstanding his change of dress, and the feminine termination he had added to his name, our readers have doubtless recognized; “when I have drunk to your health, will tell you what brought us here—on condition that you help me to carry out my plans.”

Pouring out a bumper of wine, Pilletrousse nodded, and swallowed it in silence. Then, putting down his glass, with

a smack of the lips denoting intense satisfaction, he exclaimed,

“ It does one good to meet with an old friend ! ”

“ Meaning me, or the wine ? ” said Yvonnet.

“ Both, to be sure ! But let us talk of our companions. Probably Maldent, here, has given you news of Procope and Lactance—for I understand you were all buried together.”

“ Yes,” replied Maldent ; “ and to my great annoyance we remained in the sepulchre three days longer than the orthodox period.”

“ Still, you rose to glory,” said Yvonnet ; “ that was the principal thing. Good friars, those ! and gave you famous suppers during your entombment ! ”

“ Yes, they did their best ; no defunct devotee—not even the husband of the widow of Ephesus—was ever taken such care of.”

“ Did the Spaniards never come to visit you in your vault ? ”

“ Once or twice we heard the noise of their footsteps ; but at the sight of the long row of our sepulchres, all illuminated, they made the sign of the cross, and ran off faster than they came.”

“ So much for three of us—or rather for four of us, for I see you are all right.”

“ Yes, thanks to my knowledge of the Spanish language, I came out all safe.”

“ But Franz—but Malemort ? ”

“ Look at poor Heuirich—that will tell you what has become of Franz.”

“ How the deuce came such a giant to get killed ? ” asked Yvonnet, with a sigh ; for it will be remembered that

the young and gallant Yvonnet was deeply attached to the two Titans.

“He was not killed by a man,” said Pilletrousse, “but by a demon, whom they call *Split-iron*, and who is squire to the duke of Savoy. Franz and his uncle were defending one of the breaches, when this Split-iron, or Scianca-Ferro, (for that is his name,) attacked Franz. Poor Franz was already tired with his day’s work, and was not quick enough in parrying the blow—so that Scianca actually split his skull. Heinrich, who was too late to assist his nephew, threw his tremendous battle-axe, and wounded his antagonist in the side—so that both fell, Franz on one side, and Scianca-Ferro on the other; only, Franz never uttered a word, whilst Scianca-Ferro had time before he fainted, to desire that Heinrich should go unharmed. ‘For,’ said he, ‘if I recover I should like to cultivate the acquaintance of this estimable giant.’ Heinrich Scharfenstein was accordingly taken alive—which indeed was not difficult. No sooner did he see his nephew fall, than, throwing down his sword, he sat down on the ground; and taking his nephew’s head upon his knees, seemed totally unconscious of all that was going on around him. The Spaniards, going up to him, desired him to surrender.

“‘Will you zebarade me from the potty of my nephew?’”

“‘No,’ was the reply.

“‘Then I zurrender!’ and, taking the body of Franz in his arms, Heinrich followed the soldiers to the tent of the Duke of Savoy. There he watched the body a day and a night; then digging a grave by the river’s bank, he buried it. Then, faithful to his promise, he came to the place where you now see him sitting, and where he has remained ever since.”

“Poor Heinrich!” said Yvonnet, with a sigh.

But Maldent, whose sensibilities were not easily aroused said to Piletrousse,

“ And Malemort? Has he come to his end at last? ”

“ Oh, no,” replied Piletrousse; “ Malemort has come to no end at all. It appears that, being terribly wounded, he was thrown into the river for dead. But the other morning, as I was taking the constable’s horses to water, I heard some one groan, and on approaching, I recognized Malemort ”——

“ Waiting for a friend to close his eyes.”

“ Not at all; he was merely waiting for a friendly hand to help him into life again, as Fracasse would have said—who, by the by, is the only one of whom I can give you no intelligence.”

“ But I,” said Yvonnet, shuddering at the remembrance; “ I can give you news of Fracasse.” And Yvonnet related his adventure in the wood—though not without many a shudder. Just as he had finished his recital, a great commotion outside announced the breaking up of the council. All the principal officers of the Spanish, Flemish, and English armies, were hurrying towards their tents, apparently in great haste, and in no very good humor.

A few minutes after, Emmanuel-Philibert reappeared. He seemed still more out of humor than the rest.

“ Gaetano,” said he to his major-domo, “ give orders to have the tents struck, the horses saddled, and every thing packed.”

These orders indicated an immediate departure; but, where was Emmanuel going? To Paris, they surmised. But by what route? By Noyon, Ham, or Picardy?—By Laon, Chalons, or Champagne?

Neither of these roads, with the exception of Laon, occupied by the Duke de Nevers, was defended in a manner to

present any serious impediment to the progress of the enemy. To find out which road the enemy had chosen, was now the important point with Yvonnet. Pilletrouse, to whom he confided his anxiety, took up the pitcher of wine, and having swallowed its contents, set off at full speed to the tent of the constable, in the hope of there hearing something. The pretended peasant and his mock daughter, under the pretext of getting their donkey, mingled with the attendants of the duke, all now busily engaged in preparations for departure—hoping that some observations from those around them might reveal what they so much wished to know. Gaetano, perceiving them, exclaimed,

“ So, you are still there, good people ? ”

“ Yes,” replied Yvonnet, “ we want to know where we are to bring our next provisions.”

“ Indeed ! ” said Gaetano, “ then you had better come to Catelet, to which we are going to lay siege.”

“ To Catelet ! By Jove ! (said Yvonnet to himself) but this is glorious news ! They are turning their backs on Paris.”

The peasants hastened to take their leave ; and an hour afterwards, Yvonnet having thrown aside his girl's dress, might be seen galloping along the road to Compiègne ; and in three hours more, he entered the court of the chateau, exclaiming,

“ Great news ! Glorious news ! Paris is saved ! ”

CHAPTER XXIV.

GOD IS WITH FRANCE.

FROM the moment that Philip II. and Emmanuel-Philibert did not march directly on Paris, the capital was saved. How was it that so great an error had been committed? It was partly owing to the irresolute and suspicious character of the King of Spain, and partly to circumstances which, at the last moment, Providence always directs for the safety of France. It will be remembered that when Don Louis Vergas was introduced into the presence of the king, his majesty had just received a letter, which appeared to interest him very much. This letter was from the Bishop of Arras, the favorite counsellor of King Philip II., and in whom this prince, so little apt to confide, had the greatest trust.

Philip II. had sent a courier to him, during the siege of St. Quentin, to ask what he should do, if, as was probable, the town fell into the hands of the Spaniards. The bishop, as may be imagined, answered like a priest, and not like a soldier.

We will content ourselves with extracting a passage from this letter, which had so much weight in deciding the destinies of France:

“It would be imprudent,” wrote the bishop, “to attempt any thing further against France, at this season of the year, when winter is drawing near. It would be compromising the successes already obtained. It would be, therefore, more prudent, until the beginning of spring, to harass the enemy in his provinces on the other side of the Somme.”

Although more obscurely worded, the opinion of the Duke of Alba, conveyed through Don Louis de Vergas, was quite as clear to the king :

“Sire,” said the message, “remember the poppies that Tarquin cut down.”

Now by the poppies, which had grown to too great a height, the Duke of Alba plainly indicated the Duke of Savoy.

If indeed Emmanuel had sprung rapidly up, it was on the field of battle. He had grown in a soil of glory; but the greater and more rapid were the fame and glory he acquired, the more they were to be feared. If after the battle of St. Laurent and the taking of St. Quentin, the prince should march to Paris and take the capital of France—what favor, what reward, could repay such a service? Would the mere restoration of his own dominions be sufficient? Indeed, was it not in the interest of King Philip to retain those states in his own hands?

Once reinstated in his own dominions, would not the warlike Duke take Milan and probably the kingdom of Naples—those two Italian possessions of the Spanish crown which had cost so much blood and gold to France, under Louis XII. and Francis I., and which neither could keep, even if they could ever have been said to have taken them. What had prevented their retaining them? Was it not that they had no allies in Italy, and that they were forced to draw all their succors from the other side of the Alps? But would

not a prince who spoke their language, and whose dominions were on the same side of the mountains, be able to conquer them easily, and to maintain these conquests? Might he not even be looked on, not as a conqueror, but rather as a liberator?

This was the vision which, like a menaeing spectre, had risen before the suspicious mind of Don Philip of Spain. Consequently, against the advice of all the generals, especially in spite of the contrary opinion given by Emmanuel-Philibert, which was to march directly towards the capital, the King of Spain decided that the army should not advance any farther, but that it should, during the winter, merely proceed to besiege Catelet, Ham, and Chauny—making of St. Quentin the head-quarters of the Spanish troops.

Such was the news which, if not in detail, at least in the most important points, Yvonnnet brought to the king, and which made him exclaim, with truth,—“Paris is saved!—Paris is saved!”

At this news, which the king scarcely dared to believe, fresh orders were given, and couriers were sent in all directions, from Compiègne to Saon, from Saon to Paris, from Paris to the Alps.

An edict was published, commanding all gentlemen capable of bearing arms, or all who had borne arms, to repair to the Duke de Nevers, lieutenant-general of the king at Saon, under pain of forfeiting his patent of nobility, and becoming liable to corporal punishment.

D'Andelot was sent to Switzerland, to hasten the levies of troops, which had been decreed.

Two officers, Colonels Rokrod and Reiffenberg, brought by way of Alsace and Lorraine four thousand men, enlisted on the banks of the Rhine.

The army of Italy, consisting of eight thousand men

had passed the Alps, and was coming rapidly towards Paris.

Meanwhile, as if to reassure Henry, disputes and dissensions began to arise between the English and the Spaniards under the walls of Catelet.

The English, deeply incensed at the presumption of the Spaniards, who attributed to their own arms alone the victory of St. Laurent and the taking of St. Quentin, requested to be allowed to withdraw.

Instead of seeking to conciliate, Philip, in his blind partiality for the Spaniards, took sides with his own countrymen, and gave the English permission to withdraw, of which permission they availed themselves on the very day it was given.

A few days afterwards, the Germans began loudly to express their discontent, at the Duke of Savoy and the King of Spain having appropriated the whole of the ransom money to their own use. In consequence of this, three thousand deserted and passed over to the service of France.

The rendezvous of all the French troops was at Compiègne, which the Duke de Nevers fortified so that it could contain a hundred thousand men within its trenches.

At length, towards the latter end of September, the Duke François de Guise arrived in Paris. The day after his arrival, a magnificent cavalcade issued from the gates of the Hotel de Guise. At its head rode the Duke himself, having the Cardinal of Lorraine on his right, and the Duke de Nemours on his left, and followed by two hundred gentlemen, wearing his colors. Amid the enthusiasm of the people, the Duke thus rode through the streets of Paris—the Parisians feeling that they had nothing to dread, now that their beloved Duke was among them.

On that same evening, a herald proclaimed in all the

public places in Paris, the Duke de Guise, lieutenant-general of the kingdom.

In this, Henry somewhat forgot the last injunction of his father on his death-bed, not to elevate too high the house of Guise; but the position was extreme, and needed extreme remedies.

The following day, the Duke entered upon the functions of his high office, by repairing to Compiègne and reviewing the army, assembled as if by magic, within the trenches.

On the tenth of August, there could not perhaps have been got together ten thousand men in all France; and so discouraged were all, that at the first sound of the cannon, they would have opened wide their gates to the enemy.

Now, six weeks later, the Duke de Guise reviewed an army of fifty thousand men—that is, an army one third more numerous than the army of the King of Spain, since the retreat of the English troops and the desertion of the Germans; an army, too, full of ardor and enthusiasm, eager to distinguish itself, and waiting impatiently for the first signal of war.

Happy is the country where, at an appeal in the name of the sovereign and in the name of patriotism, an army all armed, like the spectres in Macbeth, rises as it were from the bowels of the earth.

At length, on the twenty-sixth of October, news came that Philip of Spain and Emmanuel-Philibert had retired to Brussels, considering the campaign as terminated.

Then did all exclaim, in the words of Yvonnet, Great news! glorious news! Paris is saved—for God is with France!

PART III.



CHAPTER I.

1558—1559.

EXACTLY one year had elapsed since Philip II. of Spain, by retiring with his troops to Cambrai and Brussels, had abruptly terminated the campaign of 1557, causing the heart of every Frenchman to beat with joy, and the whole population to exclaim, “France is saved !”

We have seen what contemptible motives actuated this decision, which had of course deeply afflicted Emmanuel-Philibert—the more so, as it had not been difficult for him to penetrate the real cause of so inexplicable a decision, which has puzzled all modern historians as much as Hannibal’s unaccountable halt at Capua embarrassed the ancients.

The year which had elapsed had been an eventful one—the most important and glorious event for the French, being the taking of Calais from the English, by the Duke François de Guise.

After the battle of Cressy, which had placed France in as perilous a position as it was after the siege of St. Quentin, Edward III. had attacked Calais both by sea and land. Although besieged by a fleet of eighty vessels, and an army by land of thirty-thousand men, Calais having but a slender garrison, under the command of Jean de Vienne, had held out to the last—not surrendering until reduced by famine, the inhabitants having even devoured the leather of their boots.

Since Calais had been in the possession of the English, it had been their constant care to keep it fortified so as to make it impregnable; and now, having retained it in their hands for two hundred and ten years, they felt so secure that they had inscribed over the principal gate, the following inscription :

“ Calais, besieged a year and fifteen days,
At length from Valois to the English passed :
When lead like cork upon the water plays,
From England France shall take and hold it fast.”

Now, this town, besieged by Edward during three hundred and eighty days, and at last taken from Philip de Valois by the conqueror of Cressy, and which, according to the proverb, was not to be retaken until lead should float like cork upon the waters, was taken by François de Guise in a week; not by a regular siege, but by assault. After Calais, the duke had taken Ham and Guiness, whilst the Duke de Nevers had been taking Herlemont—the Spaniards and English leaving behind them all their artillery and pieces of ordnance in each town.

In recounting all these valiant achievements, which occupied France at this period, the reader will doubtless be surprised not to hear the name of D'Andelot, who, though the

admiral and the lord high constable were prisoners, was free, and as brave and distinguished as any other officer in the kingdom.

D'Andelot's genius, valor, and popular character, made him the equal of the Duke de Guise. This the cardinal of Lorraine had well understood; and founding the hopes of the whole family upon the fortunes of the elder brother, there was nothing the cardinal would not have done to get rid of a rival who might interfere with his projects of ambition. Neither the duke nor the cardinal could consent that another should share with them the gratitude of France and the favor of the sovereign. The proud house of Guise, which pretended to an equality with the house of Valois, and which, had not the timely assassination commanded by Henry III. arrested the fortunes so imprudently raised by Henry II., would probably have gone far above it—could brook no rival near the throne.

Montmorency and Coligny being prisoners, D'Andelot was the only man to be feared; and the Cardinal of Lorraine, who, as we have said, undertook all the diplomacy of the family, resolved to get rid of him.

Now, D'Andelot belonged to the reformed religion. Anxious to make a proselyte of his brother the admiral, who yet wavered, he sent to him at Antwerp, where Philip detained him prisoner, some theological works on the reformation, lately published in Geneva. With these books, D'Andelot wrote a letter to his brother, adjuring him to abandon the errors of the Roman Catholic Church for the enlightened doctrine of Calvin. Now, this letter fell into the hands of the Cardinal of Lorraine.

It was at a time when Henry II. was vigorously pursuing the Huguenots. Often had D'Andelot been accused of heresy, to the king; but Henry had rejected the accusa

tion, either because he did not believe in it, or because he was unwilling to send from him the early friend of his youth, who had so richly repaid his favor and friendship.

Against this proof there was no opposing doubt. Still, Henry declared that he would not believe in the heresy of his friend, unless he confessed it to him himself.

Consequently, he resolved to interrogate the culprit himself, in the presence of the whole court. But that he might not be taken by surprise, he requested M. de Chatillon and François de Montmorency, both relations of D'Andelot, to bring him to Meaux, where Henry was staying, with Catherine de Medicis.

D'Andelot was accordingly invited to Montceaux, as the queen's villa was called, and advised to prepare his defence, if he did not think it beneath his dignity to defend himself.

The king was at dinner when D'Andelot was introduced into his presence. The king received him most cordially, referring to the services he had rendered him, and declaring he would never forget them. Then Henry went on to say, that there were certain rumors afloat concerning the religious opinions of his friend, and that he was accused, not only of thinking but of speaking slightly of the mysteries of the Holy Catholic Church.

"D'Andelot," added the king, "I command you to give me your opinion of the most holy sacrifice of the mass."

D'Andelot, knowing the grief he was about to inflict on Henry, for whom he entertained as much affection as respect, replied evasively:

"Sire, could your majesty not dispense with insisting that the most devoted of your servants should discuss so profound a question, before which, even your majesty, with all your authority, is but man, like the rest of us?"

But the king, resolved to get at the truth, insisted on D'Andelot's replying explicitly to his question.

"Sire," then replied D'Andelot, with great dignity; "penetrated as I am with love and respect for your majesty, and for the favors lavished upon me, I would not hesitate to sacrifice my life, my estates, my all, for your majesty's service. But in matters of religion, I recognize no authority but God and my conscience. Therefore, I do not hesitate to declare that in my opinion, the sacrifice of the mass was neither instituted by Christ nor by the Apostles, and that it is nothing but an impious and detestable invention of man."

At this blasphemy, which the Huguenots considered it their duty to proclaim whenever they had an opportunity, the king grew pale with anger.

"D'Andelot!" he exclaimed, "until now I have always defended you against those who have accused you of heresy. But I now order you to quit my presence; and if you had not been my friend, I declare to you that I would have struck you to the earth with my sword!"

D'Andelot, still preserving his respectful and calm demeanor, bowed to the king, and withdrew.

But the king was far from being calm. Scarcely had the tapestry before the door fallen, after the exit of D'Andelot, before, sending for the master of the robes, he ordered that D'Andelot should be arrested and taken prisoner to Meaux.

Not content with this, the king ordered that the command of the infantry, which belonged to D'Andelot, should be taken from him, and given to Blaize de Montluc, a man devoted to the house of Guise, and who had been page to Regnier II., Duke of Lorraine.

Such was the reward of all the services rendered by

D'Andelot to his king and country, which Henry had promised never to forget. The fate of his brother, the admiral, is too well known to need recording at the present moment.

Meanwhile, Emmanuel-Philibert had not remained inactive, but had struggled manfully against the increasing strength of France. The battle of Gravelines, gained by the Count d'Egmont, was one of the most disastrous in the annals of France. But now, like two adversaries who meet in single combat, and having exhausted their strength and valor, pause by mutual consent, and leaning on their swords gaze at each other, waiting for an opportunity to renew the contest, France and Spain suspended all hostilities, and the two chiefs sought rest in their own homes. The Duke de Guise retired to Thionville, and Emmanuel-Philibert to Brussels. As for Philip of Spain, he was in the Low Countries, with an army of thirty thousand men. It was here that he received the news of the death of his wife, Mary of England, who had died of dropsy, which she had persisted in mistaking for a condition promising an heir to the throne.

The French army was encamped on the side of the Somme. It was so numerous, says Montluc, that it took three hours to go round it.

As we have said in the first part of this history, Charles V. had just expired at St. Just, and Mary of Scotland, then in her fifteenth year, had just married the Dauphin Francis, then in his seventeenth.

Such was the political situation of the three great powers of the world—France, England, and Spain—when, one morning in October, 1558, Emmanuel-Philibert was in his closet, giving orders to Scianca-Ferro, now recovered from his wounds, and about to set out with a message to Philip of Spain. The prince was in mourning; and, indeed, his fortunes seemed to have acquired a funereal hue. As he bid

adieu to Scianca-Ferro, the door opened, and Leona, clad in her page's dress, but more beautiful than ever, entered the room.

During the terrible campaign against France, Emmanuel, as we have seen, had left Leona out of harm's way, at Cambrria. Partly from discouragement, partly from fatigue, Emmanuel had taken no active part in the campaign of 1558, so that the lovers, still more in love than ever, had been together nearly the whole year.

Accustomed as he was to watch every varying expression of Leona's face, Emmanuel was struck with the sad look which now rested there, and which the young girl strove in vain to hide beneath a forced smile.

Scianca-Ferro, who knew very little of the secrets of the heart, saw nothing in Leona different from her usual manner. Going up to the pretty page, whose sex was no longer a secret to him, he grasped her hand affectionately; then taking up his despatches, he disappeared, humming a tune and clanging his spurs as he went.

Emmanuel looked after him until he was out of sight; then, turning to Leona, he gazed silently at her.

She was leaning on the back of a chair, as though her limbs refused to support her. Her cheek was pale, and though she smiled, a tear still trembled in her eye.

"What is it makes my love so sad to day?" said Emmanuel, in a tone of tenderness which distinguishes the love of mature years from that of early youth: for Emmanuel-Philibert had now attained his thirtieth year. Misfortune had made a great man of him, which perhaps, had he quietly inherited his father's dominions, he would never have become. But now, as a military commander he ranked with the oldest and ablest of the day—with Montmorency, with Guise, with

Coligny, with the veteran Strozzi, who had just fallen gloriously at the siege of Thionville.

"I am not sad," replied Leona, "but I am come to tax both your memory and your kindness."

"If my memory fails me sometimes," said Emmanuel, "I trust my heart will never be at fault. Let us hear what it is I am to remember, and then tell me your request." As he spoke, he made signs to an attendant, to close the door, and to allow no one to enter. Then, seating himself in an arm-chair, he motioned to Leona to take her accustomed place, on a pile of cushions at his side.

Leona obeyed; and seating herself, placed both her arms on Emmanuel's knees, gazing up into his face with a look of unbounded love and devotion.

"Well?" said Emmanuel, beginning to feel alarmed at her hesitation.

"What day of the month is this?" asked Leona.

"It is the seventeenth of November, if I mistake not," replied the duke.

"And does this date recall nothing to your memory? Is it not an anniversary worthy of being celebrated?"

Emmanuel smiled; for his memory recalled faithfully, in all its details, the event of which this was the anniversary.

"It is now twenty-four years," said he, "since, at this very hour, I found on the banks of the Tieino, a dead woman with a child in her arms. That child was my beloved Leona."

"Have you ever had cause to regret that day, Emmanuel?"

"Never, my beloved. On the contrary, I have blessed it every time I have thought of it. For thou hast become the guardian angel of my existenee."

"And if, in this sacred day, I should, for the first time

in my life, demand of you a promise, should I be too exacting, and would you grant my request?"

"You alarm me, Leona," replied Emmanuel, "what can you have to ask, that you think I would not instantly grant?"

"By the glory of your name, Emmanuel; by the memory of your father; by the honor of your house; swear to me that you will do what I am about to ask of you!"

The Duke of Savoy shook his head gravely, feeling instinctively that some great sacrifice was about to be required of him, yet feeling that his honor would oblige him to accept it. Raising his arm solemnly, he said,

"Whatever you may ask, Leona, unless it be that I should not see you more, I swear to grant."

"Ah!" murmured Leona, "I thought you would make that reservation! Thanks, Emmanuel. And now, what I ask of you, is, that you shall consent to the conditions of the treaty of peace between France and Spain, which my brother has just communicated to me."

"What do you mean, Leona? Where have you seen your brother? I have not heard of any treaty of peace."

"A high and mighty prince, Emmanuel, thought it necessary to secure my influence, before applying to you; and this is why I am so well informed. But now, you too shall know all."

With these words, Leona, lifting the drapery at the door, desired the groom in waiting to admit the person who was waiting to see the duke.

In a few moments, and whilst Emmanuel still held Leona's arm, to prevent her leaving him, the door was opened, and the lord in waiting announced,

"His Excellency, the Count Odoardo Maraviglia, ambassador from their majesties, the Kings of France and Spain."

CHAPTER II.

THE AMBASSADOR OF THEIR MAJESTIES, THE KINGS OF FRANCE AND SPAIN.

THE reader will remember, as he encounters this name, the history of its owner, and the relationship which bound him to Leona. This relationship, however, was only known to the Duke of Savoy and Leona—Odoardo himself was completely ignorant of it. It remains for us to inform the reader how it happened that Odoardo had risen to the position which he now occupied.

The son of one of the favorites of Francis I. ; brought up in close intimacy with Henry II., who was dauphin when Odoardo was page to the King ; bequeathed by Charles V. on the day of his abdication to Philip of Spain ; Odoardo enjoyed the favor of both the Kings of France and Spain. It was known, too, though through what influence no one had ascertained, that Odoardo owed his life to Emmanuel-Philibert. It was therefore a most judicious choice, to send as ambassador, a nobleman equally devoted to the interests of both parties, to Emmanuel-Philibert, on whom the principal condition of the treaty depended.

Although when he saw him enter, Emmanuel-Philibert

felt a presentiment of impending evil, he rose to meet him, and extended his hand towards him.

“ Monseigneur,” said the ambassador, respectfully kissing the duke’s hand; “ you behold in me the happiest of men; for I trust I shall be able to prove to your highness that he whose life you saved, is not ungrateful.”

“ Nay, Odoardo, it is not to me that you owe your life, but to the magnanimity of that great emperor whom we now all mourn.”

“ That may be, my lord; but you were the medium he employed, and I am grateful to you, as the patriarchs of old were to the angels who brought them the word of God. I am come, your highness, to propose a treaty of peace.”

“ In that character, Odoardo, you have been already announced to me, and I have been prepared to expect you.”

“ Your highness expected me! I thought I should be the first to announce my mission, and had imagined the conditions of the treaty to be still a secret.”

“ Never fear, Count Maraviglia,” replied Emmanuel, with a forced smile; “ I only meant to say, that some men have familiar spirits, who keep them advised of every thing that interests them.”

“ Your highness, then, knew the object of my mission?”

“ The object only, but none of the details.”

“ I am ready to give them to your highness,” said Odoardo, looking significantly at Leona.

Leona, understanding that the ambassador wished to be alone with the prince, was about to retire; but Emmanuel detained her by the arm.

“ You may speak, Count Odoardo,” said he; “ for I am alone when I am with this young man. He is the familiar

spirit to whom I alluded. Remain, Leone," continued the duke; "let us hear what they have to propose to us."

"What should you say, my lord," said the ambassador, "if I were to tell you that, in exchange for Ham, Catelet, and St. Quentin, France would give us a hundred and eighty-eight towns?"

"I should say that it was scarcely probable. And amongst the towns to be returned, does France include Calais?"

"No, your highness. Queen Elizabeth, who has just refused, from conscientious scruples, to marry her brother-in-law Philip, has been somewhat overlooked in this treaty. Yet it is only conditionally that France is allowed to retain Calais and the other towns taken by the French."

"What are those conditions?"

"That at the expiration of eight years, France shall either restore them to the English, or pay an indemnity of fifty thousand crowns."

"And she will give them, unless the king should be as poor as Baldwin, King of Jerusalem and Emperor of the East, who pawned the Saviour's crown of thorns," said Emmanuel.

"It was merely as a concession to satisfy Queen Elizabeth," continued Odoardo; "and, insignificant as was the concession, she accepted it without difficulty—being fully occupied with her quarrel with the Pope."

"Has he not declared her illegitimate?" asked Emmanuel.

"Yes; but the Pope will lose the sovereignty of England; for Elizabeth has already declared herself the head of the Church of England."

"And what, in the midst of all this, has become of the young queen of Scotland?" asked Emmanuel.

“Immediately on the death of Mary of England, Henry II. had his daughter-in-law, Mary Stuart, proclaimed queen of Scotland and England—rejecting Elizabeth, as having been declared illegitimate by the Pope.”

“Ay, but,” rejoined Emmanuel, “the will of her father, Henry VIII., in which he has formally recognized her. But let us return to our own affairs.”

“These then,” said Maraviglia, “are the conditions of a treaty proposed between France and Spain :

“1. A general amnesty for political offences—with the exception of those in the kingdom of Naples and the duchy of Milan.

“2. All the towns taken by the French, especially Thionville, Marienbourg, Troyes, Montmedy, Damvilliers, Hesdin, Charolais, and Valence, to be restored to the King of Spain : and that Troyes should be dismantled, in compensation for Theroune, which had been destroyed.

“3. That King Philip II. should marry the Princess Elizabeth, who was affianced to his son Don Carlos ; and that with her he shall receive a dowry of four hundred thousand golden crowns.

“4. That the fortress of Bouillon shall be restored to the bishop of Liège.

“5. That the Infanta of Portugal shall be put in possession of all she inherits from her mother, Queen Eleanor, widow of Francis I.”

“And do you mean to say that Francis consented to all these conditions ?”

“To all.”

“Then,” said Emmanuel, “if you, Count Maraviglia, have brought about such a treaty as this, I can only say that the Emperor Charles V. knew well what he was about, when he recommended you to his son King Philip II.”

“It is not through my influence,” replied Odoardo, “that this treaty has been arranged. The principal agents in bringing it about have been Madame de Valentinois and the lord high constable, from their dread of the increasing power of the house of Guise.”

“Ah!” said Emmanuel, “now I understand why Montmerency was perpetually soliciting permission to return to France, and why he offered to ransom the admiral at two hundred thousand crowns: a proposition which I have just submitted to his Majesty, through my squire, Scianca-Ferro.”

“And unless the king is more ungrateful than I take him to be, he will accept the proposition,” said Odoardo.

There was a moment’s pause: then the ambassador, looking at the prince, said—

“And you, my lord; do you not wish to hear the portion of this treaty which concerns you?”

At these words, Emmanuel felt Leona’s hand, which he had still retained, tremble within his own.

“Concerns me?” said Emmanuel, “I thought they had forgotten me.”

“For that to happen, Philip and Henry should have chosen some other negotiator than myself. Thank heaven! I have been enabled to be of some little service; and I trust that the victor of St. Quentin will be rewarded according to his merits.”

Emmanuel looked at Leona, who sighed deeply. Odoardo continued:

“My lord, all the towns, cities, and possessions, which were taken from the duke your father, are to be restored to you, with the exception of Turin, Pignarolles, Chère, Chival, and Villeneuve, which France will retain until your highness shall have a son born to him. Until the birth of that son

which will unite Piedmont and Savoy, the King of Spain is to retain the privilege of garrisoning the towns of Asti and Vercelli."

"But," exclaimed Emmanuel, "as I shall not marry,"—

"Your highness would surely not lose five such magnificent cities?"

"No," interrupted Leona; "the Duke of Savoy intends to marry. Proceed, my lord ambassador, and tell his highness the alliance that is proposed to him."

Odoardo looked at the young man with astonishment, and then to the duke, whose features were contracted as with indignation. Mistaking the cause of his emotion, he hastened to add:

"Your highness has nothing to fear; the wife I have to propose to you, is worthy of a king."

Still Emmanuel spoke not; and Odoardo proceeded:

"It is the Princess Margaret of France, the sister of Henry II., who, besides the duchy of Savoy, will bring to her husband a dowry of three hundred thousand golden crowns."

"The Princess Margaret of France," replied Emmanuel, "is a great princess—I know it. But I prefer regaining my duchy by the strength of my own arm, rather than by a marriage."

"But," said Odoardo, "the Princess Margaret is one of the noblest rewards for all your valor and your victories."

Emmanuel-Philibert replied not; and Odoardo gazed on him with astonishment.

"Would your excellency," said Leona, "allow me to remain alone with the prince? In a quarter of an hour you will receive an answer to your proposal."

Odoardo bowed, and obeyed; for he had understood that the mysterious page was the only person who could overcome

the opposition of the Duke of Savoy to the wishes of the kings of France and Spain.

A quarter of an hour had scarcely elapsed, before Odoardo was again summoned into the presence of the Duke.

Emmanuel-Philibert was alone. Extending his hand towards the ambassador, he said, in a sad and mournful tone,

“Return, Odoardo, to those who sent you, and say that the Duke of Savoy accepts with gratitude the alliance proposed to him.”

CHAPTER III.

IN THE APARTMENTS OF THE QUEEN OF FRANCE.

THANKS to the skilful manner in which the treaty had been negotiated, none but those interested in it had any suspicion of the important events which were preparing at the court of France. It was therefore with the utmost astonishment that two cavaliers, each followed by two squires, met in the streets of Paris. One was the lord high constable Montmorency, who was supposed to be a prisoner at Antwerp—the other was the Duke de Guise, who was supposed to be encamped at Compiègne.

Between two such mortal enemies, the greeting was brief. Being a sovereign prince, the Duke de Guise had precedence of all the nobility of France. Monsieur de Montmorency, therefore, backed his horse a few steps, whilst Monsieur de Guise advanced upon his—so that, as they entered the Louvre, Montmorency might have been taken for one of the prince's attendants—only, that immediately after they had passed the gate, one turned to the right, and the other to the left.

The Duke de Guise was going to the apartments of the queen—the other to the apartments of Diana de Poitiers. Both were impatiently expected.

We will follow the Duke de Guise.

Catherine de Medicis, and the Guises, as we know, were firm allies; and both inveterate enemies of the house of Montmorency, whose influence with the king was greater than their own.

Notwithstanding the peril in which the loss of St. Quentin had placed France, they could not but secretly rejoice in the disaster when they heard that Montmorency was taken prisoner,—as it removed him from the court.

The civil administration of the kingdom was already in the hands of the Cardinal of Lorraine, when François de Guise returned from Italy, and assumed the military authority of the kingdom. Well, too, had he used this authority, and for the glory of France.

Some rumors had reached the Duke de Guise, of the constable's return to Paris; and he had hastened from Compiègne to ascertain their truth, and had met the constable at the gate of the Louvre.

Montmorency, then, was free! and a treaty of peace would probably follow this unexpected event.

The Guises had thought the constable's captivity,—like that of king John's,—to be eternal. Great, therefore, was their disappointment.

Montmorency had lost all; Monsieur de Guise had been ever victorious. And yet, in all probability, the defeated general would reappear at court on the same footing with the victorious one;—even supposing, which was not at all probable, that the influence of Madame de Valentinois, did not place the conquered far above the conqueror.

It was therefore with a dark and lowering brow that Guise ascended the stairs leading to the queen's apartments; whilst, on the other side of the palace, Montmorency, with a smiling

and joyous visage, was mounting those which led to the apartments of the favorite.

The Duke de Guise was evidently expected, for, no sooner had he given his name than he heard the queen exclaim, with her harsh, Florentine accent :

“ Come in, duke—come in ! ”

The queen was alone. But the duke looked round, as if expecting to see some one else.

“ Ah,” said her majesty, “ you expected to see your brother ? ”

“ I did,” replied the Duke de Guise, dispensing with the usual ceremonious manner of conversing ; “ for my brother sent me a courier to bid me hasten to Paris.”

“ He did,” replied Catherine ; “ but as the courier only left at one o’clock to day, we did not expect you until late to-night.”

“ True ; but I met him half way.”

“ You were then coming to Paris ? ”

“ I was.”

“ Duke ! ” replied Catherine, “ you were right ; for there never was a more difficult moment than the present.”

At this juncture, a key was heard to turn in the lock of a door leading to the private apartments of the queen ; and the Cardinal of Lorraine entered.

Without saluting either his brother or the queen, the cardinal, as though he were in the presence of his own rank, or even of a rank inferior to his own, walked straight up to his brother and said, in a voice which betrayed great emotion,

“ Do you know who has arrived ? ”

“ Yes,” replied the duke, “ for I met him at the door of the Louvre.”

“ Whom do you mean ? ” asked Catherine.

“Montmorency,” replied the duke and the cardinal, in a breath.

“Ah!” said the queen, as though she had received a dagger in her heart. “But perhaps he is here merely on parole—that he is not free.”

“He is free,” said the cardinal. “By means of the Duke of Savoy, both he and the admiral have been allowed to ransom themselves for the sum of two hundred thousand crowns, which, I dare swear, he will make the king pay. It is right the king should pay for so great a folly; for, by the cross of Lorraine! the whole affair is so complete a farce, that the fortune of a subject would not suffice to pay for it.”

“Have you heard any thing more,” asked Catherine, “than what we already know?”

“Nothing more; but I expect the Duke de Nemours, who belongs to the house of Savoy, and who, as the wind seems to blow from that quarter, will probably be able to tell us some news. There, most likely, he is,” added the cardinal, as some one knocked at the secret door by which he had entered.

“Open the door, cardinal,” said the queen, regardless of the strange appearance of the cardinal having the key of the door which led to her private apartments.

The cardinal obeyed, and the Duke de Nemours entered.

Having neither the anxiety of the Duke de Guise, nor the intimacy of the cardinal, to excuse a breach of etiquette, the duke remained standing without speaking. But Catherine, beckoning him to advance, said:

“A truce to ceremony, my lord duke! The cardinal tells me that you have probably news for us. Speak! What do you know with regard to this treaty of peace?”

“I know all about it,” said the Duke de Nemours, “for

I have just left the Count Maraviglia, who comes from the Duke Emmanuel, of Savoy."

"Oh, then you must indeed be well informed," said the Cardinal of Lorraine, "for the Duke Emmanuel is more deeply interested than any one in this negotiation."

"And yet, strange to say," replied Nemours, "from some unaccountable motive, whether a disdain of greatness, or from some secret love, the Duke Emmanuel hesitated greatly before he accepted the terms offered to him."

"Perhaps," said the Duke de Guise, "his services have not been appreciated by his sovereign. Conquerors never appear to be favorites."

"He must be very difficult to please; for all his possessions are to be restored to him, with the exception of some few towns, and even they will be returned to him on the birth of an heir."

"An heir!" exclaimed the cardinal; "why, he is not married."

"Ah," said Nemours, "but the treaty provides him a wife."

"Who is she?" said the Duke de Guise.

"The princess Margaret, of France."

"The king's sister!" exclaimed Catherine.

"She has waited to some purpose," said the Duke de Guise; "she was determined to marry none but a sovereign prince."

"Only," said Catherine, with that peculiar tone of ill nature which a woman always assumes when she speaks of another: "she has waited rather long for this paragon—for, if I mistake not, the young lady must be some thirty-six years old."

"And how did Emmanuel-Philibert receive the proposal of this royal alliance?"

“ Very coldly, at first. Count Maraviglia even pretends that he was on the point of refusing it, though, after more mature reflection, he had ended by accepting. Still, when he took leave of the ambassador, he desired him not to terminate the negotiation until he himself had seen the Princess Margaret. Of course the ambassador has said nothing about this hesitation to Henry II., but has, on the contrary, represented Emmanuel-Philibert as the happiest and most grateful prince in the world.”

“ And pray,” said the Duke de Guise, “ what are the terms he is to receive ? ”

Nemours then proceeded to enumerate them.

“ Did you happen to hear,” asked the Duke de Guise, when he had finished, “ whether Calais was one of the towns the king intended to restore ? ”

“ I do not remember to have heard.”

“ By the Lord ! ” exclaimed the Duke de Guise, “ if he surrenders Calais it will be plainly telling me that my sword is of no use to him ; and I should immediately proceed to offer it to some other sovereign who would appreciate it better,—unless, indeed, I kept it to fight my own battles ! ”

At this moment, a gentleman in attendance in the ante-room raised the curtain of the door, exclaiming :

“ The king ! ”

“ Where ? ” asked Catherine.

“ At the end of the long gallery.”

Catherine looked at the Duke de Guise, as if to ask him what he meant to do.

“ I will wait for him here,” said the duke.

“ Wait for him if you please, my lord,” said the Duke de Nemours ; “ you are a great and victorious general, and can meet all the kings of the earth, face to face. But do you not

think that his majesty will find the Cardinal of Lorraine and the Duke de Guise sufficient company without me?"

"You are right," said Catherine, "it is better he should not see you. Quick—open the secret door."

The cardinal complied, and the door closed upon Nemours, just as Henry de Valois, with a frowning aspect, appeared on the opposite threshold.

CHAPTER IV.

IN THE APARTMENTS OF THE FAVORITE.

ALTHOUGH we have followed the Duke de Guise into the apartments of the queen, in preference to following Montmorency to those of the favorite, it was not that what took place at Mme. de Valentinois' was of less interest and importance than the proceedings at the queen's. But Guise, being a greater man than Montmorency, and Catherine a greater lady than Madame de Valentinois, we thought it but right to give them the preference. Honor to whom honor is due!

Now, by relating what occurred at Mme. de Valentinois', we shall ascertain why Henry II. entered his wife's apartment with a lowering brow.

The return of the constable was no more a mystery to the duchess than that of Guise was to the queen. Almost at the same moment that the queen uttered, in a tone of surprise, "*Guise!*" the favorite exclaimed in the same tone, "*Montmorency!*"

Court scandal had been, as we have said, very busy with the cardinal and the queen—nor had it spared Montmorency and the favorite. Though how an old man of seventy, sulky and cross as was the constable, could be the rival

of a fine, noble, generous, and refined gallant, like King Henry, is a mystery which we leave cleverer anatomists of the human heart than ourselves to solve.

Still, Diana de Poitiers, it cannot be denied,—the beautiful Diana who imposed her law upon every body—submitted to the wishes, and humored the caprices, of the eccentric old constable. It is to be remembered, however, that this friendship had commenced some twenty-eight years previously, when Diana was but thirty, and the constable only forty-eight.

It was, therefore, with an exclamation of delight, that Diana replied to the announcement—

“ The lord high constable de Montmorency.”

She was not, however, alone ; on a sofa at the farthest extremity of the apartment, were two bright children of love—Francis the Dauphin, and Mary Stuart—wedded six months previously, but more deeply enamored of each other than before their marriage.

The young queen had taken from her head the graceful velvet cap and feather worn at that time by both sexes, and was trying it on her husband—pretending that it was better fitted to the size of his head than to hers. So absorbed were they by this occupation, that, notwithstanding the importance, politically speaking, of the announcement just made, they either did not hear, or did not heed it.

They did not heed it ! For what to young love is of importance, beyond itself ? Oh, one year of a deep, happy, absorbing passion, is worth twenty years of a life of indifference. Francis II. enjoyed two years of perfect, uninterrupted bliss, with his beautiful Mary, and then died at nineteen—happier far than his wife, who, surviving him thirty years, passed four of them in broils and exile, and eighteen in prison !

Diana did not appear to attach any importance to the presence of the happy pair; for, going up to the constable, with open arms, she presented her fair smooth forehead to his lips.

The constable, however, as he bent down to embrace her, exclaimed,

“Halloo! but, fair duchess, we are not alone!”

“Indeed but we are,” replied she.

“Do you think my eyes are so old that they cannot see something crouching down there in the corner?”

“The ‘something crouching in the corner,’” said the duchess with a smile, “is the Queen of England and Scotland, with her husband, the Dauphin of France. But never fear—they are too much preoccupied with their own affairs, to think of meddling with ours.”

“The devil!” exclaimed the constable; “Are matters on the other side of the water going as badly as they are on this, that these young people are so taken up with them?”

“My dear constable, the English might be in Edinburgh, or the Scotch in London, and this news might be cried on the house-tops, or announced in as loud voice as yours, and I doubt whether either of these young people would have heard it. No, thank Heaven! They are not thinking of worldly affairs; they are absorbed in their love. To them the kingdoms of England and Scotland are as nothing, for their love has given them the kingdom of Heaven.”

“Ah, siren!” said Montmorency, repeating his caress; “how are matters progressing at court?”

“Well, I think, my dear friend, peace is about to be declared, and Monsieur François de Guise will soon be obliged to sheathe his mighty sword. Now, as there is no need of a lieutenant-general of the kingdom, in time of peace, the office can be suppressed; and my lord high constable, who is

necessary both in peace and in war, will once more be the first nobleman of the land, and the greatest man at court after His Majesty."

"Not badly imagined, by the Lord! But you know, fair Diana, that I am only here on parole, and that in order to be free, I must pay a ransom of two hundred thousand golden crowns."

"I know it," said the duchess, with a smile.

"So do I; but by all the devils in purgatory, I don't intend to pay it!"

"For whom were you fighting, most noble constable, when you were taken prisoner?"

"For the king; though, by the mass, the wound I got was for me, and not for his majesty, I promise you!"

"Then it is but just that the king should pay the ransom, my dear Montmorency. But I thought you told me that, if I concluded successfully the negotiations for peace, the Duke Emmanuel-Philibert, who is a magnanimous prince, would remit the two hundred thousand crowns."

"Do you think I said that?"

"No, you did not say it, but you wrote it."

"The devil I did!" said the constable, laughing; "then I suppose I shall have to take you into the speculation too, my dear Diana. Come, let us show our cards, and play the game out. It is true that the Duke of Savoy has most nobly refused to accept the two hundred thousand crowns; but, as you know my nephew is too proud a jackanapes to accept of any such favor, it is better to say nothing about it."

"So that Coligny will pay you his hundred thousand francs, as though you had to pay the whole sum to the duke?"

"Precisely."

"So that," continued Diana, "his majesty will pay into

your hands the sum of two hundred thousand crowns, as if you were going to pay them to the duke?"

"Right again."

"That will make you richer, by three hundred thousand crowns; is it not so?"

"You are a clever arithmetician, my fair duchess! and as you have so well calculated, you shall now see how I intend to dispose of these three hundred thousand crowns."

"First of all," said the duchess, "we appropriate two hundred thousand to our dear constable, to indemnify him for his troubles, his sufferings, and his imprisonment."

"Do you think it too much?"

"Not at all! Our dear constable being a lion, it is right that he should have the lion's share. Now for the other hundred thousand crowns—what do we do with them?"

"Oh, these we divide into two parts—one, we give to the most beautiful of all ladies, the fairest Diana, for ribbons and what not, and the other fifty thousand we reserve to help our poor children, when they marry—who, if the king does not help them, will find themselves poor enough, with what a poor soldier can give them."

"You must, however, remember," rejoined the duchess, "that our beloved daughter has her dowry as widow of the Duke de Castro. Yet, if the king in his munificence should not think this sufficient for the son of a Montmorency and daughter of a king, you may be sure I shall not tighten his purse-strings if he should desire to loosen them."

The constable gazed on the duchess with admiration.

"I see," said the constable, "that the king still wears the magic ring you gave him!"

"He does," replied the Duchess; "and as I think I hear the footsteps of his majesty, you shall see how it works."

“So! so! he has always the key of the secret door, I see.”

The king *had* the key of the secret door of the duchess's apartment, just as the cardinal had that of the queen's. There were a great many private entrances in the palace of the Louvre, of which some person or persons had the keys!

“Are you going to be jealous of the king?” inquired Diana of her old admirer.

“I have a great mind,” growled the old soldier.

“Take care!” said the duchess, alluding to the well-known avarice of the constable; “your jealousy would be put out at a losing interest, and it is not usually in this way that you place your”——love, she was about to say, but she paused.

“My what?” said the constable.

“Your money,” said the Duchess.

As she spoke the king entered.

“Oh, sire!” said she, running up to Heury; “how glad I am to see you! I was just going to send for you! Here is our good friend the constable, come back to us as young and valorous as Mars.”

“Yes,” replied Henry, continuing the mythological metaphor; “and his first visit is for Venus.” He is right; I give precedence to the majesty of beauty. Your hand, my brave old constable!”

“By the mass, sire, I know not whether I ought to give you my hand!”

“Really! and why not?”

“Why, because it seems to me that you have somewhat neglected me.”

“Neglected you, my good friend!” exclaimed the king, beginning to justify himself, instead of accusing, as he ought.

“ Yes ; your ears were somewhat deafened by the flourishes of M. de Guise.”

“ Well,” replied the king, determined to make a home thrust ; “ you cannot prevent the victor from sounding the trumpets.”

“ Sire,” replied Montmorency, drawing himself up ; “ there are some defeats as glorious as certain victories.”

“ That may be,” said the king ; “ but you must confess that their results are less advantageous to the state.”

“ Less advantageous,” growled Montmorency ; “ if you please ; but war is a game of chance, at which the bravest may lose sometimes, as your father before you did, for instance.”

The king colored, but replied not.

“ And as for St. Quentin,” continued the constable, “ it appears to me that if it surrendered”—

“ In the first place,” interrupted the king, “ St. Quentin did not surrender, it was taken ; and taken, as you know, after a most heroic defence. St. Quentin saved the honor of France, lost by”—here the king hesitated.

“ By the battle of St. Laurent—say it out, for that’s what you mean, is it not ? This is all the thanks I get for having fought like a lion, been wounded like a dog, and imprisoned like a wild beast !”

“ No, my dear Montmorency,” said the king, whom an appealing look from Diana had brought to calmer feelings ; “ No ; you mistake me. I merely meant to say that St. Quentin had made a most admirable defence.”

“ It did ; and your majesty has well recompensed its brave defender.”

“ Coligny ? What more could I do than to pay his ransom, as well as yours ? ”

“ Who cares for your money ? I don’t speak of freedom,

but of imprisonment. Pray, what does d'Andelot's imprisonment mean?"

"Ah, my dear constable," said the king, "M. d'Andelot is a heretic."

"As if we were not all heretics, more or less! Do you yourself, sire, pretend to think you'll go to Heaven?"

"Why should I not?"

"Nonsense! You have just as much chance of getting there as old Marshal Strozzi, who with his last breath denied the existence of God!"

"What was it he said?"

"Why, he said—'The farce is over; I've done with God!' and Monsieur de Guise having replied; 'Take care, marshal, you will ere long see him face to face!' 'Ere long!' replied the marshal, suapping his fingers, 'I shall see nothing more, and be where all are who have died since the world began.' Why don't your majesty have him dragged up and burnt for a heretic? He deserves it; for he died for you, and the other was only wounded in your cause!"

"My lord constable," said the king, "you do me great injustice."

"I do you injustice, do I? Where, then, is d'Andelot? Reviewing the infantry, as became his rank, or taking his ease on his estate, after the fatigues of the famous siege of St. Quentin, in which your majesty confesses he conducted himself so well? No! He is a prisoner in the chateau of Melun. And what for? I ask. Merely because he has given you his candid opinion ou the saeriffee of the mass. By the Lord! but I have a great mind to turn Huguenot myself, and offer my services to the Prince de Condé!"

"My lord of Montmoreney!"

"And when I think that my poor dear d'Andelot probably owes his captivity to M. de Guise!—"

“Montmorency!” said the king, “I swear to you that the Guises had nothing to do with this matter!”

“Just as you’ll tell me that your infernal cardinal had nothing to do with it, perhaps?”

“Constable,” said the king, eluding the question; “would you like me to do something for you?”

“What!”

“Do you wish me, in honor of your return, to set M d’Andelot at liberty!”

“Blood and thunder! Do I wish it? Why, I not only wish it, but I insist upon it!”

“Constable,” said Henry, “you must remember that even the king says, we insist, not I insist!”

“Then, sire,” exclaimed Diana, “do you say *we* insist on our faithful friend and servant being set at liberty, in order that he may be present at the marriage of our beloved daughter, Diana de Castro, with Francis de Montmorency, Count de Damville.”

“Yes,” said the constable, in a surly tone, “provided that marriage ever should take place.”

“And why should it not take place?” inquired the duchess. “Do you think the young people too poor to set up housekeeping?”

“Oh, if that is the only obstacle,” said the king, ever ready to get out of every difficulty by means of money; “we can surely find some two or three hundred thousand francs for them, in some corner of our privy purse.”

“Your majesty thinks every thing depends on money—I don’t allude to money.”

“To what then?” said the king.

“Oh, I alluded to the Guises, whom this marriage may not suit.”

“ My dear constable, you are seeking imaginary difficulties.”

“ Imaginary difficulties, am I? Why, then, do you think M. François de Guise is come to Paris, if it is not to prevent a marriage which will aggrandize my house? Though, after all, Madame de Castro is only a bastard!”

The king bit his lip, and Diana blushed; but neither replied to this last insult.

“ In the first place,” said the king, “ M. de Guise is not in Paris.”

“ Where is he, then?”

“ At Compiègne, with his troops.”

“ And has your majesty not given him leave of absence?”

“ Why should I?”

“ That he might come here.”

“ I have given no leave of absence to the Duke de Guise.”

“ Then, sire, Monsieur de Guise has come to Paris without it.”

“ He would not dare to do it!” said the king; “ the duke knows too well what is due to me, to attempt such an act of insubordination.”

“ The duke, of all people, ought to know what is due to your majesty, for he owes you a great deal; but he has forgotten it this time, at any rate.”

“ But, my dear constable,” said Diana, putting in her word; “ are you quite sure that the duke has committed this, what can I call it?—this act of thoughtlessness?”

“ By the Lord!” said Montmorency, “ I saw him myself.”

“ When?” said the king.

“ Just now.”

“ Where?”

“At the gates of the Louvre. We were there at the same time.”

“How is it, then, that I have not seen him?”

“Because, instead of turning to the left, he turned to the right; so, that instead of being in the presence of the king, he found himself in the presence of the queen.”

“Do you mean to say that the Duke de Guise is with the queen?”

“Oh, your majesty has nothing to fear,” said the constable; “he is not alone with her: there is a third person, the illustrious Cardinal of Lorraine.”

“That is what remains to be seen,” said the king; “wait a few moments, constable, and I will come and tell you whether you are right.”

With these words the king, greatly incensed, left the room, whilst Diana and the constable exchanged a glance of satisfaction, and the young queen and her husband, who had neither seen nor heard any thing of what had passed, continued their tender dalliance.

And so it happened that the king stood frowning on the threshold of the queen’s apartment.

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH THE CONQUERED ARE TRIUMPHANT, AND THE CONQUERORS DEFEATED.

THE attitude of these three personages, as the king entered, betrayed the various emotions which agitated them.

Catharine de Medicis stood leaning with her back against the door, holding the key behind her. Her cheek was pale, and she trembled—so much does ambition resemble love in its outward symptoms !

The cardinal, in the undress costume of his calling, half ecclesiastic, half military, was standing by a table covered with laces, embroideries, and state papers.

The Duke de Guise, determined to brave it out, had turned towards the door, and now faced the king. He was, with the exception of the helmet and cuirass, in complete armor. His high leather boots were covered with mud, and his long rapier hung by his side. As though prepared to encounter an enemy, he stood ; for although out of respect to the king, he held his plumed beaver in his hand, his tall and rigid frame bent not before him nor lost one inch of its stature.

The king stood in the presence of that conqueror, whose

aspect, said one of the great ladies of those days, made all other noblemen look like plebeians.

Henry stopped short, as when iron strikes steel, or stone comes in contact with stone.

“ Ah, is it you, my cousin ?” said the king ; “ I am surprised to see you here I imagined you had been at Compiègne.”

“ Yes, your majesty, it is I. And your majesty cannot be more surprised to see me, than I was to meet at the gates of the Louvre the Duke of Montmorency, whom I imagined to be still prisoner at Antwerp.”

Henry bit his lips at this taunting reply.

“ I have paid his ransom, sir,” said he, “ nor did I think two hundred thousand crowns too high a price to pay for the pleasure of seeing once more so old a friend, so faithful a servant.”

“ Does your majesty not value the towns he is about to return to Spain, England, and Savoy, at a higher price than two hundred thousand crowns ? As there are, it is said, about two hundred of them, that would not be more than a thousand crowns a city.”

“ I restore these cities,” said the king, “ not to purchase the return of Montmorency, but to obtain peace.”

“ I had always thought that, in France, peace was purchased by victory.”

“ That is, my lord, because, being a prince of Lorraine, you know the history of France imperfectly. Have you overlooked or forgotten the treaties of Bretigny and Madrid ?”

“ Neither, your majesty ; but I see no analogy in the positions. After the defeat of Poitiers, the king of France himself was prisoner in London ; after the battle of Pavia, Francis I. was prisoner at Toledo. But to-day, Henry of

Valois, at the head of a powerful army, reigns undisturbed in his palace of the Louvre. Wherefore, then, should the disastrous periods of French history be repeated in such prosperous times?"

"Monsieur de Guise," said the king, haughtily; "when I appointed you lieutenant-general of the kingdom, did you well understand the duties of your office?"

"I did, sire. When, after the disastrous battle of St. Laurent; after the heroic defence of St. Quentin; when the enemy was at Noyon; when M. de Nevers had no more than three or four hundred gentlemen around him; when Paris, panic-struck, was flying from the expected invader; when the king, from the summit of the highest tower of Compiègne, was watching the arrival of the foe—not as a king who should avoid all peril, but as a general, as a soldier, resolved to fight to the last; then it was, sire, that you sent for me—then it was that you appointed me lieutenant-general of the kingdom. My duty was, then, to save France, lost by M. de Montmorency. What have I done, sire? After bringing back the army from Italy, I delivered Bourg, I took the keys of France from the hands of Mary Tudor, and restored Calais to France. I have conquered Guinness, Ham, and Thionville. Taking Arlon by surprise, I repaired the disasters of Gravelines; and after one year's campaign, I have assembled at Compiègne an army twice as numerous as when I first took command of it, on my return from Italy. Have I not fulfilled my duties, sire?"

"Certainly, my lord, certainly."

"Then," replied the duke, "I am at a loss to understand your majesty's meaning, when you asked me if I understood the duties of my office."

"I meant to say, my lord duke, that one of your duties

was, not to remonstrate with your king—that is not the right of any subject.”

“Your majesty must allow me to observe,” replied the duke, with so low a salutation that it seemed almost a mockery; “that I have not the honor of being your majesty’s subject. It was the Emperor Henry III., of Germany, who first conferred the duchy of Lorraine on my ancestor, Gerald of Alsace. I received the duchy from my father by inheritance, in the same way as, by the grace of God, my son will inherit it from me—just as your majesty will bequeath the kingdom of France to the dauphin.”

“Do you know,” said Henry, smiling sarcastically, “that your words inspire me with a fear I never yet thought of?”

“Indeed! What may that be, sire?”

“That one day Lorraine may declare war against France.”

The duke bit his lip, but nowise daunted, he replied:

“That is not probable, sire; but if ever it should happen that I should have to defend my principality against your majesty, I swear to you that it would be but on the ruins of my last fortified town, that I would sign so disastrous a treaty as your majesty has consented to sign with Spain.”

“You forget yourself, my lord!” said the king, in a tone of authority.

“Sire,” said Guise, “allow me to say to your majesty what I think, and what all the nobility worthy of the name, think of this treaty of peace. Sire, the power of the Constable de Montmorency is said to be such, that he could in a moment of necessity mortgage one-third of the kingdom, if he chose. Sire, without any more urgent necessity than that of getting out of prison, where his time hung heavy on his hands, my lord of Montmorency has forfeited one-third

of your kingdom. For I hold as a portion of your kingdom, the territory of Piedmont, which cost the country more than forty millions, besides a hundred thousand of her soldiers. For I hold, also, as your kingdom those magnificent cities of Turin and Chamberry, which the king your father had organized as French cities. For I hold as your kingdom all those transalpine towns in which so many of your subjects have established themselves, and founded French families, in what were formerly Italian cities, and where now French is spoken as fluently as at Tours or Lyons."

"And," replied Henry, "to whom do I give all these possessions?—to Margaret, my sister, the daughter of my father."

"No, sire; you have given them to Emmanuel of Savoy, your most bitter enemy, your most redoubtable antagonist—for once married, the Princess Margaret is no longer the daughter of her father; she is the wife of her husband, she is the Duchess of Savoy. And you will see that, no sooner will the new duke re-enter his possessions, than he will destroy all you have established; and all that France has achieved, with so much blood and glory, will be for ever lost—as will for ever be the chance of re-conquering the Duchy of Milan. And what afflicts me more than all, is, that all these favors are conferred on the lieutenant of Philip of Spain, your most mortal enemy. Once master of the Alps, and commanding all its passes, the King of Spain will be at the gates of Lyons—Lyons, which was in the centre of your kingdom, but which has now become a frontier town."

"There is nothing to fear on that score, my dear cousin, for in reality, Emmanuel-Philibert exchanges the service of the King of Spain for ours. The sword of the lord high

constable is already promised to him, on the death of Montmorency."

"It was probably for that reason," said the duke, bitterly, "that Emmanuel took it from Montmorency at St. Quentin! But I am wrong," continued Guise, impressively; "these are matters to be treated more seriously. Ah! Monsieur de Savoie is to succeed Montmorency! A foreigner is to be high constable of France! Have a care, sire! That sword was once before in the hands of a foreigner, the Count de St. Pol; you remember how he used it! Louis XI. and the Duke of Burgundy signed a treaty of peace, just as your majesty is about to do; and one of the conditions was, that St. Pol should be lord high constable. I refer your majesty to the *Memoires of Philip de Commines*, to see with what treachery he rewarded the king for his favors."

"As you mention the *Memoires of Philip de Commines*, cousin, I also will refer you to them, so that you may see how the count, in his turn, got rewarded for his treacheries by the king. He was beheaded, was he not? And so, I swear to do, as did King Louis, at the first symptom of rebellion or treachery of Emmanuel-Philibert. But there is no cause to fear. The Duke of Savoy is noble, brave, and will be ever grateful. We have retained in the midst of his possessions the Marquisate of Saluzzi, in order that the Piedmontese may remember that once they were conquered by France. In favor of a daughter of France we have returned all their possessions, on both sides of the Alps, in order that they might be ever more obedient and devoted to the crown of France.

"Besides," added the king, "if you reflect, my lord duke, you will find that it was an act of tyranny and usurpation for my father to take possession of the dominions of the late Duke of Savoy, and that therefore, if there were no other

motive than that of relieving the soul of my honored father, it would be my duty, as a son and christian, to make this restitution to Emmanuel-Philibert."

The duke bowed.

"Have you nothing to reply?" said the king.

"If the interest of the moment so absorbs your majesty, as to lead him to accuse his father of tyranny, it is not for me, who hold the King Francis I. to have been a just and great monarch, to speak to King Henry II. As you have judged your father, so will your father judge me; and as I take the judgment of the dead to be the most infallible, I appeal from the living monarch to the dead king."

Then, turning towards Titian's magnificent portrait of Francis I., which now ornaments the gallery of the Louvre, but which then hung in the queen's apartments, he exclaimed,

"Oh Francis I! You, who received the honors of knighthood from Bayard; you, whom to distinguish above all other monarchs, we call *le roi chevalier*; you were too fond of sieges and battles, and too devoted to your kingdom of France, not to be still watching what is passing here. You know all that I intended to do; but, alas! I am forced to inactivity, for the sake of a peace, which, when the treaty is signed, will have cost us more than would thirty years of reverses. My sword, as lieutenant-general of the kingdom, is no longer of any use. But it shall not be said that this peace was signed whilst Guise was still in command. Therefore, to you, who first gave me my sword, I, who never surrendered it to an enemy, surrender it—to you, who so well know its value."

Then, unbuckling his sword, he hung it on the frame of the picture; and bowing to the king, withdrew from the apartment—leaving the king furiously angry, the cardinal astounded, and Catherine triumphant.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PEDDLERS.

By the side of these two ambitious parties, which divided the court of France, and under the pretext of its welfare worked for the aggrandizement of their own houses and the destruction of their rivals, there was another party. One full of poetry, truth, and love—devoted to the arts, and animated by virtue, grace, and refinement. This party consisted of the Princess Elizabeth; of the widow of Horace Farnese, Diana d'Angoulême, Duchess de Castro; of the youthful couple we have just perceived at M^{me}. de Valentinois', and of the Princess Margaret, the sister of the king and now the affianced bride of Emmanuel-Philibert.

Around this charming group fluttered, like butterflies round flowers, all the poets of the day. Ronsard, DuBellay, Jodele, Daurat, Remy, Belliau, the grave and learned Amyot, the translator of Plutarch, the preceptor of the Prince Charles, together with the Chancellor de l'Hôpital, the private secretary of the Princess Margaret.

These were the intimates, and had access at all hours of the day; but their special time and place of meeting was at the patroness, the Princess Margaret's, after her dinner,—that is, about two o'clock in the afternoon.

The great news of the day had also had its effect upon some of the individuals of this coterie—the bird of peace, as it swept over them, had shed smiles upon some and tears on others. To the Dauphin Francis and his bride, alone, it was a matter of indifference. To the handsome young widow of Horace Farnese, Diana de Castro, this treaty brought a young and handsome husband, rich, and of a noble house. But the Princess Margaret had been more highly favored than all, in this distribution. After sixteen years of disappointment and secret love, she was at length to be united to the object of her early affections. What she had scarce dared hope for, had become a certainty—for the principal condition of this treaty gave her hand to the Prince of Savoy, now one of the greatest captains of the age. The Princess Margaret, therefore, was supremely blessed.

Very different was the fate of the poor Princess Elizabeth. She had early been affianced to the young Prince Don Carlos of Spain. He had sent her his portrait, and she had learned to love him—whilst he would gaze with rapture on the miniature which she had sent him in exchange—when the death of Mary Tudor changed the whole aspect of her fate.

Philip of Spain, having failed in his intention to espouse Elizabeth of England, determined to ally himself to the house of Valois. When the treaty was drawn up to be signed, he ordered two words in it to be changed. Instead of “the Princess Elizabeth, who shall espouse Don Carlos,” he caused it to read, “who shall espouse Philip II. of Spain.” A trifling change; but what an influence did it not exert on the lives and destinies of the personages affected by the change!

This young girl of fifteen, instead of espousing a young and handsome prince of seventeen, full of chivalry and love,

was doomed to marry a king who had never known youth—a man morose, suspicious, and fanatical—the slave of ceremony and conventionality—who, instead of plays, balls, and tournaments, would give her, as a pastime, an occasional *auto da fê!*

The different personages of whom we have been speaking, had just risen from table, and all, entering the withdrawing-room of the Princess Margaret, seemed absorbed in their various reflections. Margaret sat by an open window, with a bright beam of sunlight shining on her golden tresses. Elizabeth, seated at her feet, was resting her head pensively on her aunt's knees. Madame de Castro, half buried in an enormous high-backed chair, was reading Ronsard's poems. Whilst Mary Stuart, seated at a spinnet, that venerable grandmother of the piano, was playing an Italian melody, to which she had adapted some words of her own composition.

Suddenly the Princess Margaret, who had been for some time gazing upwards, was attracted by a scene which was passing in the court-yard, on the quay leading to the Seine.

"What is the matter?" said Madame Margaret, in that voice which all the poets of her day have celebrated, and which was always gentler when she spoke to her subordinates than when she addressed her equals.

Another voice pronounced a few words, which could be heard alone by the Princess Margaret, as she leaned out of the window.

Mary Stuart, finishing her song, turned towards the princess, to inquire in her turn, what was the matter.

"My dear niece," replied the princess, "I beg you to ask the dauphin's pardon for the breach of etiquette I am about to commit."

"Oh, my dear aunt!" exclaimed Francis, "we all know what charming fancies you take into your head, and should

be ready to excuse them, even if you had not a right to do as you please in your own apartments."

"What have you done, madame?" said Madame de Castro, languidly lifting her eyes from her book.

"I have given permission to two peddlers to come up here and show us the rare treasures contained in their packs, which they say they will only disclose to us. One sells jewelry, and the other brocades."

"Oh," exclaimed Queen Mary, clapping her hands like a child; "I am so glad! There are such beautiful jewels in Florence, and such magnificent brocades in Venice!"

"Suppose we go and fetch Madame de Valentinois?" said Madame de Castro.

"No," said the Princess Margaret, "let us first choose two or three of the most beautiful things as presents with which to surprise the duchess, and afterwards send the peddlers to her."

"You are always kind and considerate," said Diana de Castro, with a smile.

The princess, then turning to Elizabeth, said,

"And you, my child, will you not smile on us?"

"Why should I smile?" said the young princess, whilst the tears started into her eyes.

"To please those who love you."

"I do smile on those who love me, but I weep to think that I must leave them."

"Come, sister," said the dauphin, "take courage. Philip II. is not so terrible as he has been described—nor is he old, as you always seem to think him. He is only thirty-two—exactly the age of François de Montmorency, who is about to marry my sister Diana; and you see she does not complain."

"I should not complain either," replied the princess,

“if I were about to marry one of these peddlers; but I must complain at having to marry King Philip.”

“Come,” said Queen Mary, going up to her, and wiping her sister’s eyes with her handkerchief; “it will amuse you to see all these beautiful things. Only, let me wipe your eyes, that you may look at them.”

The Princess Elizabeth embraced the young queen, and replied,

“If amongst all these brocades, there should be one of black and silver, I claim it for my wedding dress.”

At this moment the door opened, and two men in the garb of peddlers, each with his pack, appeared on the threshold.

“Did your highness desire these men to come into your presence?” inquired the groom in waiting.

“I did.”

“Come in, my good friends, but do not forget in whose presence you are,” said the attendant.

“Never fear,” replied the youngest of the peddlers, a fine, handsome young man, with a brilliant complexion and a red beard. “’Tish not the firsht time we have been in the presence of prinshes and prinshesses.”

“Oh, ho!” said the dauphin, “there is no occasion to ask where they came from.” And, going up to the Princess Margaret, he added in a whisper, “they are, perhaps, ambassadors in disguise—sent before the treaty is signed, to see if their duke was not deceived when he was told that you were the most charming princess in the world.”

“At any rate, they are my future subjects, and as such I shall treat them.” Then turning towards the peddlers, she said.

“Come in, my friends, come in,”

The peddler who had already spoken, entered first, and

his companion followed after. The latter was a man of about thirty-two years of age, and of an admirable stature, with dark eyes and beard, and who, despite his coarse apparel, displayed an air of distinction.

As the Princess Margaret beheld him, she started. So apparent was her emotion, that the younger peddler exclaimed,

“ Oh, madame ! what is the matter ! ”

“ Nothing,” replied the princess ; “ but seeing your companion rather embarrassed in opening his box, I was going to help him.”

“ Oh, never mind him ! He’s rather awkward, but he’ll do very well—won’t you, Beppo ? ”

“ Are you Italians ? ” inquired Margaret.

“ Si, signora,” replied the peddler with the black beard.

“ Where do you come from ? ”

“ From Venice, by way of Florence, Milan, and Turin ; and having heard that there were about to be great festivities in Paris, to celebrate the marriages of the princesses, we resolved to bring our merchandise to the palace. I was told that several of the princesses spoke Italian like their own language.”

“ There is one,” replied Margaret—“ my niece, Mary—who knows all languages, and who speaks that of Dante and Petrarca like her own.”

“ And ish there no fine prinshess who can speak Shavoyard ? ”

“ I do not speak it,” replied the Princess Margaret ; “ but I am learning it.”

“ But,” exclaimed Mary, in the purest Tuscan that had ever been spoken, from Pisa to Arezzo ; “ you have promised to show us wonders, and we are all impatience.”

“ Nonsense ! ” said the dauphin, “ you don’t know any

thing of Italian charlatans, my dear Mary. They brag a great deal, but have very little to show. Come, friend, open your pack; for the longer you keep us waiting, the more difficult we shall be."

"What says the prince?" inquired the peddler with the dark beard.

The Princess Margaret repeated in more courteous terms, what the dauphin had said.

"I am waiting," he replied, "until that young lady, who seems so melancholy, shall draw near: for precious stones are very efficacious in drying the tears in the eyes of beauty."

"Come, Elizabeth," said the dauphin, "or Diana will die with impatience."

Elizabeth approached, and leaning her head on her brother's shoulder, looked listlessly on.

"And now," said Francis, yawning; "prepare to be dazzled."

At this moment the peddler opened his box; and much as the dauphin and princesses were accustomed to jewels and precious stones, they were literally dazzled at what they beheld.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WEDDING DRESSES AND DIAMONDS.

As the princesses gazed on the diamonds, sapphires, rubies and pearls, displayed in the four compartments of the box before them, it appeared as if some magic power had suddenly opened one of the veins of Goleonda to their astonished eyes.

The princesses looked at each other, asking themselves whether they were rich enough to pay for the contents of the Italian peddler's pack.

"Well, François," exclaimed Mary Stuart, "what do you say to this?"

"I say nothing," replied the dauphin; "all I can do is to admire."

The peddler appeared not to understand what the dauphin was saying; but, as though he had divined the conversation which had preceded his entrance, or as if he were aware of the influence exercised by Diana de Poitiers on all present, he said:

"Let us begin, by thinking of the absent. Such a thought is doubly dear to those we love."

At these words the peddler, plunging his hand into the

box, produced a diadem on which all gazed with admiration.

“ Here,” said the peddler, “ is a diadem which, though simple, appears to me worthy of the person for whom it is destined, from the beauty of the design and the workmanship. You see it consists of three crescents interlaced, like a true lover’s knot. In one of the spaces is Endymion sleeping, while, in the other is seen the goddess Diana, descending in her diamond car to gaze on him as he sleeps. Does not one of the illustrious princesses in whose presence I now am bear the name of Diana ? ”

Diana de Castro eagerly advanced towards the peddler, forgetting his rank—so dazzled and enchanted was she with the admirable work he held in his hand.

“ I am called Diana,” said she.

“ Well, then, illustrious princess, here is a diadem which by order of Cosmo de Medici, was designed and executed by Benvenuto Cellini. Thinking I might dispose of it to advantage in the court of France, where I knew there were two beautiful Dianas, I bought the jewel in Florence. Do you not think, madame, it will well become the marble brow of the Duchess de Valentinois ? ”

“ Oh ! ” exclaimed Diana, her eyes glistening with pleasure ; “ how delighted my dear mother will be ! ”

“ Diana,” said the dauphin, “ tell her that it is her children, Francis and Mary of France, who give it to her.”

“ Since your royal highness has pronounced two such illustrious names,” said the peddler, “ you must allow me to offer to your notice the objects I had prepared for yourself and your young bride. Here is an amulet of pure gold, containing a piece of the true cross. This amulet, designed for Leo X. by Michel-Angelo, was executed by Nicoli Braschi, of Ferrara. The rubies set in it at the top, just over

the division destined to contain the sacred wafer, was brought from the Indies by the great traveller, Marco Polo. This splendid jewel, this amulet beyond all price, was intended for the young queen of Scotland. Possessing this, she will be constantly reminded, in the country of heretics over which she reigns, that there is but one true faith, and that it is better to die like the Saviour, on the cross, of which she has a portion, than to swerve from the Holy Catholic religion, even though the triple crown of Scotland, England, and Ireland, should be the reward of such apostacy."

Mary Stuart had already extended her hand to take this beautiful specimen of papal magnificence, when her husband arresting it, said :

"Have a care, Mary! This amulet must be worth a king's ransom."

The peddler might have said, "a king's ransom is not much, when, like Francis I., your gracious father, he does not pay it." However, he merely replied, "I bought it on credit, and can give it to your highness on the same terms."

And so the amulet was put into Mary Stuart's hands, and she, immediately taking her prize to a small table, knelt down before it, not to pray to it, but to admire and examine it at her leisure. Francis was about to follow her, when the peddler, turning to him, said :

"May I request your highness will deign to examine this poniard, which I hoped would suit your taste?"

With an exclamation of admiration, the dauphin snatched the poniard from the hands of the peddler, as Achilles did the sword from the hand of Ulysses.

"This admirable dagger was made for Lorenzo de Medicis, a most pacific prince, whom many have tried to assassinate, but who never killed any one. It was sculptured by Ghirlandajo, whose workshop is on the Ponte Vecchio of Flo-

rence. A portion of the handle is said to have been designed by Michel-Angelo, when only fifteen. Lorenzo died before the poniard was finished, and for sixty years it remained in the possession of Ghirlandajo. Wanting money at the time that I was in Florence, he offered it to me. I purchased it for a trifle. Take it princee, it is a mere nothing, for I shall only charge you with the expenses of my journey, in addition to the original price.

The princee, taking the poniard, drew it from its sheath, and in order to try whether the shining blade was worthy of the handle, he placed a gold piece on the table at which Mary Stuart was kneeling, and with a hand firmer and stronger than could have been expected from his appearance, pierced it through and through with the sharp point of the dagger.

“Look!” said he exultingly, to the peddler; “could you have done as much?”

“Princee,” replied the pedler, in a humble tone, “I am but a poor pedler, and little versed in the pastimes of kings and princees.”

“Oh,” replied the dauphin, “but you look to me as if you could, in an emergency, make as good use of the sword and dagger as the best of us. Try to do what I have done; and if you break the blade it shall be at my cost.”

“If your highness desires it, I will try,” replied the pedler, with a smile.

“Let us see,” said Francis, feeling in his pocket for another gold piece.

But whilst he was looking for it, the pedler drew from the leather purse which hung at his girdle, a quadruple of Spain, about twice the thickness of the rose-noble pierced by the young prince, and placed it on the table.

Then, taking the dagger, apparently without the slightest

effort, the peddler not only pierced the piece of money, but also the oaken table on which it stood.

Leaving the prince to examine the piece of money, which had been struck exactly in the middle, as though it had been mathematically measured, the peddler returned to his jewels.

“And for me,” inquired the Duchess de Castro; “have you nothing for me?”

“Pardon me, madame, here is an Arab bracelet of great value and most original design. It was found in 1535, in the harem at Tunis, by the Emperor Charles V., of glorious memory. I bought it of an old condottière, who was in the service of the emperor at the time, and I had laid it aside for you. But if you do not like it, madame, you see you have plenty of other things from which to choose.”

Diana saw, indeed, that they were far from having exhausted the traveller's box. But the bracelet was so beautiful, so rich, and so original, that the lovely widow did not for an instant wish to exchange it, but thought only of whether she had the means of paying for it.

There remained now but the Princess Elizabeth and the Princess Margaret to satisfy; but the former, plunged in thought, appeared indifferent to all around; whilst the latter awaited with patience, preoccupied by a conviction which had taken possession of her mind.

“Madame,” said the peddler, addressing the betrothed of the king of Spain, “although I had selected something for your highness, you appear so indifferent to all these sparkling stones, that I fear I shall never succeed in divining your taste. Will it please you, choose for yourself?”

Elizabeth, roused from her reverie, said, looking around her:

“Is it to me you are speaking? What did you say? What do you wish?”

Then Margaret, taking a necklaee composed of five rows of pearls, terminated with a diamond clasp of a single diamond as big as a hazel-nut, said :

“ We wish, my dear little niece, that you should try how this necklaee will become your white throat—or rather, how your throat will set off the necklaee.” With these words, she elapsed the necklaee around her niece’s throat, and pushing her towards a little Venetian glass, bade her see whether the pearls or her skin were the whitest.

But the princess, never turning her eyes towards the mirror, passed on and resumed her place, sadly and silently, by the window.

Margaret gazed at her with a melancholy smile, and, turning away with a sigh, she perceived that the eyes of the peddler were also fixed on the princess with a look of tender concern.

“ Alas ! ” murmured the princess, “ there are no jewels that can brighten that darkened spirit ! ” Then, turning to the peddler, she added, cheerfully, as though to banish thought :

“ And I—have I alone been forgotten ? Is there nothing for me ? ”

“ Princess,” said the peddler, “ on my way hither I was fortunate enough to encounter the Prince Emmanuel-Philibert. Knowing that I intended to obtain admission to your highness, he commissioned me to lay at your feet this girdle, which his father Charles III. presented to his mother, Beatrice of Portugal, on their wedding day. As you see, it consists of a golden serpent, enamelled with blue. In its mouth it sustains a chatelaine, from which depend five golden keys. They are the keys of Turin, Chamberry, Nice, Vercelli, Villeneuve, and Asti, emblazoned with the arms of these cities, which are the most precious jewels of the ducal crown. With

each of these keys you will open a closet in your palace in Turin, on the day of your entrance into your capital, as Duchess of Piedmont and Savoy. After such a present as this, what could I offer you that would be worthy of your notice?—unless, perhaps, some of these brocades and silks, which my comrade will display to you.”

Then the second peddler, advancing and unbuckling his pack, unrolled before the princesses a collection of scarfs from Smyrna, Algiers, and Tunis, which seem to have been embroidered by the rays of the sun of Africa and Turkey. Then came an assortment of the rich gold and silver brocades, which Paul Veronese throws over the shoulders of his doges and duchesses of Venice, and which, falling in heavy folds around them, sweep the marble steps of the palaces or churches where they stand. Then came numerous pieces of satin, brought from the east, on which the patient industry of the Hindoos and the Chinese had embroidered in colors even brighter than the dazzling hues of their native vegetation, a whole world of fantastic fruits, flowers, birds and idols.

All these beautiful things were soon distributed amongst the princesses, who with the eagerness which a woman of every rank displays in matters of dress, selected the colors and designs most favorable to their style and their beauty. The peddler with the fair complexion and red beard met with as many customers as his companion.

Now, there was nothing more to be done but to pay the bill. Each purchaser had already thought of an endorser. Diana de Castro intended to have recourse to her mother, the Duchess de Valentinois; Mary Stuart to her uncles, the Guises; the dauphin to his father, Henry II.; Madame Margaret alone relied on herself; whilst the Princess Elizabeth

took no more interest in the payment than she had done in the purchase.

But, as each was preparing to settle, the peddlers declared that it would be impossible for them to fix the price of all these articles without referring to their books, and that, therefore, the payment must be delayed till the next day.

This suited all parties. Permission was therefore given to the peddlers to return at the same hour the next day; and packing up their boxes somewhat awkwardly, with many salutations they took their leave of the august assembly.

During these preparations, the Princess Margaret had left the apartment, and the peddlers looked for her in vain. But when they reached the ante-room, a page, touching the Italian peddler on the shoulder, signed to him to deposit his pack on the oaken bench, and to follow him.

The peddler obeyed, and was proceeding along a corridor, when a door opened, and he stood face to face with the princess Margaret. At the same moment the page disappeared.

“Do not be surprised,” said the Princess Margaret, replying with a smile to the astonished look of the peddler. “Fearful that I might not see you to-morrow, I have taken this opportunity of giving you the only payment in my power for your invaluable present.”

Then, with that easy grace for which she was proverbial, Margaret extended her hand towards the peddler. Taking it in his, with the courtesy of an accomplished gentleman, he dropped on one knee and pressed it to his lips—resigning that white hand with a sigh, which Margaret interpreted in her favor, but which in reality was a tribute to another.

“Madame,” said the peddler, after a moment’s pause; “does your highness know on whom you confer so signal a favor?”

“ My lord,” replied Margaret, in a voice trembling with emotion; “ it is now seventeen years since I entered the castle of Nice, and was presented by the duke Charles to his son, as his future wife. From that hour I have considered myself the affianced of the prince Emmanuel-Philibert, and have waited with full trust in the goodness of heaven, for the moment it should please to unite us. God has rewarded my confidence, and has made me, not only the proudest but the happiest princess on earth.”

Then taking from her neck the chain of rubies and gold she wore, and passing it round that of Emmanuel-Philibert, she disappeared through the door by which she had entered.

The princesses waited in vain for the peddlers; they did not return—till at length it was concluded that these peddlers had been sent by Emmanuel-Philibert with his wedding presents. But as the Princess Margaret kept her own secret, none divined that the peddlers were the prince in person, with his favorite Scianca-Ferro.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHAT WAS GOING ON IN THE CHATEAU DES
TOURNELLES, AND IN THE STREETS OF
PARIS, IN THE MONTH OF JUNE, 1559.

ON the 5th of June, in the year 1559, a splendid cavalcade, consisting of ten trumpeters, a king-at-arms, four heralds, a hundred and twenty pages, and forty men-at-arms, issued from the royal palace of the Tournelles, situated near the Bastille; and, proceeding along the Rue St. Antoine, followed by a vast concourse of people, stopped in front of the Hotel de Ville.

Then the trumpets sounded three times, leaving time between each blast for the people to come to the windows, and to assemble around them. When every window was filled, and the square densely crowded with a gaping and curious populace, then the king-at-arms, unfolding a long parchment to which were appended the royal seals, cried three times:

“Oyez! oyez! oyez!”

After which in a distinct voice he read:

“In the name of the king:

“After a long and cruel war, our gracious sovereign, by

a treaty with the belligerent powers, has obtained for France the blessings of peace. This peace, cemented by the closest alliances between the sovereign powers, is a boon for which the people should be joyous and grateful. The people of Paris are therefore invited to show their love for the king, by celebrating with joy and festivity the royal marriages about to take place.

“Namely—the marriage of the high and mighty Prince Philip, the most catholic king of Spain, with the high and mighty princess Elizabeth, the daughter of our magnanimous prince, Henry II., the most Christian king of France, our most gracious sovereign.

“Also, the marriage of the most high and mighty prince, Emmanuel-Philibert, duke of Savoy, with the most powerful and excellent princess, Madame Margaret of France, Duchess de Berri, only sister of our sovereign lord and master, the most Christian king of France.

“In consideration of which solemn events, it has been decreed that a tournament shall be held in Paris, in which all qualified may display, in harmless fight, their skill and prowess.

“The lists will be opened to all those princes, noblemen, and gentlemen, qualified to enter the lists with his most Christian majesty, the prince Alfonso d’Este, the Duke of Ferrara, the Duke Francis de Guise, lord high chamberlain of France, and the Duke of Nemours, all bearing the order of knighthood. This tournament will be held on the sixteenth day of June, and will continue till the combatants have accomplished all their feats of arms.

“The first tilt will be on horseback, and will consist of four encounters of the lance, and one for the liege lady.

“The second will be with swords, either on foot or on horseback, at the pleasure of the masters of the field.

“ The third tilt will be on foot, and will consist of three rounds with lances, and six with swords.

“ If, in running a tilt, a cavalier should strike the horse instead of the rider, he shall be put out of the lists, nor allowed to re-enter them, unless by permission of the king.

“ The knight who shall have demeaned himself best, and who is declared the conqueror, shall receive the prize to be awarded by the judges.

“ All knights intending to take part in this tournament, must strike the shield suspended at the head of the lists, to designate in which of the combats he intends to enroll himself. He must also be inscribed by a king-at-arms in the books of the herald’s court.

“ Every combatant intending to take part in this tournament, is bound to send his shield, with his arms thereon engraven, to the king-at-arms, that it may be suspended in the lists, three days before their opening.

“ In case of failing in any of these conditions, knights will not be admitted to the list, unless by special permission.

“ Witness our hand and seal, which we append to this veritable proclamation.

“ HENRY by the grace of God king of France.”

This proclamation having been read, the four heralds cried three times, in a loud voice :

“ Long live King Henry, God save the king ! ”

To this cry the whole procession responded ; and the crowd taking it up, rent the air with their shouts.

From the Hotel de Ville, the procession proceeded to read, with the same ceremonies, the same proclamation on the place Notre Dame, and so on in all the public squares and places, until it returned by the Boulevards to the Palais des Tournelles, where the king now kept his court.

A week previously, Henry II. had been apprised that the duke d'Alba, destined to act as proxy for King Philip in the marriage ceremony, was advancing towards Paris with a suit of three hundred Spanish noblemen. The king at this news, had immediately evacuated his palace of the Louvre, leaving it to the Duke d'Alba and his other royal and noble guests, and had taken up his residence at the Palais des Tournelles, where he intended to remain during the festivities of the marriage.

The lord high constable, with an appropriate suit, was sent forward to meet the Duke d'Alba. They met at Noyon. Then Montmorency, after much courteous greeting, accompanied the representative of Philip II. to Paris. At St. Denis the Duke d'Alba and the Constable were met by another envoy from Henry II., the Marshal de Vielleville, superintendent of his majesty's household.

Having halted for rest and refreshment at St. Denis, the Duke d'Alba continued his road to Paris; and on a beautiful morning of the last day of May, he made his entrance into the French capital, accompanied by a magnificent suite of more than five hundred princes, grandees, gentlemen, and pages.

According to the orders he had received, M. de Vielleville made the Duke d'Alba cross all Paris, from the *barrière* St. Denis to the *Barrière des Sergens*, and then conducted him and the most distinguished of his suite to the Louvre, whilst the less noble guests he lodged in the Rue St. Honoré.

When, some days after the proclamation we have thought proper to give entire, as a curious historical document, was read on the Place du Louvre, the shouts of "Long live King Henry!" which every where followed it, were pronounced in both Spanish and French.

And now, before proceeding farther, we will, for the better comprehension of what is to follow, describe the immense preparations that had been made for this tournament, which was the last glimpse of the chivalrous days in France, and which was so important in its results.

A large platform had been raised on the whole space which divided the Palais des Tournelles from the Place de la Bastille. It was two hundred feet long and one hundred and fifty wide.

The flooring of this platform was covered with canvas, striped azure and gold, the colors of the shield of France. On either side arose galleries for the ladies and gentlemen of the court. At the end nearest the Palais des Tournelles were three large Gothic gates, something in the form of triumphal arches. The centre gate was in advance of the others, leaving a space behind it for the four champions, so that they might be ever ready to reply to the challenges that should offer.

These four champions were :

1. The King of France ;
2. The Prince of Ferrara ;
3. The Duke de Guise ;
4. The Duke de Nemours.

In front of this gate was a barrier guarded by men-at-arms, and which was only opened at the words *Caissez aller !* pronounced by the masters of the field.

From four high poles floated the banners of the champions, and their shields were appended to the same poles, six feet from the ground. Each knight was obliged to come and touch, with his lance, the shield of the adversary he desired to encounter—signifying at the same time whether it was a simple joust in honor of the ladies, or a hand-to-hand encounter, that he contemplated.

At the other end of the platform, a large hall had been constructed, in which the knights could arm themselves and change their accoutrements. Here, too, was a barrier guarded as at the other extremity, only to be opened at a given signal.

Yet, spite of all these precautions, it might happen that an inveterate enemy of the king would penetrate into the lists, and striking the shield with the steel of his sword, instead of with his lance, defy the king to mortal combat—a challenge which Henry would never have had the moral courage to refuse.

The lists were enclosed by a balustrade of wood, of three feet high, covered with the same stuff which formed the tent.

In the four corners were small compartments for the masters of the field, who could on special occasions be challenged, like the champions.

There were as many judges of the field as there were champions. These were :

1. Emmanuel-Philibert, Prince of Savoy ;
2. The Lord High Constable Montmorency ;
3. Monsieur de Boisy, Master of the Horse, habitually called M. le Grand, from his title of Grand Ecuyer ;
4. M. de Vielleville, Chamberlain and Marshal of France.

The divisions appropriated to each of these judges were surmounted by their arms. Montmorency and Emmanuel-Philibert occupied the corners facing the palace, and M. de Boisy and De Vielleville the two opposite ones.

Above the gates where the champions stood, was the balcony destined for the queen and princesses. It was covered with cloth of gold, and contained a throne for the queen, and arm-chairs covered with velvet for the princesses.

All this was now ready ; and the king, impatient to commence, visited each day the lists he had erected.

CHAPTER IX.

NEWS FROM SCOTLAND.

ON the 20th of June, a procession not less magnificent than that of the Duke d'Alba, left Brussels and entered Paris by the same gate as that by which King Philip's envoy had made his entrance.

At the head of this cavalcade was Emmanuel-Philibert, the affianced husband of Madame Margaret of France, Duchess de Berri.

At Ecouen, the procession had halted; and here, the prince, leaving his suite, proceeded with his page to a house in which, from the door being immediately opened, it appeared they were expected.

This house, situated out of the town, was half hidden amidst a grove of trees. After an absence of two hours, the prince returned to his escort. His step was slow, and his voice subdued, and his melancholy smile of resignation, indicated a painful sacrifice, accomplished after great struggles.

Those about him remarked that the page, who habitually never left him, was now no longer with him.

"To horse, gentlemen!" said the prince, "we are expected in Paris. Let us on!"

Then, mounting his horse, and turning with a sigh to-

wards the place where the house he had visited was situated, as though once more to take leave of what it contained, Emmanuel started at full gallop for Paris.

At St. Denis, Emmanuel-Philibert was met by his former prisoner. Although he received his compliments with cordiality and courtesy, still Emmanuel-Philibert spoke with the languor and abstraction of a man overwhelmed by some great sorrow.

Between Paris and St. Denis, the prince was met by a procession of two hundred Piedmontese gentlemen, all dressed alike, in black velvet, wearing gold chains around their necks, and headed by the Count de Raconis. These gentlemen had come out unbidden to testify their respect for their duke; and having saluted him, took rank amongst his suite.

The king, apprised by messengers stationed at the barrier for that purpose, waited to receive the duke on the steps of the Palais des Tournelles—having Madame Margaret at his side, and behind him Queen Catherine with her five children. The ladies in waiting, with the gentlemen of the court, crowded in the background.

Emmanuel, stopping his horse within ten paces of the king, vaulted from the saddle, and advancing towards him, attempted to kiss his hand; but Henry extended his arms, saying,

“ Let us embrace, my dearest brother ! ”

He then presented him to the Princess Margaret. The princess wore a robe of scarlet velvet, slashed with azure—her only ornament being the girdle and chatelaine presented to her by the Italian peddler at the Louvre.

At the sight of the prince, Margaret became the color of her dress. She extended her hand to him; and he, tak-

ing it, did as the peddler had done, when she had given him her hand—kneeling on one knee, he raised it to his lips.

He was afterwards presented to the queen, and the princes of the blood, and the princesses of the court. Each one, to do him honor, wore the magnificent present he had made them under his humble disguise.

Mary Stuart alone did not wear her present; it was deposited in her oratory, of which it was one of the most precious and valued relics. It was from this scapulary that, thirty years after, was taken, on the night which preceded her execution in the castle of Fotheringay, the holy wafer sent by the pope from Rome for her last communion.

In his turn, Emmanuel-Philibert presented the gentlemen of his suite to the king.

There were the Counts Egmont and Horn, both of whom had so distinguished themselves, the one at St. Laurent, the other at Gravelines; both of whom were destined to die together, some few years later, on the same scaffold, condemned by the very Duke d'Alba who was now impatiently waiting to press their hands in friendship.

Then came William of Nassau, a fine young man of about twenty-six, already wearing the melancholy aspect which gave him the name of William the Taciturn.

The Duke of Brunswick, the Counts of Schwartzenberg and Mansfeldt, succeeded each in their turn, none however destined to misfortune or untimely deaths.

But, as if fate had determined to unite on this solemn occasion all whom it had joined in a bond of fatality, a cavalier was seen approaching at full gallop. Seeing the goodly assembly which stood on the entrance to the palace, the rider stopped his horse and stood till the king should notice him and command him to advance.

The king, on perceiving him, exclaimed,

“What! Lorges! Lorges! the captain of our Scotch guard, who had gone to the assistance of your mother, my dear Mary. Is that you, my good friend? Are you come, on this day of general rejoicing, to bring us good news from Scotland? Come,” continued Henry, “you are just in time for the feasting; only, remember the brand! You know it is dangerous to play with fire!”

It may not be uninteresting to our readers to inform them to what the king alluded.

At a sham siege of the Hotel Saint Pol, attacked by Jacques Montgomery, the grandfather of Lorges de Montgomery, had been so unlucky as to burn Francis I., who defended the fortress, with the brand of an extinguished torch. The scar this accident had left, had been the origin of the fashion of wearing long beards and short hair, which fashion lasted thirty years.

Montgomery advanced eagerly towards the king, little dreaming that a more dreadful catastrophe awaited him and the son of Francis I., than had befallen his grandfather.

His news was excellent, politically speaking, but disastrous as regarded the interests of the church. Elizabeth had not attempted to invade the kingdom of her sister queen; but the interior of Scotland was a prey to intestine dissensions.

John Knox had arisen, and religious zeal was spreading the flames of persecution far and wide. This dreaded name was as yet unknown in France, when Gabriel de Montgomery pronounced it for the first time.

Of what interest could such an obscure name be to Francis I., with his Duehess d'Etampes, his Leonardo da Vinci, his Andrea del Sarto, his Benvenuto Cellini, his Rosso, his Primatrice, Rabelais, Budé, and Marot? Or what could it be to Henry II., with his Duchess de Valentinois, his Philib-

bert de Lorme, Montaigne, de Beze, du Bellay, Amyot, le Chancelier de l'Hôpital, Jean Goujon, Serlio, Germain Pilon, Catherine de Medicis, and her maids of honor? What could it matter to this elegant, frivolous, brave, skeptical court, in whose veins were mingled the French and Italian blood,—whose lives were a compound of history and romance, chivalry and intrigue,—who pretended to unite in their lives the virtues of Athens, Rome, and Paris—what mattered it to these kings, princes, princesses, noblemen, sculptors, painters, authors, architects, living in a blaze of glory, art, and poetry,—what mattered it what events were transpiring in a portion of the globe which they considered entirely out of the civilized world, inhabited by a poor, ignorant, and savage people? They looked upon this kingdom of Scotland as a mere province of France, but adding no more to its value than one of those fanciful ornaments which a queen adds to her chatelaine.

Should this corner of the earth rebel against its young king Francis, or its young queen Mary Stuart, would it not be easy to cross the water in a fleet of gilded vessels, like William the Norman when he conquered England, and make it kneel submissively at the feet of the daughter of James V.?

Gabriel de Lorges was destined to set the French people right with regard to Scotland and its condition. To the astonishment of Mary Stuart, he declared to her that her most dangerous enemy was not Elizabeth, Queen of England, but a poor apostate priest from the Church of Rome, called John Knox, the reformer. De Lorges had seen him, in the midst of a popular tumult, and he tried to impart to the young queen of Scotland the impression he had made on his imagination. He had seen him in the midst of that popular revolt, of which Knox himself thus speaks :

“I have seen,” said he, “the implement of Dagon* broken on the high road, and priests and monks flying as fast as their legs could carry them—their pastoral crooks forgotten, their mitres broken, their pontifical robes trailing in the dust, their breeches in rags,—black monks and grey,—flying like a flock of crows, happy to get into any corner—for never had such a panic been known in this generation of anti-christs.”

The man who could pronounce such a discourse as this, who could have raised such a tempest as he raised, must indeed be a Titan. John Knox was, in reality, one of those instruments in human form, sent by Providence, at all great crises, to work out a great end.

In Scotland he was called John Knox; in England Cromwell; in France the political reformers sent by fate, bore the names of Mirabeau and Danton.

John Knox was born in Mid-Lothian, in the year 1505, and was now fifty-four years of age. He was about to take holy orders in his youth, when the words of Luther echoed from Worms to Edinburgh. No sooner had John Knox heard of this exciting rebellion against the Church of Rome, than he began, with all the ardor of his nature, to preach against the pope and the mass. In 1552 he was appointed chaplain to Edward VI.; but, on the accession of Bloody Mary, he retired to Geneva in order to be near Calvin. When Elizabeth came to the throne, he had returned to Scotland, bringing with him thousands of copies of a pamphlet written by him at Geneva, entitled, “Why Women should not Govern,”—which was an open attack upon the regency of Marie de Lorraine, and on her daughter, Mary Stuart.

The tree of reform, which he had planted in Scotland, had

* It was thus that he characterized the crucifix.

grown during his absence, and now sheltered under its branches three-fourths of the inhabitants of Scotland. Scotland, in his absence, from a Catholic had become a Protestant country.

Such was the man whom Mary Stuart was told to fear. Yet, why should she fear? Scotland to her was still in the dim distance. Was she not the wife of the Dauphin of France, a young man of eighteen, and was not the king his father still in the prime of life? The worst that she could imagine was a reign of still twenty years for her father-in-law, and an existence of forty more for her husband. As yet, none of the Valois had died young. What did she want with that wild thistle, growing in the midst of rocks, called Scotland?—when she had in perspective the kingdom of France, with which (according to the emperor Maximilian) God, had he had two sons, would have endowed the younger.

There certainly was the horoscope of Henry II., which the constable had treated with such contempt, and which declared that Henry would be killed in a duel. The Count de Montmorency, too, bore that fatal mark which had so alarmed the astrologer of the Emperor Charles V., until he discovered that it threatened only a French prince.

But what probability was there, that one of the greatest princes of the earth should fight a duel, when Francis I. had refused to meet even Charles V. in single combat? What chance was there that Gabriel de Lorges, one of the most devoted of the king's servants, and who in the forest of St. Germain had once saved his life, should raise his hand against the king?

But neither predictions nor sorrow, nor misgivings, could affect the illustrious personages now met together, and to whom the great bell of Notre Dame was now announcing that all, even God, was prepared for the first of the royal

marriages—the marriage of Philip II. by his proxy, the Duke of Alba, with Elizabeth, whom the people called the Princess Elizabeth of Peace, because her marriage cemented the peace of the world.

CHAPTER X.

THE TOURNAMENT.

IT was on the 27th of June, 1559, that the great bell of Notre Dame, pealing from the venerable towers of Philip-Augustus, announced the marriage of the King of Spain with the daughter of the King of France.

The Duke d'Alba, with the Count d'Egmont and the Prince of Orange, represented, as we have said, the bridegroom.

When she reached the threshold of the church, the Princess Elizabeth's strength failed her. She tottered, and the Prince of Orange and the Count d'Egmont, those two men marked by fate to perish, one on the scaffold and the other by the pistol of Balthazar Gerard, were obliged to support her. Emmanuel-Philibert looked on her with profound pity and sympathy—a look of which Seianca-Ferro, who knew what the prince had left at Ecouen, alone of all present, comprehended the full meaning.

The ceremony being over, the wedding-party returned to the Chateau des Tournelles, where a great banquet awaited them. To this succeeded a concert, and the evening terminated in a ball opened by the young Queen of Spain, still

happy in the absence of her husband, to whom she was not to be united for some days.

Friends and enemies were here together—all hatred and division appeared forgotten. The two rival parties, however, kept aloof from each other. Montmorency was surrounded by his sons, Coligny, d'Andelot; the Duke de Guise with his brothers, the Cardinal of Lorraine, the Duc d'Aumale, the Count d'Elbauf, and the rest. The first party, however, were gay, joyous, triumphant; the latter, morose, menacing, and grave.

It was whispered that if one of the Montmorencys should encounter one of the Guises in the lists, there might chance to be a bloody duel, instead of a mock encounter. But the king foreseeing this probability, had forbidden both Coligny and d'Andelot to strike any other shield than his, or those of Jacques de Nemours and the Duke d'Este. The same commands had been laid on Damville and François de Montmorency.

The Guises had at first decided on not appearing at these festivities; but Catherine de Medicis had induced them to change this resolve, rash and imprudent, like all resolutions inspired by pride and anger.

At midnight the bride retired to her chamber, and presently the Duke d'Alba entered; and approaching the bed where the young princess lay, he placed his bare leg beside her, drawing the clothes over it; then, at the expiration of a few moments, he arose, and bowing to the queen, left the apartment. The marriage was thus considered consummated.

Early the next morning the whole court was aroused by the sound of trumpets, announcing the tournament, for which Henry was so impatient that he had not slept for thinking of it. Although the lists were not to be opened until after

breakfast, the king was by break of day in the stables examining his stud, to which Emmanuel-Philibert had just made a magnificent addition, of one hundred horses richly caparisoned.

At breakfast, the four champions, with the four masters-of-the-field, sat at a round table, in honor of King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table, and were waited on by Catherine de Medicis, Margaret of France, Mary of Scotland, and the Duchess de Valentinois.

This repast being finished, every one retired, to dress and to arm for the tournament.

The king on this occasion wore a magnificent armor of Milan steel, richly inlaid with gold and silver. His helmet, encircled by the crown, displayed on the summit a salamander with outspread wings.

His shield, similar to the one which hung in the lists, displayed a crescent on an azure sky, with the device—

Donæ totum impleat orbem.

The colors he wore were black and white, being those Diana de Poitiers had adopted at the death of her husband, Monsieur de Breze.

The Duke de Guise put on the armor he had worn at the siege of Metz. On it were still visible the marks of the five balls which had been repelled by the good steel. His cuirass, with the same five indentures, is now to be seen in the Museum of Artillery, in Paris.

His shield was azure, like that of Henry—only, on the blue of the heavens was a thin white cloud, veiling a golden star. The device was,

Présente mais cachée.

(Ever present, though hidden from view.)

His colors were white and scarlet, being, says Brantôme.

“the colors of a lady I could name if I chose, whom the duke served when she was a maid of honor at court.”

And owing to Brantôme's unusual discretion, we are forced to leave our readers in ignorance of the name of the lady who had won the heart of the proud Duke of Guise.

The Duke de Nemours wore a cuirass of Milan steel, being a present from the king. On his shield was painted a figure holding a bunch of flowers, representing either a cupid or an angel, it was difficult to distinguish which; with this motto:—

Ange ou amour, il vient du ciel.
(Love or angel, it comes from heaven.)

The duke had adopted this device, in remembrance of an adventure he had in Naples on the day of the Fête Dieu.

Passing along the street at the head of his company, there suddenly descended from a window of one of the palaces, on a wire prepared for that purpose, an angel, who presented him with a bunch of flowers. Hence his device:

Ange ou amour, il vient du ciel.

His colors were yellow and black, which, according to Brantôme, meant, pleasure and firmness. “And right was he to be firm and faithful,” adds the author of the *Femmes Galantes*; “for his mistress was the most beautiful woman of the court, and nowhere could he have found her equal.”

The Duke of Ferrara, a young prince as yet little known, but whose name has descended to us as that of the prince who shut up Tasso in a mad-house for seven long years, wore a Venetian armor. His shield represented Hercules tearing the Lion of Nemæ, with this inscription:

Qui est fort est Dieu.
(’Tis strength makes a God.)

His colors were red and yellow.

At twelve o'clock the doors were thrown open, and in an instant the places reserved for the ladies and gentlemen whose names gave them right of access to these festivities, were filled to their utmost capacity.

Next, the balcony arranged for the court, was occupied in its turn.

Madame de Valentinois was to give the prize on the first day. It consisted of a magnificent chain of rubies, sapphires and emeralds, beautifully set and linked together with golden crescents—a crescent being the arms of the Duchess Diana de Valentinois.

The second day the prize was to be given by the royal hand of Margaret of France. It was a Turkish battle-axe, inlaid with gold, and had been given by Soliman to Francis I.

The third day, being the grand day, Catherine de Medicis was to crown the victor, and present him with a sword, the handle of which was engraved and carved by Benvenuto Cellini.

At length, the hour for opening the lists arrived. The signal was given; and like a covey of birds, the pages entered the arena. There were twelve pages for each champion, forty-eight in all—each wearing the colors of their lords, in the richest velvets and satins, with plumed caps.

Then came four squires for each champion—their duties consisting in picking up the broken lances, and in assisting the combatants, if need should be.

Then followed the four masters of the field, armed at all points, their vizors down. They were on horseback, and their horses were armed, and covered with caparisons and trappings which swept the ground.

Each of these, taking his station, his wand of office in hand, remained immovable as an equestrian statue.

Now appeared at the gates the four trumpeters of the four champions, who sounded their trumpets to the north, south, east, and west.

When the last sound had ceased, another trumpet responded, and a knight appeared behind the opposite barrier, vizor down and lance in hand.

Round his neck was suspended the collar of the order of the Golden Fleece. This order, which he had received from Charles V., in 1546, at the same time as the Emperor Maximilian, Cosmo de Medicis, Albert of Bavaria, Emmanuel-Philibert, the Duke of Parma, Ferdinand Alvarez, and the Duke d'Alba, revealed Lamoral, Count d'Egmont. The feathers in his helmet were green and white, being the colors of Sabina, Countess Palatine of Bavaria, to whom he had been united five years before, at Spire, in the presence of the Emperor Charles V. and Philip II., and whom he loved faithfully to the hour of his death.

He advanced, managing his horse with a skill and grace which had acquired him the reputation of being the most accomplished equestrian in the Spanish army—a reputation on which Henry looked with a jealous eye, as he esteemed himself the best horseman in the world.

Advancing into the lists, he bowed his head low, and saluted the balcony where sat the queen and the princesses; and then, riding on, he touched with the handle of his lance, the shield of Henry II.

Then in the midst of a flourish of trumpets, he made his horse back in a straight line to the farthest extremity of the arena, and placed his lance in rest, on the other side of the barrier.

As it was what was called a courteous encounter, it was

usual not to aim any blows above the shoulder, and sedulously to avoid striking either the head or face.

Now Henry issued from the gate, armed at all points. Even if Henry had not been the king of France, the applause would have been as loud—so elegant, so manly, so handsome did he look, as he rode forth into the lists.

Having caused his horse to turn on his haunches, in order to salute the queen, he took his station with his lance in rest, like D'Egmont's.

Then the masters of the field, seeing that the combatants were ready, cried,

“*Laissez aller!*”

And the grooms threw open the barriers.

Then the two combatants, running full tilt, struck each other full in the breast. Both were too good horsemen to be thrown by the encounter, but the count lost a stirrup, and his lance fell to the ground, whilst that of the king was shivered in pieces.

The horses, as if stunned by the charge, stood still, trembling in every limb.

Then rushed into the list, leaping over the barrier, two squires—the one picking up and restoring his lance to the count, the other giving to the king a new one.

The two combatants again retired behind their respective barriers. Once again the masters of the field cried,

“*Laissez aller!*”

The trumpets sounded, and the knights again charged on each other.

This time both lances were broken. Henry was almost pushed on to the croup of his horse, and the count, losing both stirrups, grasped his saddle bow. But in an instant the king arose, the count let go the saddle, and both com-

batants, whom the spectators had expected to see rolling in the dust, were firm and erect in their seats.

Then, in the same way as before, the squires picked up the broken lances, and the combatants again retired behind the barriers, having received each a fresh and stronger lance.

This time the noble steeds, neighing and covered with foam, animated by the encounter and the music, seemed as impatient for the fight as their riders.

Again the trumpets sounded, and the court applauded, as, three hundred years later, they applauded Louis XIV., enacting the part of "the sun" in the ballet of the *Four Seasons*. Henry II., as the warrior of the middle ages, Louis XIV. as the mountebank of all ages, were the representatives, one of the days of chivalry in France, the other the days of gallantry.

"*Laissez aller!*" cried the masters of the field, for the third time; and on rushed the horses and their riders.

This encounter was still more violent than the other. The king lost one stirrup, but his lance was uninjured, whilst that of the count was broken to fragments. D'Egmont's horse, too, reared, and breaking the saddle girths, his rider, without even losing his stirrups, found himself with the saddle, on the ground. But as he fell still upright in the saddle, this accident served only to display his admirable skill and presence of mind as a horseman. Nevertheless, D'Egmont declared himself conquered, and surrendered to the king.

"Count," said the king, "you are the prisoner of the duchess de Valentinois; go and throw yourself on her mercy, for on her your fate depends."

"Sire," replied the count, "if I could have divined that such sweet slavery was in reserve for me, I would have

allowed myself to be taken the first time that I had the honor of engaging with your majesty."

"It would have been a great saving of men and money, sir count," replied Henry, resolved not to be outdone in courtesy; "for you would have spared me the disastrous days of St. Laurent and Gravelines."

The count bowed, and retreated to the steps of the balcony, where sat the Duchess de Valentinois; and kneeling at her feet, she bound his hands with a magnificent string of pearls.

The king, now requiring breathing time, left the lists to the second champion, the Duke de Guise.

The Duke de Guise's adversary was the Count de Horn, who ran the three tilts without any great disparity of skill with his opponent; but at the third tilt, with a courtesy equal to that of the Count d'Egmont, he confessed himself overcome.

Next came the turn of the Duke de Nemours. His adversary was a Spaniard, of the name of Ruy Gomez. At the first encounter, the Spaniard lost a stirrup; at the second he was pushed off the saddle on to the croup of his charger; and on the third, he was thrown to the ground. This was the only Spaniard who entered the lists, our neighbors on the other side of the Pyrenees not wishing to risk their reputation against adversaries whom they recognized as their superiors.

The Duke of Ferrara was challenged by d'Andelot. The struggle was pretty equal, but the brave defender of St. Quentin declared that he would rather encounter an enemy on the field of battle with a real army, than engage in fights for pastime, which seemed to him somewhat profane and irreverent, now that he was converted to puritanism.

He therefore declared to his brother Coligny that he

would take no farther part in the tournament—and he kept his word.

The first day's jousts terminated by an encounter of all four champions at once, against four assailants—Damville against the king; Montgomery against the Duke de Guise; the Duke of Brunswick against the Duke of Nemours; and the Count de Mansfield against Alfonso d'Este.

With the exception of the king, who obtained a slight advantage over Damville, the fight was equal on all sides.

The king, enchanted with his success, re-entered his palace in high glee, perfectly unconscious, as kings always are, of what was whispered around—that his success had been as much owing to the courtesy of his adversaries as to his own skill—especially in the case of the constable's son, Damville, Montmoreney being too old a courtier not to instruct his son what was due to a sovereign, even lance in hand.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CHALLENGE.

So impatient, on the next day, was the king to begin, that he advanced the hour of dinner, so as to be able to open the lists at mid-day.

About the time that the pleasures of the day were beginning, amidst the flourish of trumpets, with the ceremonies we have attempted to describe, a cavalier closely wrapped in a large cloak, which the heat of the day did not warrant, and wearing a broad-brimmed beaver drawn far over his face, issued from the courts of the Palais des Tournelles. He was mounted on an Arab, whose fleetness could be judged by the pace at which he started. As soon as he had cleared the crowd, which encumbered the streets surrounding the royal residence, he started at a pace which in an hour brought him from Paris to Ecoeu. Traversing the whole length of the town at the same rapid pace, the cavalier, who was Emmanuel-Philibert, stopped at the door of the same house, into which he had gone with his page on the day previous.

Before the door stood several mules, laden with baggage, and a horse ready saddled.

Emmanuel, rejoicing that he was not too late, threw himself from his horse, and entering the house, proceeded rapid

ly to a room on the first floor. Pushing open the door, he beheld a young girl with tearful eyes, fastening a travelling dress of the darkest and simplest material. Raising her head, she perceived the prince, and with a cry of joy rushed forward.

Emmanuel-Philibert received her in his arms, and tenderly embracing her, said :

“ Leona, Leona, is this what you had promised me ? ”

But all the young girl could say, through her sobs and her sighs, was the beloved name of “ Emmanuel,” oft repeated, with many an endearing epithet.

Emmanuel, still holding her in his arms, seated himself on a sofa ; and there, gazing at her pale features with ineffable tenderness, as she lay with her head leaning on his shoulder, said :

“ How happy am I, that some mysterious words in your letter—but that still more, a dream in which I beheld you in the habit of a nun, far, far off—and more than all, an irresistible instinct and presentiment—should have impelled me here to-day, or else I had not seen you again till my return to Piedmont.”

“ Or rather, Emmanuel,” replied Leona, in a trembling voice, “ you would never have seen me again.”

Emmanuel turned pale, and trembled from head to foot. Perceiving his emotion she exclaimed ;

“ Forgive me, Emmanuel ! forgive me ! I was wrong ! ”

“ Remember,” said Emmanuel, with great solemnity ; “ remember what you promised me. Did I not, in obedience to your entreaties, seduced by your magnanimous love and devotion, whilst your brother, whose life we had saved, and who has deprived me of more than my life ; did I not swear that I would consent to this marriage, which retrieves the fallen fortunes of our house ? Then, did you not swear to

me that you would be ever mine, and that, separated by my marriage, we should still, until death should release us from the promise, meet every year on the 17th of November, in that village of Olnaggio, where you, exhausted and dying, were found by me in the arms of your dead mother? How often have you not said to me: 'Emmanuel, I am yours by right, for the life you saved is yours, and yours only!' Do not forget this, Leona, which alone induced me to accept the sublime devotion which led you to sacrifice all to me—a devotion which makes woman far above the angels, who have neither love nor passion against which to struggle."

"Oh Emmanuel!" replied Leona, reviving at the voice of him she loved, "I am not wanting in courage or in devotion, but—"

"But," said Emmanuel, imprinting many kisses on those quivering lips.

"But oh, Emmanuel, my beloved, I am mad with jealousy!" and, straining her lover to her bosom, she burst into tears.

"Jealous, my own love! and of what?" replied Emmanuel.

"Oh, I am no longer jealous—here—here—in your arms, with your kisses on my lips, I feel that our love must be eternal, and will be my reward in heaven. Oh yes, my beloved, you can never love another as you have loved me!"

"My own love," said Emmanuel, "God, in giving me the heavy responsibility of a crown, sent me one of his angels—yourself, my Leona—to direct and guide me. We are not like others, however they may have loved. Our hearts have been united from our earliest years—devotion and sacrifice have bound us irrevocably to each other; separated or together, we can but belong to each other; we share the same thoughts, the same feelings, have the same aspirations. And if the bright summer of our former lives is changed to chill

winter, I feel that the flowers of the heart will bloom again, as the soil feels that the flowers of spring will again bloom on its surface."

"Yes, yes!" said Leona, "I again begin to hope."

"And now tell me, Leona, of what were you jealous, my child?"

"Oh!" murmured Leona, "there are but four leagues from here to Paris, and I have seen you but twice."

"You know, Leona," said the prince, "that all is festivity at the Palais des Tournelles—sad, sad fêtes for two hearts, mine and the poor young Princess Elizabeth's. But still, as I play a part in them, and that the kindness of the king summons me to him at every instant, I am forced to remain."

"Then how, being one of the masters of the field, Emmanuel, have you been able to come to me at the very hour of the tournament?"

"Oh," said Emmanuel, "I am at this very moment performing my duties in the lists—only, as the master of the field wears his vizor down, another is under mine, representing the prince of Piedmont and Savoy."

"Oh," exclaimed Leona, smiling for the first time, "Scimca-Ferro, is it not?"

"And so, my own beloved, burning with love, torn with anxiety, pursued by evil dreams and presentiments, I came here to find fresh courage in your arms, and again to make you swear you will be ever mine."

The few last words were murmured on the lips of his Leona—and, forgetful that these hours of joy and love were their last, they buried all jealousy and sorrow in each other's arms.

Leaving the lovers to exhaust to its dregs the chalice of their love, let us see what was passing in the palace of the Tournelles.

At the moment when Emmanuel-Philibert left the palace, leaving Scianca-Ferro to perform his functions in the lists, a messenger knocked at the gate of the palace and demanded Emmanuel-Philibert, stating his business to be with the prince himself.

Scianca-Ferro, who personated the prince, and was duly encased in his master's armor, assumed the helmet, and, placing himself in the shadiest corner of the apartment, ordered the messenger to be admitted.

A squire entered, habited in dark vestments, and bearing neither arms nor device of any kind by which he could be recognized.

"I have the honor of addressing the Prince Emmanuel-Philibert?"

"As you see," replied Scianca-Ferro.

"Here is a letter from my master," said the squire; "he merely wishes your consent or refusal to the proposition it contains."

Scianca-Ferro took the letter, opened it, and read the following lines:

"A man who has resolved upon the death of Emmanuel-Philibert, proposes to meet him in mortal combat, to-day, in the course of the tournament. The prince must abandon all ideas of quarter, should he be conquered, and his adversary, should he be worsted, demands no mercy. It is said that the Prince Emmanuel-Philibert is a great commander. If he is worthy of the name, he will accept this challenge, and obtain a safe-conduct from Henry II. for his adversary.

HIS MORTAL ENEMY."

Scianca-Ferrò read the letter without any sign of emotion.

“Tell your master,” replied he, “that his challenge is accepted, and that after the king has finished his jousting, he has only to descend into the arena and touch the shield of the Prince Emmanuel with his lance. This shield is to the right, on the same side as that of the constable; and I pledge my word that, if he is the conqueror, he shall depart in safety.”

“My master has sent a written challenge, and he wishes a written reply,” said the squire.

At this moment Monsieur de Vielleville entered, to see if the prince was ready. Scianca-Ferro, lowering his vizor, advanced towards Monsieur de Vielleville, saying,

“My lord, take this letter to the king, and beg him to write on it, ‘Granted,’ and to append his royal signature. ’Tis a matter that nearly concerns my honor.”

Scianca-Ferro wore the complete armor of the prince, which entirely concealed his light hair and his blue eyes. Monsieur de Vielleville, bowing, hastened to obey; for the hour for opening the lists was fast approaching. Five minutes after, he brought back the letter, with the word “Granted,” and the king’s signature below it.

Scianca-Ferro, without adding a word, presented the letter to the messenger, and then proceeded to take his place in the arena. He sent, however, for his sword and battle-axe; and, as he passed by the armorer’s, he desired him to sharpen the lances.

The trumpets sounded the signal; the heralds proclaimed that the lists were opened, and the jousting commenced.

The king ran the first tilt, breaking his three lances—the first against the Duke of Brunswick; the second against the Count de Horn; the third against the Count de Mans.

feldt. Then came the turn of the Duke de Guise, the Duke de Nemours, and the Duke of Ferrara. But, although all these champions distinguished themselves, the assembly were pre occupied with the duel which, it was whispered, was about to take place—the king not having had the discretion to keep the secret, although he had not mentioned the names of the parties. Every one knew, therefore, that before evening, blood would be shed in the arena which had only been prepared for holiday combats.

The ladies, although they shuddered, awaited perhaps more impatiently than the men, this moment of intense excitement. The king had not precisely said whether the combat would take place on the second or third day.

After the four tilts run by the four champions, without any signs of the duel, it was imagined that it had been a false report—and they prepared for the *mclée*, which usually terminated the amusements of the day.

The trumpets sounded ; but instead of the four trumpets of the assailants replying, one single bugle sounded a long, shrill blast.

A thrill ran through the assembly, and all bent forward to see what was to follow. Only two persons in the assembly knew for whom this note of defiance was intended—the king and Scianca-Ferro. But the king imagined that it was Emmanuel-Philibert who was to reply to it, and leaned forward to see if the prince was at his post.

Scianca understood his purpose, and saluted the king.

“ God speed you, brother ! ” said the king.

Scianca-Ferro smiled beneath his vizor, and lifted his head proudly.

But now all eyes were turned towards the opposite barrier, behind which appeared a knight armed at all points.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MORTAL COMBAT.

THE knight carried in rest a sharp lance. A long sword hung on one side of his saddle-bow, and a battle-axe on the other. His squire, who was behind him, carried two other lances, with sharp points, like that of his master. The knight wore a complete suit of black armor. The plumes on his helmet were black; his horse was black; and it was caparisoned and dressed in black. The sharp edge of his sword, and the sharp point of his lance, shone with intense brightness, relieved upon this sombre background. His shield bore no device, and on his helmet was no crest, to indicate even his country. The gold chain round his neck, and his golden spurs, revealed, however, that he had received the Order of Knighthood.

Advancing into the lists at a rapid pace, he proceeded to the foot of the queen's balcony; and then, veering round, he backed his horse to the barrier. Then, signing to his squire to advance, he gave him his lance. The squire, laying down those he held, approached the place of the Prince Emmanuel-Philibert, and struck with the sharp end of the lance, the emblazoned arms of Savoy, surrounded with the

motto—“*Spoliatus armæ supersunt.*” The iron, touched by the steel, sent forth a hollow sound.

The squire then said, in a loud voice, “Emmanuel-Philibert, duke of Savoy, in the presence of the king of France, in the presence of the princes, nobles, gentlemen, and barons, here present; before the queen, princesses, and noble ladies, who now see and hear us; my master here challenges you to mortal combat, without quarter or mercy; taking God to witness the justice of his cause, as well as all here present. And God defend the right!”

At these words a cry escaped the pale lips of Madame Margaret of France, who fell back and fainted in the arms of her attendants.

Then, after a moment's silence, the voice of him they thought Emmanuel-Philibert, was heard to say:

“Tell your master that I accept the challenge he has offered me, with all its conditions. With God for my judge, and this royal and noble assemblage for my witnesses, I am willing to stand the chance of the fight. And now, let God decide on which side is the right.” Then lowering his shield, he said, “bring me my lance!”

The squire obeyed, bringing three lances. Without pausing to choose, he took the nearest to him, and, tightening his horse's rein, leaped the barrier and entered the arena.

No sooner had he left his place as master of the field, than it was filled by another knight—King Henry in person, who honored the combatants by filling the prince's place.

Since the entrance of the black knight, a profound silence had reigned over the assembly. A slight murmur of admiration, only, was audible, when Emmanuel-Philibert had leaped the barrier with so much address. But it died away, like a voice in a church or a vault, which commencing

heedlessly in a high tone, sinks into a whisper under the sacred influence of the place.

And now the grooms withdrew the barriers, and the king cried,

“ *Laissez aller !* ”

The three other judges were silent—leaving to the king alone the right of giving the signal for this mortal combat.

Scarcely had the fatal words been pronounced, when the two adversaries rushed upon each other. They met in the middle of the lists. Each had directed his aim differently. The black knight had directed his lance at the head of his adversary ; while the other had aimed at the breast. The black knight's blow carried off the ducal crown from the helmet of his adversary ; whilst the lance of Scianca-Ferro was shivered in pieces. The encounter had been so violent, that he had lost a stirrup ; but he recovered himself almost immediately—and, turning their horses, they rode back to the barriers.

Scianca-Ferro now chose a fresh lance, as did also the black knight, he having broken the point of the first on the crest of the duke's helmet. No exclamation of applause had followed this encounter—for, by the manner in which it had commenced, all felt that they were indeed witnessing a mortal combat.

All being once more in readiness, the king again pronounced the words, “ *laissez aller !* ” and, like the noise of thunder, the adversaries rushed upon one another. So terrific was the encounter, that both horses recoiled upon their haunches. Both lances were shivered, the lance of the black knight slightly damaging the armor of the prince, whilst a portion of that of Scianca-Ferro remained in the cuirass of his adversary.

For an instant it was supposed that the black knight was

wounded ; but the lance, although it had penetrated the steel of the armor, had been arrested by the scales of the gorget. The knight, seizing the portion of the lance, strove to draw it forth ; but, having failed in his attempt, was obliged to have recourse to his squire, who after much difficulty succeeded.

Nothing decisive had yet been done—yet, what little advantage there was, was in favor of the Duke of Savoy.

The queen began to take heart. At every tilt, Madame Margaret closed her eyes, opening them only when the daughter would tell her that there was no blood spilt.

As for the king, he was in the height of his glory—witnessing, as he did, a veritable combat. Seeming totally to lose sight of the possibility of his sister being a widow before she was a wife, he would exclaim, every now and then,

“ Courage, brother ! The victory will be yours ! ”

And now, other lances being taken, for the third time the king cried,

“ Laissez aller ! ”

This time the black knight's horse rolled in the dust before the shock of his adversary's lance. Scianca-Ferro, losing both his stirrups, was nearly thrown ; but, recovering himself, he with admirable presence of mind, with one hand seized his battle-axe, whilst with the other he drew his sword.

Scarcely had the black knight touched the ground, before, with a rapidity and dexterity equal to that of his adversary, he snatched from the saddle of his fallen charger his battle-axe and sword.

Each of the combatants then took one step back, taking time to thrust their axes into their belts. Then, leaving to their squires the task of removing their horses from the arena,

they rushed upon each other with the same fury as if the combat had but now begun.

If the attention and silence of the assembly had been thus far profound, they were still more so at the sight of the drawn swords—at which weapon it was known Emmanuel-Philibert excelled. No astonishment, therefore, was manifested at the blows which were showered upon the black knight. But it was impossible to refrain from admiring the manner in which they were parried—each of the adversaries giving, as it were, blow for blow. The blades flashed so rapidly that they dazzled the eyes of the spectators, as the rapid and incessant blows drew a stream of fire from the steel. At last Scianca-Ferro aimed such a blow at the head of the black knight, that it must have been fatal, had he not parried it with his shield, which was severed in two.

His arm still encumbered with the pieces of the broken shield, the black knight retreated a few steps, and threw them from him. Then, seizing his sword with both hands, he rushed with all his force upon his adversary. The duke received the blow on his shield, which resisted unharmed, while the sword of the black knight was broken in pieces, leaving only the handle in his hand.

Scianca-Ferro uttered an exclamation of satisfaction—for he could at last bring into play that weapon in the use of which he was so renowned, and which had conferred upon him the name of *Split-iron*.

The black knight throwing away the remains of his sword, seized also his axe. From this moment, skill or dexterity was no longer of avail—it was a mere question of strength. Struck like an anvil by a hammer, the black knight lost all power of defence, until, at length, after repeated blows, he began to retreat. Scianca-Ferro, too, stepped back a few paces; and making his axe describe a circle swifty round his

head, he struck the black knight a terrific blow full on the vizor. At this blow, the black knight threw out his arms, staggered a few paces, and fell. Then Scianca-Ferro, bounding like a tiger, rushed upon him with his dagger. Then was heard a cry from all the ladies:

“Quarter, Duke of Savoy! Mercy, Duke Emmanuel!”

But Scianca-Ferro, shaking his head, exclaimed:

“No mercy for a traitor! No quarter for an assassin!” and proceeded to seek, amidst the joints of the armor, an aperture for the point of his dagger.

But just at this moment a voice exclaimed:

“Stop! In the name of God, stop!” and a knight on horseback rushed into the arena, leaped from his horse, and seizing Scianca-Ferro in his arms, threw him far over the head of his fallen foe. Then, to the cries of terror which had been uttered, succeeded exclamations of surprise; for he who had thus precipitately entered the arena, was the Duke Emmanuel-Philibert.

“Scianca-Ferro, Scianca-Ferro! What have you done? Did I not tell you that this man’s life was sacred to me?”

“Sacred or not,” replied Scianca-Ferro, “by the memory of my mother, I swear, he shall die by my hand!”

“Happily,” said Emmanuel, unbuckling the vizor of the black knight; “it will not be this time, at any rate.”

Although when his vizor was removed, his face was but one mass of blood, he had received no mortal wound, and had only fainted.

“My lords,” said Emmanuel-Philibert, turning to Vielleville and de Boisy; “you who are judges of the field, I place this young man under your protection. Let him, when he revives, be allowed to retire unmolested, and without revealing his name or the cause of his hatred. This I entreat you

to do, and, if necessary, I will ask his majesty to give orders that it shall be done."

The squires now carried off the wounded man—whilst Scianca-Ferro, unbuckling his helmet, on which the ducal crown no longer shone, threw it from him with disgust.

Then, and not till then, did the king appear to understand.

"Do you really mean to say it was not you, brother Emmanuel?" said he.

"No, sire," replied Emmanuel-Philibert, "but, as you see, it was one worthy of the armor which he wore."

He then turned to Scianca-Ferro, and held out his hand to him. Scianca-Ferro, growling like a bull-dog that has been forced by his master to give up his hold, somewhat reluctantly gave his hand.

The applause, repressed, first by terror, and then by surprise, now burst forth on all sides, in deafening acclamations. The ladies rose, and the princesses waved their handkerchiefs—whilst Margaret pointed to the Turkish battle-axe which was to be the prize of the victor of the day.

All this, however, did not console Scianca-Ferro, that the bastard of Waldeck had again escaped from his hands. Even while being conducted, between Emmanuel and the king, to receive the Turkish battle-axe from the hands of the Princess Margaret, he murmured,

"Let me only get hold of him a third time, and I'll ask nobody's permission!"

CHAPTER XIII

THE PROPHECY.

THE occurrences of the twenty-ninth of June remained a mystery to the spectators, and even to those more intimately connected with the duke. How did it happen that the Duke of Savoy was absent, when he was supposed to be present? how did it happen that his foster-brother had taken his place? and especially, how did it happen that, at the very time he was representing him, he should have to sustain a mortal combat?

To all these questions, Emmanuel declined to reply; and even when the king manifested his desire to be initiated into the causes of these events, the prince requested him not to insist on his replying.

Madame Margaret would alone have had a right to insist on an explanation:—but she was so well satisfied with seeing her much-loved Emmanuel safe, that all she felt on the occasion was a profound gratitude and affection for Scianca-Ferro.

Emmanuel-Philibert had sent three times to inquire after the wounded knight.

The first reply to his inquiries was, that he was still insensible; the second, that he had come to himself; and the third, that he had mounted his horse.

In reply to the Duke of Savoy's messages, the knight had said, in a tone of defiance :

“ Tell the Duke Emmanuel, that we shall meet again.”

Then, without revealing his name, he departed, followed by his squire, who was as unknown as himself.

The exciting episode gave additional animation to the pleasures of the evening. The king, hearing on all sides animated discussions of the combat, and eulogiums of the brave Scianca-Ferro, and the magnanimous Duke of Savoy, said to the fair ladies with whom he conversed :

“ What can I give you to-morrow, that can equal in interest what you have had to-day ? All will seem tame to you, that is not in earnest.”

Little did the king know that he was destined, on the morrow, to become the hero of so terrible an event, that for a time all others would be forgotten.

The day was ushered in by many forebodings and evil omens.

As early as eight o'clock in the morning, Catherine de Medicis had sent to request that the king would receive her.

“ To receive her ! ” exclaimed the king ; “ 'tis I who will go to her. Is she not my liege lady and my queen ? ”

At this answer, Catherine sighed and shook her head ; for she felt that, in reality, it was not she who was queen, or the liege lady of Henry II., but Diana de Valentinois.

When the king entered her apartment, he was alarmed at her pallor.

“ Are you ill, madam ! ” said he ; “ or has your majesty passed a bad night ? ”

“ I am ill, my dear lord,” replied Catherine ; “ ill from fear and anxiety.”

“ Good heavens ! What can you have to fear ? ”

“ The event of yesterday, sire, has revived within me some most painful recollections. Does your majesty remember the predictions made at your birth ? ”

“ To be sure I do ; though not distinctly. I believe my horoscope threatened me with some great peril.”

“ It did.”

“ That I should be killed in a duel, was it not ? ”

“ It was, sire.”

“ Then you see that the horoscope was wrong, for it was not I who was threatened, but my brother-in-law, Emmanuel ; and, thank heaven ! he has escaped—though I confess I cannot exactly tell how, or how it happened that his valorous Scianca-Ferro (the demon is well-named,) was there in his place.”

“ My lord,” said Catherine, “ the stars do not menace our brother Emmanuel. On the contrary, they promise him a long and prosperous life ; whilst to us —— ”

Catherine’s voice trembled, and she could not proceed.

“ My dear lady,” replied Henry ; “ I have no faith in predictions, prophecies, horoscopes, or nativities ; but I have always heard say that from the prophecy once made to a king of antiquity, *Œdipus* by name, at the moment of his birth, to that made to *Louis XII.* on his marriage with *Ann of Brittany*, it was useless to seek to evade them. Spite of all our efforts and precautions, what is to happen, will happen, do what we may. Let us, therefore, trust in God and the protection of our guardian angel, nor let us anticipate events.”

“ Sire,” said Catherine, “ would you care very much not to enter the lists to-day ? ”

“ Not to enter the lists to-day, madam ! ” exclaimed the king. “ Why, do you not know that I have determined to encounter my three champions, *M. de Guise*, *M. de Ne-*

mours, and M. de Ferrara? This will give me an opportunity of remaining the whole day in the field, so that, as this is probably our last tournament, I may enjoy it to the full."

"Sire," said Catherine, "your majesty is, I know, at liberty to do as you please; but to go against the stars, is tempting providence, since the stars are the celestial alphabet."

"Madam," replied the king, "I thank you heartily for your solicitude on my account; but unless I have some positive proof that there is danger at hand, I shall change nothing in the day's programme."

"Sire," replied Catherine, "I have nothing more positive to offer than my anxieties and presentiments. All I could wish is, that some one having more influence over you than I have, would ask you the favor you have just refused me."

"No one has more influence over me than yourself, madam," replied the king; "and be assured, madam, that what I have refused to the mother of my children, I would grant to no one."

With these words, Henry took one of the queen's hands—hands renowned for their beauty,—and holding it in his, added,

"And now, madam, do not forget that it is you who are the queen of this day's tournament, and that I expect to be crowned by your fair hand."

Catherine sighed, and turning her eyes towards heaven, said, in a tone of resignation,

"Let us say no more, sire. After all, it may perhaps be some other prince of your house that the stars threaten; yet I should prefer a real combat to this tournament, for the prediction alludes positively to a tournament, and not a real encounter."

Quem Mars non rapuit, martis imago rapit.

(He whom Mars has spared is felled by the image of the god.)

But Henry was already too far off to hear the quotation Catherine murmured through her half-closed lips.

Either from indisposition or anxiety, Catherine did not appear at the dinner, but was early in her place in the royal balcony. It was afterwards noticed that she wore a violet velvet robe, slashed with white satin, which was royal mourning.

When about to arm, the king sent for the lord high chamberlain, M. de Vielleville, to assist him, M. de Boisy, whose office it was, being absent.

Monsieur de Vielleville silently assisted the king to put on his armor; but when about to give him his helmet, his courage failed him, and he heaved a profound sigh.

"God is my witness," said he, putting the helmet down, "that I never performed any service for your majesty with so unwilling a hand."

"Why so, my old friend?" inquired Henry.

"Because for the last three nights I have dreamed that evil was about to befall you, and that this last day would be fatal to you."

"Ah!" said the king, smiling; "I know what's coming. Vielleville, you have seen the queen this morning, have you not?"

"Not this morning, sire, but last evening."

"And she has confided all her fears to you, has she not?"

"Sire, it is three days since I had the honor of conversing with her majesty, and then, not on the subject to which your majesty alludes. However," added the marshal, piqued to see his forebodings unheeded; "your majesty can follow your own judgment, for there is none to oppose your will."

"Shall I tell you why you are afraid, Vielleville?" said the king, laughing. "It is because your commission as Marshal of France is not yet signed, and as yet you have

only my royal word for it. Never fear, my old friend; unless I am killed on the spot, you may rely that, if I can hold a pen, I will not forget you, even though I should only be able to put my initials instead of my whole name."

"If your majesty chooses to take it all as a joke, I have only to ask pardon for having referred to the subject. But be assured, it will not be my commission I should first think of, if any thing should happen to your majesty; but the misfortune itself."

With these words Vielleville placed the helmet on the king's head. At this moment Coligny, all armed to his head-piece, which a page bore after him, entered the apartment.

"Your majesty must excuse me if I intrude, but I understand there is to be a change in the programme of to-day. I hear that the whole is to terminate by a general *melée*. If so, I have a few words to say to your majesty, of the utmost importance."

"No," replied the king, "there is to be no *melée*; but, nevertheless, tell me what you have to say, all the same."

"Sire," said Coligny, "will your majesty allow me to ask you a question, which, believe me, is no ways dictated by curiosity. Against whom does your majesty intend to run your tilts?"

"My dear admiral, it is no secret, and you really must be very much absorbed in your theological questions, not to know that I am to encounter Guise, Nemours, and the Duke of Ferrara."

"And no one else?"

"Not that I know of at present."

"Then," replied the admiral, "I am satisfied, I have no more to fear, and am perfectly happy."

"Then, my dear admiral, all I can say is, that you are

very easily satisfied, and that it takes very little to make you happy." Then, turning to Vielleville, the king added: "Come, Vielleville, we shall be late—let us to the field."

The trumpet sounded, and the sports began.

The first tilt, between the king and the Duke de Guise, was admirable. At the third encounter, however, the Duke de Guise was unhorsed, and the day remained to the king—though the fault was attributed, not to the duke, but to his horse, which was restive.

The next tilt was against the Duke de Nemours. Before commencing, the king had the girths of his horse looked to, and chose another lance—for Nemours was celebrated for his skill and address. He sustained his reputation in this encounter; but the king did not lose his. However, after some time, the Duke de Nemours' horse fell with his rider, and the king was again the conqueror.

Again the trumpets sounded, and the king prepared to meet the Duke of Ferrara. Expert as was Alfonso of Ferrara in these tournaments and games, of which he was so fond as to half ruin his duchy in festivities of this description, he was not a rival the king need dread. Catherine, therefore, began to take heart, and to think that her fears had been vain: for the astrologers had told her, that if the king went through this day, the last day of June, without an accident, he would live to a green old age.

Now the Duke of Ferrara engaged with the king; but spite of all his efforts the king was again victorious in this encounter, as he had been in the two previous.

This did not suit Henry. It was as yet but two o'clock; and, giddy with applause and success, he did not desire to abandon the field.

"By the mass!" exclaimed the king, "but this is too easy!" and as he glanced around, his eye lighted on Mont-

gomery, who, all armed to his helmet, was standing within the barriers of the assailants. "Eh, Montgomery!" cried he; "Guise told me that he had a rude encounter with you the other day. Put on your helmet, whilst I swallow a glass of wine, and come and break a lance with me."

"Sire," replied Montgomery, "it would be with great pleasure, but that there are no more lances here."

"If there are none on your side, there are plenty on mine," replied Henry; "and I will send you three, that you may choose. *Hola, there, François!*" said he to one of his grooms; "take three lances to M. de Montgomery, and see that they are good sound ones!"

Having given this order, the king rode back within the gates; and alighting from his horse and taking off his helmet, he called for wine.

As he held the cup in his hand, the Duke of Savoy came in.

"What ho, there! a goblet to the duke, that he may pledge me. I will drink to the health of Madame Margaret, and he shall drink that of my lady love."

"Sire," replied Emmanuel, "I am ready to pledge you; but first let me deliver a message to you."

"Say on," said the king, "I am listening."

"I come from the queen, sire, to entreat that you will tilt no more to-day. All is happily over, and she most ardently desires you will grant her request."

"Nonsense!" said the king; "did you not hear that I sent three lances to Montgomery? Tell the queen that I will run this one more tilt in her honor, and that this shall be the last."

"Sire," insisted the duke.

"A goblet! a goblet, for the duke! and for the health

we are about to drink, I will restore to him the marquisate of Salluzzi. But if you love me, do not let me lose this last chance of breaking a lance!"

"You will break no more lances," said a voice behind the king.

Henry turned, and beheld the constable—

"Ah, is it you, my old bear? Are you thirsty, too, that you are come here, instead of remaining at your post?"

"Sire, my post was in the lists as long as the lists were open: but they are now closed, and therefore I am no longer master of the field."

"The lists closed?" said the king; "it wants yet an hour of the time."

"Sire, the queen—"

"Oh, you too, are sent by her?"

"Sire, her majesty entreats——"

"A goblet to the lord high constable!" The constable took the cup, and said in a morose tone,

"After the treaty of peace which I negotiated, I had flattered myself that I was a successful ambassador; but your majesty shows me that I had too good an opinion of myself."

"Come, Emmanuel! come, constable! Fill your goblets! Here's to the health of Margaret—the pearl of all pearls. Here's to the queen! Go, my lords, and tell her that I drank to her health, and that I run this last tilt in her honor."

There was nothing more to be said. The two unsuccessful ambassadors bowed and withdrew.

"Come, Vielleville! my helmet!" cried the king.

But instead of Vielleville, it was Coligny who appeared.

"Here I am again, sire."

“ Welcome again, my dear admiral; and since you are here, do me the favor to fasten the buckles of my gorget.”

“ Before I do it, allow me one word.”

“ Not before, but after, if you please.”

“ After, it will be too late for what I have to say.”

“ Say on, then, as quickly as you can.”

“ Sire, do not encounter Montgomery, to-day!”

“ You, too! Admiral, you, as a Huguenot, should have no vain superstitions. I wonder at you. It is all very well for the queen, who is a Catholic, and an Italian to boot.”

“ Sire, what I have to say, is of the gravest importance, for it comes from a great man, now dead and gone.”

“ Oh! oh! Some message from the Emperor Charles V., which you forgot to give me when you came from Brussels?”

“ I did not forget, sire, to deliver the message, but gave it indirectly to your majesty when I advised him to send M. de Montgomery to Scotland.”

“ And very good advice it was. He has been to Scotland, and has done me good service.”

“ I am aware of it; but did your majesty know my reason for advising that Montgomery should be sent to Scotland?”

“ No, I did not.”

“ Well, then, it was because the Emperor Charles V. was told by an astrologer, that M. de Montgomery bore on his brow the mark of one who was to be fatal to a prince bearing the *fleur-de-lys* in his coat of arms.”

“ Nonsense!”

“ The late august emperor charged me to tell you this; but as I held M. de Montgomery to be one of your majesty’s most devoted servants, and therefore presumed that he was destined to injure you involuntarily, I merely advised your

majesty to send him from you—fearing, also, to injure him in your esteem. This morning, having still this prediction before my eyes, I came to your majesty to inquire if there was to be a *melée*, in which case I should have spoken as I have just done. But now, that by an inconceivable fatality, after the lists are closed, your majesty himself challenges Montgomery, I come, in the hope of prevailing on your majesty to alter his determination. Remember, sire, and I call heaven to witness that I do but repeat the words of the Emperor Charles V., that great and wise prince: Monsieur de Montgomery is destined to be fatal to a prince of your house; and you, sire, are the head of the house, and the most conspicuous, and the greatest.”

Henry, placing his hand on the admiral’s shoulder, gazed at him for a moment, and then said,

“Admiral, had you told me this this morning, it is probable I should not have challenged Montgomery; but now, if I withdrew, it would look like fear. God knows, I fear nothing on earth; but nevertheless, it is too late. I thank you, admiral, and shall not forget your warning, come what may. But it is too late—I must break a lance with Montgomery.”

“Sire,” said a man-at-arms, entering, “Monsieur de Montgomery, all armed, awaits your pleasure.”

“My pleasure is, that you buckle on my helmet, and then bid the trumpets sound; for I come!”

The man-at-arms obeyed; but when he returned to the field, the trumpeters, thinking the lists closed, had left the platform on which they had stood. The man-at-arms added that it would take a quarter of an hour to find them and bring them back.

“Never mind,” said the king, “that would be too long. We will run our tilt without blast or trumpet.”

Then, mounting his horse, the king appeared at the barrier, exclaiming :

“ Monsieur de Montgomery, are you ready ? ”

“ Yes, sire,” replied Montgomery, appearing at the opposite barrier.

“ My lords,” said the king, “ we await the signal.”

“ Laissez aller ! ” cried the Duke of Savoy and the Constable ; and in the midst of the most profound silence, the two knights rushed on each other, and meeting half way, shivered both their lances in pieces.

Suddenly, to the great astonishment of the spectators, the king lost both his stirrups, let fall his bridle, and clung to the neck of his horse, who, thus freed, pursued his way around the arena ; whilst Montgomery, in great consternation, let fall the butt end of the lance he had still in his hand.

Monsieur de Vielleville and Monsieur de Boisy, certain that there was something the matter with the king, rushed into the arena, and seized the king’s horse by the bridle.

“ In the name of God, what ails your majesty ! ”

“ Vielleville ! ” gasped the king, “ you were right—this is a fatal tilt ! ”

“ Your majesty is, then, wounded ? ” inquired the chamberlain, in great anxiety.

“ To the death, Vielleville ! to the death ! ” replied Henry, in a voice scarcely audible.

It was too true. Montgomery’s lance, having encountered the joints of the helmet, had broken the vizor, and penetrated the left eye to the brain.

The king, now with a supreme effort, exclaimed :

“ Let Montgomery go unmolested ; it was no fault of his.”

With these words, he fainted ; and the spectators, rend-

ing the air with their cries, fled, as if a thunderbolt had fallen in their midst—exclaiming, as they rushed in all directions,

“The king is dead! The king is dead!”

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DEATH-BED.

MONSIEUR DE BOISY, and M. de Vielleville, having raised the king, laid him, all armed, on his bed. It had been impossible to take off his helmet—the lance being still in the wound.

The surgeons in attendance on the field stood round; but, spite of the entreaties of the queen and the royal family, that they should assist the king, none dared venture to remove the head of the lance from the wound.

“Let Ambroise Paré be sent for—he alone dare proceed, here,” said one of the surgeons.

“Let messengers be sent in every direction for Master Ambroise Paré,” said the queen.

Master Ambroise Paré was, at this period, at the height of his fame. He was president of the corporation of surgeons, and had been for the last seven years attached to the king’s person.

At length Ambroise Paré was found in the garret of a poor mechanic, who had fallen from the roof on which he was working.

“Here is Master Ambroise Paré!” exclaimed the pages at the door; and there appeared on the threshold of the

room a man of about forty or forty-five, his manner grave and sedate, his brow full of intellect and thought.

As he entered, the crowd made way for him, and every eye followed him as he proceeded to the king's bedside—for if it were possible that the king should be restored to life, Ambroise Paré was the only man in France to do it.

We say in France—for out of France there was another surgeon, whose reputation exceeded Ambroise Paré's—whom he himself recognized as his master. This man was Andrea Vesale, the surgeon of his majesty, Philip II. of Spain.

Ambroise Paré showed no sign of emotion as he advanced; only, at the sight of the wound, he turned slightly pale.

“Ah, Master Ambroise Paré!” exclaimed Catherine de Medicis, “do not forget that it is the King of France whom I confide to your care!”

“Madam,” replied Ambroise, who had already extended his hand towards his patient; “in the state in which is now your august husband, the real King of France is his successor. I beg that you will allow me to be permitted to treat him as though he were the last soldier of the army—it is his only chance of life.”

“Oh, then, there is a chance of restoring him to life, Master Ambroise?” asked the queen.

“I cannot tell, madam,” replied the surgeon.

“Oh, sir!” said the queen, “you can save him, for all things are possible to a man of your ability.”

Ambroise Paré seemed not to heed this compliment; but, leaning with his left hand on the upper part of the vizor, with the other he drew forth the head of the lance, with as steady a hand as though he had been operating on

the most obscure soldier in the army. At this the patient shuddered slightly, and heaved a deep sigh.

"Now," said the surgeon, "take off the king's helmet and the rest of his armor, as quickly and as gently as possible."

Monsieur de Vielleville attempted to unloose the helmet, but his hand trembled so exceedingly that it was impossible for him to proceed.

"Let me do it," said Ambroise, putting him aside; "mine is the only hand here that dare not tremble."

Gently raising the king's head, he with a steady and unhesitating hand, unbuckled the king's gorget, and took off his helmet. The rest of his armor was comparatively easy to remove, and the task was accomplished without the patient's giving any signs of life.

The king being now undressed and laid in his bed, the surgeon proceeded to examine the wound.

Having first carefully looked at the stump he had withdrawn from the wound, he found that it had penetrated about three inches into the head, and that from what adhered to the lance, it had touched the commissures of the brain.

Ambroise then, with a silver scalpel probed the wound, and ascertained that it was more terrible even than he had supposed. He then applied to the orifice a preparation of pounded charcoal, then the substitute for lint—terminating the dressing by a bandage saturated in ice water, which was to be changed every quarter of an hour. When the ice-water touched the surface of the skin, a slight contraction passed over the face of the patient.

Ambroise showed signs of satisfaction at this proof that all sensibility was not extinct; and turning towards the royal family, he thus addressed the queen:

"Madam," said he. "I can prognosticate nothing with re-

gard* to the ultimate result of the king's state. All I can positively say is, that there is no danger of immediate death. I therefore should advise your majesty to retire for a short time, and trying to subdue your grief, to obtain some repose. As for me, until the death or recovery of the king, I shall not leave his bedside."

Catherine approached the king, and leaning down, pressed his hand to her lips. As she did so, she found means to withdraw from his hand the duchess de Valentinois' ring, of which Madame de Nemours had once taken possession, and in which consisted the charm, it was said, which bound him to Diana.

The king, as though he had felt that one of the sentiments of his heart had been torn from him, shuddered, as he had done when the lance had been taken from his wound.

Ambroise Paré, who never took his eyes off his patient, exclaimed,

"Madam, what is it you have done to the king?"

"Nothing, Maitre Ambroise," replied Catherine, hiding the magic ring in her hand; "but perhaps his majesty recognized me."

Catherine then withdrew, followed by the rest of the royal family, leaving the king to the care of his faithful physician.

As she proceeded to her chamber, Catherine encountered M. de Vielleville, who had been to change his clothes—having been covered with the blood of the king, as he bore him from the field.

"Monsieur de Vielleville," said the queen, "where are you going?"

"I am the king's chamberlain, madam," replied he, "and my duty is not to leave him."

"Your duty coincides with my wishes, for I have always

considered you as my friend, Monsieur de Vielleville," replied Catherine graciously.

Monsieur de Vielleville bowed low, but his heart misgave him; for although Catherine had not yet treated those to whom she gave that title as she did some years later, still, it was not considered safe to be among her friends.

"Madam," replied he, "I humbly thank your majesty for your good opinion of me, which I shall always endeavor to deserve."

"For that you have but one thing to do, said the queen;" and that is to prevent Madame de Valentinois, the constable, or any of his party from approaching the king."

"Madam," replied Vielleville, rather embarrassed at this commission, which if the king died insured his favor, but which, if the king should recover, was certain to insure his disgrace; "suppose the duchess should insist?"

"You will tell her," my lord, replied the queen, "that as long as Henry II. lies insensible, it is Catherine de Medicis who reigns, and that Catherine de Medicis, the queen, insists that Diana de Poitiers, the courtesan, shall not enter her husband's chamber."

"But there is, madam," said Vielleville, still hesitating, "a certain ring which the king wears."

"Which he wears no longer, my lord, for here it is! We ourselves have taken it off the royal hand; and if, which God forbid, the king pass from this life, the first use we shall make of it will be to sign your letters patent, as Marshal of France."

"Madam," replied Vielleville, taking courage at the sight of the ring, and greatly tempted by the queen's promise; "you are the queen, and therefore must be obeyed."

"Ah, Monsieur de Vielleville!" exclaimed Catherine, "I knew you were my friend!"

So saying, Catherine withdrew—a smile of contempt curling her lip as she turned away—for Catherine, by many a hard lesson, had arrived at a profound contempt for mankind, which every day's experience tended to increase.

For four days the king remained totally insensible; and, during this time, Madame de Valentinois had presented herself several times at the door of his apartment, but had constantly been refused admittance; and many of her friends advised her to retire to her apartment in the Louvre, or to her own chateau d'Auet—fearing that, in case of the king's death, she might find herself in a painful position. But Madame de Valentinois seemed to have no fear, and declared that, as long as the king still breathed, she would remain near him, and that her bitterest enemies would not venture to attempt any thing against either her liberty or her life.

On the third day, a traveller, covered with dust and foam, rode up to the chateau des Tournelles, and demanded, in the name of Philip of Spain, whether the king yet lived—insisting, if life were not extinct, to be brought instantly into his presence.

Strict orders had been given to keep all intruders from the king's apartment—the attendants dared not admit him.

“What name shall I announce to the queen?” inquired the groom in waiting.

“It is not to the queen that I desire to be announced,” replied he, “but to my colleague, the learned Ambroise Paré. I am Andrea Vesale.”

The groom in waiting repaired instantly to the room where, still motionless and insensible, lay the king. Ambroise Paré held in his hand the head of a criminal, who had just been decapitated, and by means of which he was studying the course the lance had taken in the king's brain;

for the mysteries of life had, as yet, not been unveiled to science.

No sooner did Ambroise Paré hear that name, than he exclaimed :

“ My lords, if there is a man who can perform a miracle, by means of skill and science, and save the king, that man is here ! ” Then rushing into the ante-room, he cried :

“ Enter, enter ! You who are king of us all ! Monsieur de Vielleville,” said he, apprise her majesty that the illustrious Andrea Vesale is now by the bedside of her husband.”

M. de Vielleville hastened to give to the queen even a semblance of good news, and met, as he went, a man of about forty-six years of age, of middle stature, with small intelligent features, a quick eye, and of dark complexion, with a short, bushy beard. This was Andrea Vesale, whom Philip II., informed by an express from Emmanuel of the danger of his father-in-law, had sent to his assistance.

Andrea Vesale was received with the most profound deference by his colleague. Ambroise Paré, though as conscientious and modest as Vesale, and excelling him in the practical exercise of his profession and in the use of the knife, was far from being as well versed in the theory of medicine, and, above all, in the anatomy of the human frame.

At a time when superstition made dissection a sacrilege, Andrea Vesale had exposed himself to the anathemas of the church and to positive personal danger, in order to search for the secrets of life in the mysteries of death, and to advance one step more the sublime science of healing.

Vesale studied at Montpellier, where, as early as 1376, the professors of the college had obtained from Charles the Bad, of Navarre, and from Charles VI. of France, permission

to dissect the body of a criminal, given over to them for that purpose.

Having completed his studies at Montpellier, Vesale came to Paris. His reputation for courage in the pursuit of science had preceded him, and many stories were related of his having snatched bodies from vaults, churchyards and gibbets, which associated a thrilling interest with his name.

At the expiration of three years, Vesale obtained permission to lecture in Louvaine, demonstrating his teachings by means of a complete skeleton. The skeleton, however, roused the suspicions, and shocked the susceptibilities of the magistrates of the town. Being summoned before them, he was asked where he had procured it.

“ I brought it with me from Paris,” replied the surgeon.

Now, in the interests of science, Vesale thought himself justified in concealing the truth; but the way in which Vesale had procured this rare specimen of the human frame, deserves recording.

Passing one day along a cross-road with one of his friends named Gemma, he lighted suddenly upon the body of a criminal hanging in chains. Time and the birds of prey had done their work, and the whitening bones of the skeleton, complete in all their details, excited the delight and envy of the man of science. He resolved to possess it. At his first touch, the thighs detached themselves from their sockets.

Fearful of injuring the precious relic, Vesale determined to accomplish his theft in the night. Carefully concealing the portions of his prize which he had already obtained, and marking well the spot where was the remainder, he repaired home. At night he returned alone, his friend not daring to accompany him; and, for three successive nights, did this disciple of science carry home, piece by piece, and with the care he would have bestowed on a new-born infant, the bones

of a being who, when in life, had lived, loved, and suffered, like himself. It was an easy task, then, by means of wires, to fix the pieces together, and to complete the skeleton which had so scandalized the good people of Louvaine.

Some years after, Vesale followed Charles V. to Italy; and the emperor's delight at a victory could not exceed Andrea's enjoyment over the quantity of anatomical subjects furnished by a battle-field. Over these bodies he gloated; and the pencil of Rembrandt has, in a dark and fearful picture, immortalized the anatomist and his science.

At length, after many years of profound study, Vesale ventured on reforming the errors contained in Gallien, whose works had formed, till now, the standard for students in anatomy, but who never having dissected any other than the bodies of animals, were full of errors. Shortly afterwards, Vesale published a work called "The Anatomist's Manual," (*Manuel d'Anatomie*), which contained only the heads of the subjects he intended to treat, later, in a much larger work.

This book furnished food for his enemies, and for all ignorant practitioners, who had looked on him with envy and hatred for his innovations. The book was attacked by the church; and such a cry was raised against it, at Venice and at Toledo, that Charles V., stunned by the clamor around him, gave over the book for examination to the University of Salamanca—leaving them to decide whether it was orthodox that Catholics should know the mechanism of their own bodies.

Fortunately, the decree of this learned assembly was more enlightened than are usually the decrees of ecclesiastical courts:

"It is a useful, and therefore an allowable, science, and worthy of the sanction of the Church."

Not having succeeded in this attempt, his enemies had recourse to calumny; averring that, in his impatience to ascertain the cause of some extraordinary disease he was called on to attend, he had opened the body of his patient before life was extinct. The story went on to say, that the family, having broken into the apartment in which Vesale was performing the operation, they had found him with the patient's heart still beating in his hand. The name of the patient was not mentioned, neither did the family of the deceased take any measures against the surgeon; but what mattered that to his enemies and calumniators? By their means the story was circulated, and it became an averred fact that Vesale had dissected a man yet living.

Nothing but the obstinacy and authority of Philip II. saved Vesale from being assassinated by the fury of the populace, as soon as this story got wind. But Philip remained firm, and Vesale calmly pursued his scientific researches.

But as time went on, Philip grew tired of shielding his faithful servant from the persecutions of the ignorant, then the mass of the population. Driven from France, Italy, and Spain, this martyr of science went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. On his return, he was shipwrecked in the Archipelago; and being cast on the island of Zante, perished of hunger and fatigue.

But at the period of which we are now speaking, the protection of Philip still overshadowed him; and the king, confident in his almost supernatural skill, had sent him to his father-in-law, Henry II. of France.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DIPLOMACY OF A FLORENTINE PRINCESS.

ANDREA VESALE approached, drew near the bedside of the king, and examined the patient—approving all that Ambroise Paré had hitherto done.

Ambroise Paré then showed him the splinter he had withdrawn from the wound, on which he had marked the distance to which it had penetrated. Vesale then asked whether it had entered horizontally, diagonally, or obliquely.

Ambroise Paré replied by taking up the head he was studying when the surgeon entered, and driving the end of the lance into the eye, in the exact direction in which it had penetrated into the head of the king.

“Now,” said Ambroise Paré, “by opening the head we shall ascertain what is the extent of the injury.”

Already had three condemned criminals been decapitated, in order that Ambroise might make these experiments; but Vesale, putting aside the head, said,

“It is useless trouble, my dear colleague. From the direction of the blow, I can tell exactly what harm it has done. In the first place, there is a fracture of the superior orbit of the right eye, with a fracture of the sinus, and a

rupture of the dura-mater and of the tunica-arachnoides—with a severing of the inferior portion of the right anterior lobe of the brain itself, the wound running up into the superior portion. The first effect was congestion and inflammation, followed by hydrocele, most probably, in both anterior lobes.”

“It is precisely what I had ascertained from the post-mortem examination,” exclaimed Paré, with astonishment and admiration.

“Yes; you could ascertain all this from the post-mortem examination, with the exception of the congestion, which could not take place after death.”

“And,” said Paré, “what is your opinion of the wound?”

“That it is mortal,” replied Vesale.

A suppressed cry made the two surgeons turn round; and they beheld Catherine de Medicis, who had entered unperceived, during these scientific discussions.

“Mortal!” cried she to Vesale; “did you say the wound was mortal?”

“I think it my duty, madam,” replied Vesale, “to speak the truth. The death of a king is not like that of any other individual—there is much to be done before the sceptre passes from the hand of the dead into that of the living. I repeat it, madam, the king’s wound is, without doubt, mortal.”

Catherine wiped away the cold drops which stood on her forehead.

“And,” said she, “will he die without coming to himself?”

Vesale approached the king, and taking his wrist, felt the pulsations.

“Ninety,” said he to Ambroise Paré.

“Better,” replied Ambroise; “yesterday it was at one hundred and ten.”

“Then,” said Vesale, “should the fever continue to diminish, the king will probably be able to speak once or twice before he expires.”

“And when?” inquired the queen, anxiously.

“Ah, madam, you ask more of my science than it can give. Still, I should say that, if ever the king recovers his speech, it will be to-morrow about the middle of the day.”

“Vielleville, you hear,” said the queen. “At the first signs of life, let me be called; ’tis I and I alone must receive his last words.”

The next day, at about two o’clock, the pulse having gone down to seventy-two, the patient heaved a sigh, and began to move feebly.

“M. de Vielleville,” said Vesale, “apprise her majesty that the king, in all probability, is coming to himself.”

Vielleville lost no time; and as he re-entered with Catherine de Medicis, the king murmured in a low tone,

“The queen—send for the queen.”

“I am here, sire,” said Catherine, kneeling by the bedside of the king.

As the king spoke, Ambroise Paré turned, with a look of admiration, towards his colleague, who, if he could not command either life or death, appeared to know all their mysteries.

“Madam,” said Vesale, “does your majesty wish that we should retire?”

The queen looked towards the king.

“Let them remain,” said the king; “for I feel every instant as though I should faint.”

Vesale took from his pocket a small phial, and putting a few drops into a teaspoon, made the king swallow it. In

a few minutes Henry heaved a deep sigh, and a slight tinge of color appeared on his lips.

“ Ah ! ” said he, “ I feel better. ”

His eye now fell on Vielleville, who was anxiously looking at him.

“ Ah, Vielleville ! So you have not left me ? ”

“ Not for an instant, sire, ” replied the chamberlain, weeping for joy, to hear once more his master’s voice.

“ You told me how it would be, ” said Henry, “ and so did you, madam. Forgive me for not listening to you. Coligny, too, he told me, more than all the rest. Do not forget Coligny—he loves me. He told me that it was by Montgomery’s hand that I was destined to die. ”

“ And how could he know it ? ”

“ By a prophecy made to the Emperor Charles V. I trust M. de Montgomery has not been molested ? ”

Catharine did not reply.

“ I hope he is at liberty, ” continued the king ; “ I requested, and now I command, that he should be allowed to go free. ”

“ He is free, sire ; nothing has been done to impede his liberty. At every hour of the day and night he sends for news of your majesty, and is almost wild with anguish and despair. ”

“ Poor Montgomery ! ” said the king ; “ he has always done me good service—especially in Scotland. ”

“ Would he had staid there ! ” said Catherine.

“ Madam, he returned by my express command ; by my express command did he enter the lists against me. He was but the instrument of fate—let us not pass our time in vain lamentations—that precious time which God has so miraculously given me must be better employed. ”

“ Ah, sire ! ”

“ In the first place,” said Henry, “ let us remember our promises to our friends, and then the promises made to our enemies by this treaty of peace. You know, madam, what we promised M. de Vielleville ? ”

“ I do, sire.”

“ We were about to sign his letters-patent, as Marshal of France, when —— ”

“ Ah, sire,” said Vielleville ; “ your majesty desired me to get the letters-patent from the secretary of state ; and ever since the fatal thirtieth of June, I have them here with me.”

“ Madam,” said the king, “ every movement causes me the most exerceiating torture ; I cannot hold a pen. Do you sign the letters-patent for me—specifying the cause which prevents my doing so myself.”

Catherine obeyed, whilst Vielleville, kneeling on the other side, kissed the white and livid hand which lay on the coverlid.

Catherine now read what she had written at the bottom of the letters-patent :

“ By order of the king, and by his bedside, he being incapable of holding a pen.

“ CATHERINE, REGINA,
“ 4th July, 1559.”

“ Is this as you wished, sire ? ”

“ It is, madam ; and now give the papers to Vielleville.”

Catherine, handing the papers to the count, said in a low tone,

“ You have the letters-patent ; but do not forget your promise, for it would still be possible to take them from you.”

“ Your majesty may rely on me,” said Vielleville.

“ And now,” said the king, “ is my sister married ? ”

“ Not yet, sire ; it was no time for a wedding.”

“ On the contrary,” said Henry, “ it is my wish that the marriage should take place immediately. Send for the Duke of Savoy and my sister.”

Catherine followed M. de Vielleville to the door, as he left the room, to obey the king’s behest.

“ Count,” said she, “ do not summon either the princess or the duke until I again open the door. Remain here in the ante-room, and on your life breathe not a word to the Duchess de Valentinois, or to any one, of the king’s return to consciousness.”

“ Never, fear, madam ; I will obey you to the letter.”

Catherine now closed the door and returned to the king’s bedside.

“ Where are you, madam ? ” said Henry, “ we are losing time.”

“ I am here, sire,” said the queen. “ I was merely giving instructions to M. de Vielleville as to where he could find the duke.”

“ Why, is he not in his apartment ? ”

“ Probably, sire, for the duke never leaves the palace till evening, and returns by daylight—so, probably, the count will find him.”

“ Oh,” said the king, “ where is the time when I too rode pleasantly along, on a still summer night, *per amica silentia luna*, as says Mary Stuart, watching the leaves in the moonbeams, with the cool breeze playing on my cheek ! And now, I am burning with fever, and great God ! how I suffer ! ”

Catherine, signing to the two surgeons to leave the bedside, approached the king.

“ Are they coming ? ” said the king.

“ Yes, sire ; but whilst we are waiting for them, can you say a few words upon matters of state ? ”

“ Speak on, madam ; I am ready to listen, although I see the things of this world as through a mist, and am weak and exhausted.”

“ God will enlighten you,” replied Catherine, “ and make your judgment clearer than when you were in health.”

Henry painfully turned towards Catherine. His eyes were bright from fever, and he gazed at Catherine, striving with all his remaining strength to divine the inmost folds of the Florentine princess's thoughts, of which he had learned to know the crooked paths in which they were wont to range.

“ Proceed, madam,” said he.

“ Sire, I am not speaking my opinion, or that of the surgeons, but I believe I am speaking your majesty's own conviction, that you will not recover.”

“ I am mortally wounded, madam, and it seems like a miracle that God has granted me this last interview with you.”

“ Then, sire, if it is a miracle, let God not have performed it in vain. Sire, does your majesty remember what you said to the Duke de Guise, when you were on the point of signing this unfortunate treaty of peace ? ”

“ I do, madam.”

“ Sire, the Duke de Guise is one of the most devoted servants of France.”

“ He is not even a Frenchman, but a Lorraine.”

“ Neither am I French,” replied Catherine.

“ No indeed, madam, you are —— ”

“ A Florentine, therefore the natural ally of France,” resumed the queen. “ Such a treaty as you have signed, sire, would scarcely have been acceptable, immediately after

the disasters of St. Laurent and St. Quentin; but now that Guise is returned from Italy—now that we have retaken Calais—now that we have an army of fifty thousand men—such a treaty is a mere mockery. This is what the duke said, and what your majesty would not listen to.”

“I was wrong, very wrong,” replied the king.

“It is not yet too late,” said Catherine.

“I do not understand your meaning, madam.”

“Will you leave all to me?” said Catherine. “Will you confide in me, sire? and I promise to restore to France, Piedmont, Nice, all your good cities, and to open you the way to the Duchy of Milan.”

“And how will you contrive this, madam?”

“It is easily contrived, sire. You have but to name, in consideration of the weakness and ill health of the dauphin, a Council of Regency, consisting of the Duke de Guise, the Cardinal, and myself—giving us power to regulate alone all state affairs.”

“And what will Francis say to this?”

“He will joyfully consent. All he requires is to be left with his wife, in full enjoyment of their mutual love.”

“Ah!” said the king, “it is a great happiness to be young, and the husband of a woman one loves. But he is King of France, and must think of his country before all else. France must be his first love.”

Catherine looked at the king, and felt greatly inclined to say, “Why did you not follow this advice yourself?” But she feared to revive the memory of the Duchess de Valentino; so she continued the conversation she had begun.

“If I am regent, I will undertake all.”

“What do you mean by all?”

“I mean, sire, that I will undertake to break the treaty;

that I will get back our towns, and annex Milau to the kingdom of France."

"And I, madam, must in the mean time appear before God, having forsworn myself; lied to the face of all Europe; betrayed my friends! No, madam, it is too great a sin. If I had lived, I should perhaps have listened to your proposition—for I might have had time to make my peace with God. Now, it is impossible."

Then, raising his voice, the king called M. de Vielleville.

"What are you doing?" said Catherine.

"I am calling Vielleville, who, I am sure, has not been to fetch the duke."

"Then why call him now?"

"That he may go instantly."

"Monsieur de Vielleville, you were right to await a second order, since such was the queen's pleasure; but now, I command you to repair instantly to the duke, and let him and the Princess Margaret be here within five minutes."

Then, looking towards the surgeons, who on hearing the king speak in a loud tone, had drawn near, he added:

"Just now you gave me a cordial which revived me. It is necessary that I should live an hour longer; I desire you will repeat the dose."

Vesale, taking the spoon, whilst Ambroise held up the king's head, administered a few more drops of the cordial. Vielleville, daring no longer to disobey, hastened to summon Emmanuel and the Princess Margaret, while Catherine, standing at the head of the bed, smiled at her husband, with rage and hatred in her heart.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE KING OF FRANCE HAS BUT HIS WORD.

A FEW minutes afterwards, Margaret and Emmanuel entered the king's presence.

A smile of joy beamed on their countenances, as they perceived the apparent amelioration in the state of the king,—for, thanks to the magic cordial, the king appeared comparatively animated and strong.

Catherine drew back, in order to make room for the duke and the princess. Both knelt by the bedside of the dying monarch.

“ I am glad to see you,” said Henry, a tender smile passing over his pale face.

“ Oh, sire! dare we hope?” said Emmanuel.

“ Oh, my brother!” said Margaret, “ what joy to hear your voice!”

“ It is joy, Margaret, to speak to you once more; but we must not deceive ourselves. There is no time to be lost—for, my children, there is no hope. Emmanuel, take my sister's hand.”

Emmanuel took Margaret's ready hand.

“ Prince,” said the king, “ your marriage with my sister

was my most ardent desire when I was in health ; now that I am dying, I exact its immediate celebration.

“ Sire ! my brother ! ” murmured Emmanuel.

“ Listen to me,” said the king, with great solemnity. “ Emmanuel, you are a great and noble prince ; but, above all, you are true-hearted and honest. As such I now address you.”

Emmanuel raised his fine head, and looked at the king with that truthful glance, which it was impossible to mistake ; then, with his low impassioned voice, he said :

“ Sire, as such I listen*to and will obey you.”

“ Emmanuel, a treaty of peace has just been signed ; it is a most disadvantageous one for France.”

Emmanuel started.

“ Never fear,” resumed the king. “ It has been signed, and shall be fulfilled. By this treaty you become allied to both the royal houses of France and Spain ; you become the cousin of the King of Spain, but you will be the uncle of the King of France. Your sword will weigh heavily in the balance in which God weighs the destinies of nations. It was this sword which repelled the battalions of St. Laurent ; it was this sword which opened the gates of St. Quentin. Let that sword be as just as its master is loyal—as powerful as he who wields it is courageous. If this treaty, signed and sworn to by both nations, is broken by France, let that sword turn against France. If it is broken by King Philip, let it turn against Spain.

“ If the office of lord high constable were vacant,” continued the king, “ I call God to witness that I would bestow it on you, the husband of my sister, the protector of the threshold of my kingdom. But I cannot take it, though perhaps I ought, from the old servant who, though unsuccessful, thought to serve me faithfully. And now, Emman-

uel of Savoy, swear to me that, if justice is on the side of France, it is for France that you will combat, as you will for Spain, should Spain be in the right."

Emmanuel, holding up his hands replied :

"By your own noble heart which thus appeals to mine, I swear it!"

"I thank you," said the king, feebly, then, appearing to pray, mentally, he relapsed into silence. After a few moments, he revived, and said :

"And now, on what day did you propose to have your nuptials celebrated?"

"On the 9th of July."

"Swear then to me, that, whether I am living or dead, by my bedside or by my coffin, you will be united on that day."

Margaret looked anxiously towards Emmanuel; but the prince, drawing Margaret towards him, imprinted a kiss upon her brow.

"Sire," said he to the king, "receive my second vow, which I make as solemnly as the first, and will keep as faithfully. By your death-bed, or by your coffin, the 9th of July shall be our wedding-day."

At this moment the door opened, and the dauphin looked timidly into the room.

"Who is that?" said the king, whose senses were sharpened by suffering.

"Oh!" exclaimed the dauphin, losing all his timidity, and rushing up to his bedside.

Henry's face beamed as he turned towards his son.

"You are welcome," said he; "for I have to speak with you." Then turning to the Duke of Savoy, he added :

"Emmanuel, you have just embraced Margaret, who will be your wife. Embrace now Francis, who will be your nephew."

Emmanuel clasped the young prince in his arms.

“And will you remember your promises?”

“Again I swear it.”

“Then all is well. Now, farewell! Leave me with the dauphin.”

Emmanuel and Margaret retired, but Catherine remained.

“Well, madam?” said the king, looking at her.

“Did your majesty mean that I also should retire?” said Catherine.

“Undoubtedly,” replied the king.

“If your majesty wishes to see me again,” said the queen, “you can send the dauphin to fetch me.”

“When I have finished what I have to say to the dauphin, madam,” replied the king, sadly, “you can return, whether I send for you or not. Indeed, it is more than probable that I shall not send for you—for I feel my strength failing fast. But come—come, if you will.”

Catherine, irritated and angry, went towards the door; but prudence getting the ascendancy, as it always did, with her, she concealed her feelings, and approaching the bed, knelt down and kissed the king’s hand. Then she withdrew, casting a look of doubt and anxiety on the dauphin.

The king waited some minutes before he spoke—then, addressing the dauphin, he said:

“Is your mother gone, Francis?”

“She is, sire.”

“See that the door is closed, and return quickly, for I am weaker every instant.”

Francis, quickly bolting the door, returned to his father’s bedside.

“Oh, my dear father, how pale you are! Can I do nothing for you!” exclaimed the young prince.

“Call the doctors,” murmured the king.

Summoned by the prince, Ambroise and Vesale drew near.

“Gentlemen,” said Henry, “give me strength, a little more strength—that is all I ask.”

Vesale appeared to hesitate.

“Have you no more of that cordial?” said the king.

“Yes, sire, but that elixir gives your majesty only a fictitious strength.”

“What matter?”

“It may shorten your majesty’s days.”

“Hours, you mean,” said the king. “Give me but power to say what I have to say to the dauphin, and let me die at the last word—I am content. Give me your elixir, a third and last time.”

As he spoke the king fell back on his pillow, and a livid pallor overspread his face.

“Quick, quick!” exclaimed Ambroise.

“My father is dying!” said the dauphin.

“His majesty has yet three or four days to live,” said Vesale; and lifting up the king, he poured several drops of the elixir into his mouth.

The effect, though sure, was slower this time than the last; but at length the king revived, opened his eyes, and sighed.

“God be thanked!” said he; “where is my son?”

“Here, father,” said the dauphin, kneeling at the head of the bed.

“Paré,” said the king, “prop me up with pillows, and put my arm round the dauphin’s neck, so that, leaning on him, I may descend to the tomb.”

Vesale, with the address and skill which a thorough knowledge of the capacities of the bones and muscles imparted, placed the king in a comfortable position, by means

of sofa cushions and pillows, whilst Paré lifted his arm, already cold and half paralyzed. Then both retired.

The dying father then, leaning forward by a supreme effort, pressed his lips to those of his son.

"My father," said Francis, two large tears coursing down his cheeks—"my dear, dear father!"

"Francis," said the king, "you are sixteen; you are now a man."

"Sire!"

"Nay, more, you are a king—for I am no longer any thing in this world; and as a king will I speak to you.

"My son," continued Henry, "I have from weakness, never from wickedness, committed many faults in my life. Let me confess them to you, so that you may learn to avoid them."

"But," said the dauphin, "many of these faults to which you allude, were committed by others, and not by you."

"True; but before God and man, it is I who am responsible for them. The greatest fault is the last. I committed it blindly at the instigation of the constable and Mme. de Valentinois. Forgive me, Francis—I was under a spell."

"Oh, my father!" sobbed the dauphin.

"That fault was the treaty of peace, by which you lose so many towns, so much territory. Do you heed me?"

"I do, sire."

"Just now your mother was here, reproaching me with this fault, and offering to repair it."

"How can that be?" said the dauphin, "when your word is passed?"

"Right, Francis—it cannot be. However great the fault, it cannot, must not be altered now. Now, Francis, remember—whatever may be said, whatever may be done;

if the woman you love should implore you with her arms round you, and her head resting on the same pillow with yours; if a priest should adjure you in the confessional; if necromancy should raise phantoms to fright you, or to make you believe that my shade speaks to you from the tomb—promise me, by the honor of my name, which is the safeguard of yours, that you will never swerve from the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis. Observe it in all its conditions, however unfavorable they may be, and the more so, because they are unfavorable; and remember over the words of King Jean—

The King of France has but his word!”

“Father,” said the dauphin; “by the honor of your name, I swear, it shall be done as you desire!”

“And if your mother insists!”

“I will tell her that I am your son as well as hers.”

“If she should command?”

“I will tell her that I am the king, and give, but never receive, commands,” replied the dauphin, assuming the air of majesty and command for which the Valois were renowned.

“I am satisfied. And now, my son, farewell! farewell! My strength is well-nigh spent—my sight is gone, and my voice fails me. When I have relapsed into insensibility, from which I shall never again be aroused, swear on my body to accomplish what you have promised, and then you may admit your mother. Farewell, my son! farewell! Embrace me once more! Francis II., King of France, I salute you!”

With these last words, the king fell back, pale and apparently lifeless. Francis gazed for some time on the pale corpse of his father; then, standing erect, he extended his hand over the body and said, aloud,

“ Father, I solemnly swear to fulfil your last wishes—to keep sacred the treaty you have sworn, nor to allow any thing to be added to it, nor any thing taken from it, whatever may be done, whatever may be said, to induce me to do otherwise. So help me God ! for

The King of France has but his word !”

Then, pressing his lips for the last time to the cold lips of his father, he opened the door of the ante-room, and found his mother, frowning and erect, standing on the other side.

On the ninth of July, by the bed where lay the king, the slight mist which diffused itself over a mirror held above his lips, alone showing that he still lived, Emmanuel-Philibert, Duke of Savoy, in the presence of the whole court, the Cardinal of Lorraine officiating, took to wife the Princess Margaret of France.

The next day, being the tenth of July, towards four o'clock in the afternoon—that is, at the same hour that, ten days previously, he had been so unhappily wounded by Montgomery, the king, without effort or convulsion, expired, as Andrea Vesale had prognosticated.

He was forty-three years of age, and had reigned twelve years.

He at least had the merit, even when dead, of keeping faith with Philip of Spain, which Francis I., while living, had so often broken with Charles V.

On the same day, Madam de Valentinois, who had remained till the last moment at the Palais des Tournelles, retired to the Chateau d'Auet.

On the same day the whole court returned to the Louvre, leaving the royal corpse alone with four priests and the two

doctors,—the doctors to embalm the body, whilst the priests prayed for the soul.

As Catherine was leaving the palace, she encountered Mary Stuart, about to issue from the last gate. Catherine, who for eighteen years had taken precedence of every one, was going on in advance ; but suddenly recollecting herself, she drew back, exclaiming,

“ Pass on, madam ! for you are now the queen ! ”

EPILOGUE.



CHAPTER I.

EMMANUEL-PHILIBERT RETURNS TO SAVOY.

THE dauphin Francis now mounted the throne of France, still so magnificent, despite the disasters of the late war. By his side was seated another, the young and beautiful Mary Stuart, whom Catherine de Medicis had saluted as queen, on the threshold of the apartment of the dead King Henry.

If at this moment of political and religious commotions, France possessed two persons more than all others incapable of directing the stormy course of the ship of state—less qualified to heal her still bleeding wounds, and wisely hold the reins of power—they were assuredly the young, innocent, amorous couple upon whose childish brows had fallen the heavy weight of the crown.

Francis and Mary were even younger than their years. They knew how to love, to weep, to sing in beautiful verses their loves and their hopes; but they knew nothing of com-

manding, of reigning. The science of politics was to them a sealed book, into which they had never dreamed of looking. And they gladly left the ungrateful cares and labors of the state to those hard and ambitious spirits, to whom life has lost every seduction save the love of power.

Frequently, however, the young monarch would suddenly pause in the midst of the studies or recreations to which he and Mary gave themselves up, and assuming an attitude of deep and pensive meditation, and an aspect of earnest determination, would murmur some words which he evidently wished to fix indelibly in his memory. These were the words which his father had said to him on his death-bed,—“ My son, a King of France has but his word ! ”

Francis was fully resolved that the injunctions of his father respecting the treaty, should be faithfully observed ; but beyond this, he thought not of politics, or of the affairs of his kingdom, but abandoned himself wholly to the love of his beautiful bride—a love which she repaid him with usury.

This state of things was far from displeasing to the queen-mother, Catherine de Medicis, who saw at length, with a joy that she could scarce conceal, her day of power arrive, after having for so many years suppressed her hatreds and her ambition. She thus encouraged her son to disembarrass himself entirely of state affairs,—though such encouragement was scarcely needed, to a character indolent and feeble as his, already predisposed against all species of serious responsibility or occupation.

From this moment, clothing herself with regal power, Catherine de Medicis commenced that long and eventful struggle, which continued through three reigns, against the Huguenots and the Guises. Apparently allying herself with the Guises, against Coligny, Montmorency, and the Hugue

nots, she in reality made use of that party to hold in check the powerful house of Lorraine, whose chiefs were the popular heroes of Metz and Calais.

Emmanuel-Philibert, who read at a glance the true state of affairs, concluded that his wisest course was to return immediately to Italy, and take possession of the kingdom of his father, which the treaty of Cateau-Cambrédis had restored to him

Accompanied by his noble bride, Margaret of France, he consequently set out for Brussels, where, in accordance with the instructions of King Philip II., who had intrusted him with the government of the Low Countries, he formally invested Madame Margaret of Austria with this government. Then, with a small escort of Piedmontese gentlemen, he proceeded towards Italy, by way of Champagne, Burgundy, and Bresse, avoiding Paris, where, he knew, that in despite of the wishes of the late king, and the well-known determination of the present one, the treaty was regarded with very little favor.

It was near the middle of September, 1559, that Emmanuel-Philibert arrived at Chambéry, and where the new Duchess of Savoy had for the first time an opportunity of using one of those richly carved, golden keys suspended from the girdle which was the bridal present of her husband.

Emmanuel now found himself a sovereign prince, in that same city of Chambéry, where, in 1528, he was not even heir-presumptive of a principality. He was now thirty-one, in the prime of youthful manhood and vigor. He had conquered one of the most renowned military chieftains of the age; he had overcome Montmorency, and subdued Coligny; he had imposed a humiliating peace upon Henry II.; he had recovered his own royal patrimony, and married the sister of the King of France. He had lived in terms of

familiar intimacy with the illustrious emperor, Charles V., and enjoyed the confidence of that most suspicious of sovereigns, Philip II.; and he was now uncle to the King of France, and cousin of the King of Spain and the Indies.

To what more could he aspire?—what more could he wish? And yet, Emmanuel was pensive and sad, and seemed overwhelmed with some secret regret, which he could not shake off. His noble and handsome features acquired an expression of pain; his calm clear eyes were veiled in a sombre cloud, and his corrugated brow denoted an intense moral suffering, whose source was unknown. Several times, during the journey from Brussels to Chambéry, Madame Margaret had remarked with lively sympathy this profound melancholy; but to her tender and delicate questionings, the prince returned no satisfactory reply.

The enthusiastic and joyous reception given by the inhabitants of Savoy to their beloved duke and his bride, served for a moment to divert his attention; but he soon again relapsed into a sadness, which his wife saw with alarm seemed deepening upon him, day by day.

The duke treated her with the utmost affection, preventing every want, and hastening to gratify the slightest caprice. But, with her, and to all the world, he maintained a reserve which contrasted painfully with his former open, frank, and sincere character. He remained as much as possible alone, in his apartment, and it was with great difficulty that he could be induced to attend to even the most important affairs of state.

This state of the duke naturally gave rise to innumerable conjectures, but none could tell whether any of them were well founded.

Among other things, it was remarked that the young and handsome page, Leone, for whom he evidently enter-

tained the greatest affection, was no longer in attendance upon the duke. His faithful squire and devoted foster-brother, Scianca-Ferro, had also disappeared. But the redoubtable squire soon after returned to his old post, and still no change was observed in the duke's state. It was therefore decided among the curious, that the cause of the prince's sadness was that he did not truly love the Princess Margaret.

Emmanuel inhabited, at Chambéry, the palace where he was born, occupying the apartments of his father. These apartments, which looked into the park, had a secret door, by which the prince could go out and in, without being seen.

One evening a horseman alighted at one of the park gates, in the rear of the palace. This gate was attended by an old gardener, whose orders, were to open it to none but those who were furnished with a special permit. The horseman doubtless had such a permit; for the old gardener had scarcely cast his eyes on the paper presented to him, when he respectfully took the rein of the traveller's horse, and made way for him to pass in.

The stranger proceeded directly to the apartments of the duke, with an absence of hesitation which clearly denoted a perfect knowledge of the place. But at the door of the duke's chamber, he encountered a sentinel, who presented his musket, saying,

“ You cannot pass.”

“ I am Scianca-Ferro,” said the visitor, smiling; “ read that paper.”

“ I don't care for your paper,” replied the sentinel; “ I have my orders, and you can't pass.”

Scianca-Ferro began to exhibit signs of impatience, and, seizing the musket with one hand, with the other he threw the sentinel to the bottom of the staircase. At the same

moment the door of the prince's apartment opened, and Emmanuel himself appeared on the threshold, his countenance overspread by a melancholy smile.

"Scianca-Ferro !" exclaimed he ; " I could have sworn that no one else would come to me in such a fashion."

" Oh, pardon, your highness," said Scianca-Ferro ; " I had forgotten that I was no longer in the camp, but within the bounds of a princely residence. I will remember next time."

The two friends heartily embraced ; and then, closing the door after them, the prince led Scianca-Ferro into a little study, where, since his return to Savoy, he had passed the long hours in solitude.

" Well ? " inquired the prince, anxiously.

" Well—it is all over."

" The sacrifice is then accomplished ? "

" It appears to me that the sacrifice was accomplished a good while ago. Not a tear—not a murmur, only a mute sorrow, so profound that I have been sometimes frightened at it."

" Poor Leona ! " said the duke. " But did you say nothing to calm this terrible grief ? "

" Alas ! " replied Scianca-Ferro, " I am, as you know, not skilful in administering consolation—but I endeavored, in default of consolation, to divert her attention by recalling the days of our childhood,—we three,—our joys, our griefs so light and seldom—all the pleasures of those happy years, that passed so rapidly. But this produced exactly the contrary effect from what I intended. Then I called attention to the beauties of the road, and tried to remember the histories which made celebrated the places we passed. Sometimes I was happy enough to perceive that I had for a moment arrested her attention."

“Proceed,” said the prince, turning away his head to conceal his emotion.

“Sometimes,” continued Scianca-Ferro, “having exhausted my store of knowledge, and not knowing what to say, I would suddenly exclaim, ‘Never mind, my dear little brother! You knew that this bad day would arrive, sooner or later.’ But my voice took on so sad a tone, that she smiled her ineffable smile, and began in her turn to console me.

“Thus we pursued the route which you had marked, crossing La Brie, La Basse-Champagne, Burgundy, Jura, and so to Bresse, and the valley of Luzerne, within a short distance of the Abbey of St. Benoit, where our journey was to end.

“Arrived at the grating, I caused the door to be opened—not as, a little while ago, I got in here, but with all the politeness and respect which you so expressly enjoined. I presented my written instructions to the superior; and after a brief pause, which was sad enough, I strained my dear little brother for the last time to my heart,—so pale he looked, that I feared every moment he was going to faint;—and then, carefully concealing the first tears I remember ever to have shed, I took my leave of the Abbess, remounted my horse—and here I am!”

“Thanks, my brother!” said Emmanuel-Philibert, after a moment’s painful silence. Then, raising his head, he said:

“And you will pay a visit to Luzerne every other day, will you not?”

“Ah!” exclaimed Scianca-Ferro, “it will be only happiness to obey that order—if only my visits may give some consolation to her sorrow.”

“And I,” said Emmanuel, “perhaps I may sometimes go with you.”

“ Oh, will you do so ?” cried Scianca-Ferro, joyfully taking the hand of the prince ; “ Thanks, brother, thanks for her ! It is worthy of your noble heart. This will be a good action, which can interfere with none of your duties, and which, I will warrant, Madame Margaret herself would approve.”

“ Silence, my brother !” said Emmanuel, in a tone of constraint ; “ let us be patient, and await the propitious hour when Leona, become resigned, shall taste the blessings of the repose she has sought ; when there shall be no longer restraint or sadness in our life ; when, in giving to my well-beloved wife the affection of which she is so worthy, I may devote myself to the happiness of my subjects. Then we will re-establish for ever over these beautiful lands the parental care and authority of our house ; and God, who knows the most secret thoughts of the heart, will recompense me, it may be, for my sacrifices and my efforts.”

“ May it be so, your highness !” said Scianca-Ferro ; “ and your career, begun in war, will finish gloriously in peace. And your friend, your brother-in-arms, will still be ever ready to serve you, and will thus meet his last hour without a sigh of regret.” Then, changing his tone to a lighter mood, he said :

“ Apropos, your highness, of our enemy, Monsieur de Waldeck—have you heard any thing of him since that day you so generously snatched him from under my dagger ? ”

“ No—both he and his threats have passed away like a dream.”

“ I don’t know,” said Scianca-Ferro, resuming his warlike look and bearing, “ as we have any thing to fear—but I confess that Monsieur de Waldeck is the only care I have at present on my mind.”

“ It is a needless anxiety, my brother,” replied Emman-

uel; "Monsieur de Waldeck, since the death of his father, has been nothing but a miserable adventurer, and he has probably long since gone to render an account of his misdeeds."

"Huu!" said Scianca-Ferro, with an air of doubt; "I should rather be sure that such was the case. I have the greatest distrust of the tricks of that cut-throat, and I must try and get some positive information about him."

"As you please," said the prince, rising and pacing the apartment; "but it is not M. de Waldeck who occupies my thoughts. Oh!" exclaimed he, suddenly, "how slowly the days creep on, when we wait for the one which is to terminate the suspense that devours us!"

"You must be weary, my good Scianca-Ferro," resumed the duke; "your apartment is directly over mine, and every thing has been made ready for you."

"Good night, your highness," said Scianca-Ferro, seeing that the prince would be alone, "good night!" and Scianca-Ferro left the apartment of the prince.

To explain the above interview, it is necessary to inform the reader that the prince, soon after his marriage, had sent his faithful squire to convey Leona to a convent in the valley of Luzerne, at a short distance from Chambéry, wishing thus to be able to afford watchful protection to her whom he had first loved, and who had so nobly sacrificed herself to the re-establishment of his destiny and the greatness of his house.

The prince was of too high a nature not to thoroughly understand that fate had charged him with a double duty, which he was fully determined faithfully to fulfil. He had been deeply touched by the delicate and fervent love of Margaret; and, now that she had become his wife, by the will of Leone, he was resolutely determined to do all that lay

in his power to render happy a princess who was so worthy of his regards, and who, two months since, had given him the assurance that he was about to become a father. It was natural, therefore, that he should take pains to conceal from her all traces of the past, for him so full of tender memories, which had given him Leona, whom he had securely placed under the care of an abbess wholly devoted to him. The abbess, besides, was a woman of superior character, whom suffering had purified, and piety and good deeds exalted. She loved Leona like a daughter, from the first moment her eyes rested upon her.

Leona found, in the bosom of this excellent woman, sovereign consolation; and being of a true and strong nature, she accepted her fate with the resignation conferred by the performance of a great duty. She began almost to see in Emmanuel only a brother, and to sincerely hope that he would transfer to Madame Margaret that love so pure and faithful, which had conferred upon her a happiness too great for earth.

But both she and her lover had a subject of solicitude which could not be put aside. In five months more, Leona would become a mother! Would she be permitted to keep her child, or must she already make up her mind to be forever separated from it? As to its future; she was reassured—the destiny of the child of Emmanuel could not but be a brilliant one! To him the affair possessed the gravest importance. In the first place, it was all-important that the duchess should be kept in ignorance of the event. But his precautions had been so well taken, that he apprehended little on this account. But that which gave Emmanuel-Philibert that profound and incurable melancholy, which we have already described, will be discovered in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II.

WHICH PROVES THAT REASONS OF STATE DECIDE THE SEX OF THE CHILDREN OF PRINCES.

SEVERAL months had passed, and every thing at the court of Chambéry remained as before. Scianca-Ferro made frequent visits, either at early morning or in the evening, from the ducal palace to the convent of the valley of Luzerne. Sometimes, but at rare intervals, Emmanuel-Philibert accompanied him. These rides were a sort of steeple-chase over the rich soil, made either in the beautiful autumn morning, or in the cold and brilliant evenings which foretell the approach of winter.

The object of these expeditions remained entirely unsuspected, no one attaching any importance to them. If for a moment they became the subject of speculation, it was supposed that they were simply for the purpose of exercise, and to distract his mind.

One evening, after the cold had become of a wintry keenness,—or rather, one night,—the curious traveller might have heard the sound of two horses coming from opposite directions, galloping over the crackling snow, about midway of the road from Chambéry to Luzerne. Shortly after, the two horsemen met; and recognizing each other, stopped as

if to reconnoitre, conversing meanwhile earnestly, but in a low tone.

The horseman coming from Chambéry was Emmanuel-Philibert; the other was Scianca-Ferro. The latter appeared to be the prey of impatience and anxiety. His horse was covered with foam, his sides were bleeding from the spurs, and his quivering nostrils exhaled his panting breath, which the frosty air immediately converted into vapor.

Emmanuel was not less agitated. His face, ordinarily so calm, and of a melancholy pallor, glowed with animation. His eyes, brilliant and gleaming, seemed endeavoring to pierce the darkness. At meeting Scianca-Ferro, he eagerly questioned him, by his looks and gestures, even before he spoke.

Scianca-Ferro, without waiting for words, replied,

“It is over, my dear brother, and every thing is well. But it was a terrible trial. I pray Heaven that I may not be often called upon to witness such a scene of suffering!”

“And it is”—

“A boy,” replied Scianca-Ferro, without waiting the end of the question.

“Heaven be praised!” replied Emmanuel; “heaven be praised—first, for the mother’s safety, and next for the infant he has given me, and which assures me an heir, whatever may happen.”

“Scianca-Ferro, my brother,” continued the prince, “you did not forget that, in the present case, it is necessary that the son should be a daughter?”

“I did not forget, your highness, and your orders have been punctually executed. The infant was immediately wrapped up by the physician, and carried from the convent, and taken to the place where every thing was ready to

receive him. The worthy abbess herself does not know the sex of the infant."

"And the mother?" said Emmanuel.

"At first she was unable to occupy herself about her child, as she did not recover her consciousness until half an hour afterwards. Then she merely opened her eyes, looked around her, and on recognizing me, smiled sweetly, and pronounced your name, that doubtless I might bring you this proof that she had not forgotten you even in the midst of her agony. Then, as she still gazed inquiringly around, I assured her of the safety of her infant, and told her that the physician had directed that it should be immediately taken to its nurse, and that she should after a little while be permitted to embrace it. She appeared but partially satisfied, until I told her that all had been done expressly by your orders."

"And the doctor?"

"I took care to repeat to him, in a manner that no one but him understood, the instructions which you had given respecting the concealment of the sex of the infant."

"It is well!" said Emmanuel, putting his horse into a gallop; "and now to Chambéry!"

In an hour they arrived at the palace, and were seated in Emmanuel's study, before an excellent supper, which had been prepared against their return. After a few minutes, the prince renewed the conversation with Scianca-Ferro.

"You know, my dear Scianca," said he, "that the Count Odoardo Maraviglia has been here several days?"

"I know it," replied Scianca-Ferro, "but I am wholly ignorant of his reasons for coming."

"Oh, nothing particular," said the duke with an affectation of indifference; "merely to rest himself a little. The Milanese sighs for his beautiful country, and tries to get us

near to it as he can. The bird returns to his nest, even after it has been despoiled."

The duke paused, and then added—

"That was a terrible history, of the Count Maraviglia, the father of Odoardo and Leona."

"Yes—one of those crimes which could only be conceived in politics, for it was an infernal political calculation, of which the count was the victim."

"You say truly, my dear Scianca, but when, instead of one man, politics demand the sacrifice of a whole people, is not the crime much greater?" replied Emmanuel. "Providence sometimes makes use of strange instruments to direct the affairs of this world! This young man, whose father, mother, and sister, have been sacrificed to an unjust vengeance,—or, as you say, to a political combination,—this young man, himself a sacrifice, whose whole life had but one idea—to assassinate the murderer of his father, Charles V., who was never more sublime than when he confessed and expiated his fault—well! would you believe that this young man is now the instrument of a political combination, whose object is the destruction of a whole people?"

"What do you say, monseigneur?" cried Scianca-Ferro.

"Yes, Scianca, yes! The Count Odoardo Maraviglia is following in the same career which resulted so fatally for his father. He is, as was his father, a diplomatist. After having been chosen by France and Spain to prepare the basis of the treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, he is now sent by Catherine de Medicis to me, to propose an alliance, offensive and defensive, between me and herself, against the colonists and the Vaudois!"

"But I thought those quarrels were terminated," said Scianca-Ferro.

“Terminated! my innocent Scianca! They have but just commenced!”

“But what can Catherine de Medicis, on the part of France, require of you?”

“Oh, a mere trifle! She merely requires me to extirpate heresy from my dominions, and to destroy the heresies of Vaudois and of Geneva; meanwhile she will undertake to free the soil of France from the Huguenots, who are multiplying much too fast for the interests of the church or the health of the monarchy. Now, to extirpate heresy, means simply to exterminate the heretics! So you see, my dear brother, what the court of France proposes to me, through the medium of Count Maraviglia.”

The manly and truthful face of Scianca-Ferro darkened, as he listened to this atrocious scheme.

“I confess frankly, monseigneur,” said he, “that I have no taste for this sort of warfare—especially since it would have to be carried on against our very neighbors, against a parcel of poor devils, who, in their simple habits and way of life, resemble rather a flock of their own sheep than wicked and dangerous heretics. But at least, the King Francis II. has offered you some compensation?”

“Oh, yes—the queen-mother and the Guise have offered me a compensation,” said Emmanuel.

“And this compensation?”

“Listen! The queen-mother and the Guise have offered to withdraw the French troops, and to restore to me, Turin, Pignerolles, Chiraz, Quiere, and Ville-Neuve d’Asti. They add that, if I go seriously about assisting them in extirpating heresy, Spain will restore me Vercelli and Asti.”

“The devil!” said Scianca-Ferro, opening his eyes in wonder. “The devil! The most splendid jewels of your crown regained at a blow. It deserves to be thought of.”

“It is proposed,” continued the duke, “that the restitution to be made by France, should take place on the day on which the duchess gives me an heir. This is one of the conditions proposed by the new alliance.”

“And if the duchess should condescend to give you only an heiress?” inquired Scianca-Ferro, very much puzzled.

“You know well that this is not possible,” replied Emmanuel, in a decided tone.

“To be sure!” said Scianca; “what a fool I am! I had forgotten! I beg your pardon, my dear brother! So, then—France offers to give back your beautiful cities of Piedmont, on the day that Madam Margaret gives you an heir—on condition of exterminating the Vaudois, and making war upon Geneva and Berne? It certainly seems a very fair bargain. But those poor Vaudois! I can’t make up my mind to have them butchered.”

And the excellent Scianca-Ferro lost himself in a maze of unsatisfactory reflections, while the duke looked at him and smiled.

“Still,” replied he, “if it could be as it was at Smalkalden, where we had before us the nobility of Germany, all bound up in iron, and the valiant Prince of Saxe, and the fiery Landgrave of Hesse, it would be all right. But these poor peasants, peaceably gathering their harvests or tending their flocks,—who have never had a musket in their hands, nor the handle of a battle-axe,—what merit would there be to make war upon them, or what glory in exterminating them?”

“You are right, my dear brother,” said Emmanuel; “it is a crime which they propose to me to commit, in exchange for the cities which they offer me. I will retake the cities, and I will not commit the crime.”

“Oh! bravo! monseigneur!” cried Scianca-Ferro, with

a radiant visage ; “ bravo ! That is the way to talk ! Give us the cities, and to the devil with the crime ! The cities are worth more—that is, they will be worth more without the shame of an action unworthy of us.”

“ In two months ! ” said Emmanuel, who continued smiling, as he looked at the honest and ingenuous squire. He then gave Scianca some instructions for the night, and they separated.

From this time, a sensible improvement was remarked in the disposition and temper of the duke, who gradually resumed his frank, open manner, and his naturally benevolent and courteous character.

“ In two months ! ” Emmanuel had said, in parting from Scianca-Ferro, after the conversation we have recorded.

Two months from that time, on a cold and frosty night of the winter of 1560, all was activity in the ducal palace, and it was evident throughout the entire court, that events of importance were about to occur.

Madame Margaret of France was in the pangs of maternity.

In a vast saloon, adjoining the bed-chamber of the Duchess of Savoy, were collected the domestics of the chateau, the princess's women, the pages and gentlemen in service, all waiting anxiously for the termination of the crisis.

In another saloon, also opening out of the princess's bed-chamber, on the opposite side, equally eager and anxious for the result, sat the ambassador of France, the Count Odoardo Maraviglia ; the envoy of Spain, and the great lords and ladies forming the court of Savoy.

By order of Emmanuel, both doors were closed, and were not to be opened until after the birth of the infant.

No one was with the duchess but the first physician of the duke, and the duke himself.

The physician had announced that the state of the duchess presented no danger, and that every thing was as favorable as could be desired.

At the farthest extremity of the apartment, near a window, stood Scianca-Ferro, his brow covered with perspiration.

At length, a cry announced that all was over, and the physician, approaching the duke, said, in a low voice,

“ Monseigneur, it is a charming little daughter.”

“ You are mistaken, monsieur,” said Emmanuel, drily ; then he added, in an imperious tone, “ it is a son, monsieur !”

“ I have already had the honor of telling your highness,” said the physician in a raised tone of voice, “ *that it is a son.*”

At this moment both doors into the bed-chamber opened simultaneously, and Emmanuel said, in a loud and distinct voice,

“ Scianca-Ferro, announce to the ambassadors, and to the court, that Madame Margaret of France, Duchess of Savoy, has just presented to the house of Savoy, a prince, heir-presumptive to my crown !”

CHAPTER III.

THE AMBUSH.

SCIANCA-FERRO, with all the dignity of an accomplished master of the ceremonies, announced to the Court that Emmanuel-Philibert had a son, an heir to his dominions, and the event was notified immediately to all the Courts of Europe.

The princess Magaret, happy at having given an heir to her beloved husband, and thus completed the restoration of all his possessions, recovered her strength rapidly. Meanwhile, Leona, whom Scianca-Ferro no longer visited, but to give her news of her child, lived in the most absolute retirement.

Since her separation from her child, since Emmanuel had convinced her of the necessity of this separation and had promised to adopt it, her pure spirit and her loving heart belonged only to God, and she aspired impatiently to the hour which should for ever consecrate her to his service.

The Count de Maraviglia, having accomplished his embassy to Emmanuel, and given an account of it to the Court of France, purchased an estate near Novaca, where he settled.

Peace, order, and prosperity, were now established in the states of the Dukes of Savoy, whilst his own happiness was

secured in the bosom of his family. The dark days appeared to have alike vanished for Emmanuel-Philibert and for his people, from the Alps to the Mediterranean.

There remained but one thing to complete the security of the prince—that was, to take possession of the various towns and strong-holds still occupied by the French and Spanish troops.

France, it has been seen, had offered, through her ambassador, to restore all she held, but had imposed for a condition that the prince should make war on the Vaudois, and on Berne and Geneva.

But as Emmanuel-Philibert as yet had undertaken nothing against these people, and allowed all the heretics of the Swiss Cantons free discussion and the free exercise of their religion, the French and Spanish troops still remained within the very heart of his dominions.

This was both annoying and humiliating to Emmanuel-Philibert. At length, he determined to send Scianea-Ferro to negotiate with these peaceable and gentle people, whom God had confided to his care—trusting that, by this means, he could avoid having recourse to more violent measures. Taking advantage, too, of a question of a limitation of territory near Lake Lemman, Emmanuel assumed a hostile attitude towards the Genevese, and informed the Court of France of the commencement of the campaign.

At this juncture the Genevese, far less forbearing than the Vaudois, sent a deputation to the latter, advising them to take measures for resistance, and promising them their aid.

By a singular coincidence the deputation from the Genevese arrived at Berne before the Prince's emissary, Scianea-Ferro, had returned to Chambéry.

The authorities of the town had asked permission to assemble a council of the elders, in order to deliberate before

replying to the prince's message, and Scianca-Ferro had thought proper to comply with so reasonable a request.

Whilst this council was sitting, the deputation from Geneva arrived at Berne. The Genevese demonstrated to the Vaudois that the proposition of the prince was dictated by the ambition of the prince, and by the hatred of the Catholics for all without the pale of their Church. They laid before the council the persecutions which were going on against the Protestants, in both France and Germany—reminding them that the inhabitants of the valley of the Durance had preferred death and ruin to a change of religion, and concluding by declaring that the Genevese were determined to sacrifice all, even life, sooner than swerve from their faith.

This discourse, well calculated to make an impression even upon stronger minds than those of the Vaudois, all unanimously declared that it would cover them with everlasting shame, if they were to abandon the religion of their fathers.

Still, so far from making a hostile demonstration, the elders made an appeal to the magnanimity of the prince, —offering to recognize his authority, and to pay him a tribute.

Scianca-Ferro returned to Chambéry with this proposition, which Emmanuel would willingly have accepted, had it fulfilled the conditions imposed by the exactions of Guise and the queen-mother.

He resolved, therefore, to present himself in person to the council of the elders, and started without other suite than Scianca-Ferro, for the most populous of the Swiss valleys—convinced that he should be received with acclamations of joy, as their rightful sovereign. Nor did he think it necessary to keep his resolution secret. Accordingly, when armed at all points, and mounted on his favorite charger, Emman-

uel rode forth from Chambéry with Scianca-Ferro, every one knew the object of his journey.

There was something chivalrous and daring in this manner of terminating a political discussion, that suited well with the spirit of adventure peculiar to the prince and his foster-brother. Convinced, as they both were, that the duke's presence would bring the Vaudois to submission, they set off in high spirits.

The two friends, following the course of a little stream, attained, in about three hours, the entrance to the valley of those most gentle and harmless of Christians.

Both cavaliers were, as we have said, armed cap-a-pie. Scianca-Ferro was the duke's only escort, and he had not forgotten his terrible battle-axe or his good broadsword.

At the approach of the first village in the valley, Scianca-Ferro, putting spurs to his horse, started forward to announce the arrival of his royal master, the Duke Emmanuel, of Savoy. At this news terror was the first sentiment which took possession of the simple inhabitants of the valley; but when Scianca-Ferro added that the duke had come alone, and without any other attendant than himself, their terror was changed into joy, and acclamations rent the air. Men, women, and children came forth to meet him, gazing in admiration at his noble stature, and looking with profound astonishment at his brilliant armor.

At the request of Emmanuel, the council assembled on the public square of the village.

It was about ten o'clock in the day. The sun, reflected high on the snow-capped hills which enclosed the valley, shed its tempered rays on the green and luxuriant vegetation below. The magnificent scenery, the simple and affectionate manners of the people, the grave dignity of the elders deeply impressed Emmanuel's susceptible heart, and he ad

dressed them almost in words of tenderness, stating what it was he required of them.

The council of the elders replied in a most respectful tone, by reiterating their former proposition—promising to be most exact in the payment of their tributes, and to entertain a royal commissary at their own expense, who should reside amongst them.

As the worthy elder delivered the last word of this discourse, a voice from the crowd exclaimed :

“Shame! shame! Take courage and resist the tyranny of popery! The Council of Geneva will despise you! Ah! If you all felt like me!”

The crowd, discontented at this intrusion, began to murmur. Scianca-Ferro, turning round, saw that it was a stranger who spoke, and it struck him that, somewhere or other, he had heard that shrill piercing voice before.

“Where have I seen that face before?” said Scianca-Ferro to the prince.

“If I mistake not,” replied Emmanuel, “it was in the campaign of St. Quentin. This man was one of the adventurers in the pay of Coligny.”

“My master,” said Scianca-Ferro, riding up to the intruder; “what are you doing in this part of the country?”

“My lord,” was the reply, “I am here in the sacred character of an ambassador, and am one of the deputation of the council of Geneva to the council of the Elders.”

“Would you favor me with your name?”

“My name is Procope, my lord.”

This name aroused a whole train of disagreeable associations in the mind of Scianca-Ferro. He continued his questions.

“Are you, then, of the reformed religion?”

“ I am, sir ; I support truth against error.”

“ And how much do you make by it ? ”

“ I make my eternal salvation,” piously replied Procope ;
“ and I consider that I am doing my duty in opposing the
submission of these good people to anti-Christ.”

“ Indeed ! ” said Scianca-Ferro ; “ but, my dear Mr.
Ambassador, you preach too well for me not to make sure
of you. You will have the goodness to hold your tongue,
and to remain quietly by my side, or you shall see what will
happen.”

With these words, Scianca drew his sword ; but Procope,
who had foreseen this movement, adroitly evaded the gaunt-
leted hand of the squire, and rushing through the crowd,
exclaimed,

“ Help ! help ! To arms ! to arms ! ” hoping thereby to
excite the people against the Duke of Savoy. But the
crowd, mortified and astonished, in order to disclaim all
participation in the words of the stranger, replied with
exclamations of “ Long live the duke ! long live the
duke ! ”

Scianca-Ferro, however, who rarely lost his presence of
mind, followed Procope’s track, and found that he fled to a
narrow lane at the end of the village, where several other
men joined him. One of these, putting a horn to his lips,
sounded a prolonged note, which was evidently a signal.

“ Stand off, there ! ” said Scianca-Ferro, dashing at the
group. But, probably aware of the adversary they had to
encounter, four or five of the individuals retreated into the
lane. One, however, remained at the entrance, with a long
iron bar, at the end of which was a ball ; whilst another
rushed forward, flourishing his sword, and exclaiming,
“ Come on ! come on ! ” Unheeding the giant who, with his
battle-axe upraised, called to him to return, saying,

“ I will refenge Franz—I will refenge Franz ! ”

Our readers have now recognized these old acquaintances, Malemort, and Heinrich Scharfenstein.

It will be remembered that, after the siege of St. Quentin, Yvonnet, who was the soul of the association, had insisted on a division of their gains, which had, as it were, dissolved the association—dispersing its members in various directions.

Franz Scharfenstein had been killed at the siege of St. Quentin, by Scianea-Ferro, and his uncle, in despair at his loss, had allowed himself to be taken prisoner. Fracasse, the poet, had been hanged, and the encounter Yvonnet had made with his friend in the wood, contributed not a little to inspire him with disgust for his former life. His better feelings, too, had been stimulated by the confidence reposed in him by D'Andelot and the king. Besides, Yvonnet was really in love, and love purifies and ennobles, when it is sincere. So Yvonnet resolved to become an honest man.

He had saved no inconsiderable sum. Gudule's uncle had fallen at St. Quentin, leaving all he possessed to his niece—so Yvonnet married Gudule; and, prosperous and happy, they now kept one of the best-appointed hostelries on the road between Paris and Compiègne.

Heinrich Scharfenstein, wandering from the Spanish camp, had encountered Maldent, and together they had sought out Procope and Malemort. Procope immediately re-established the association, adding a deserter from the English army to its numbers, and himself assuming the command.

No sooner had the adventurers retreated into the alley, than the horn sounded a second signal, and a knight, clad in black armor, was seen coming along the road at full gallop. He advanced rapidly into the midst of the crowd, and draw-

ing up his horse in front of Emmanuel-Philibert, he exclaimed,

“Come on, Duke Emmanuel-Philibert, come on! Murderer and assassin, this time you shall not escape me!”

At these words, as well as by the crest on his helmet, Emmanuel-Philibert recognized his most mortal enemy, the bastard of Waldeck.

Overcome with shame and anger, at his discomfiture at the tournament, this worthy son of his dead father had wandered about Germany and France meditating schemes of revenge. Having encountered Procope, he had taken the whole troop into his service, and had, on the restoration of the duke to his possessions, brought them to Geneva, to await his opportunity of carrying out the only object of his life—his revenge.

Procope, once established at Geneva, began to look around him, and calculated that it would be to his interest to allow himself to be converted to the Protestant faith. By this means he obtained great influence, and succeeded in being named as one of the envoys from the council of Geneva to the valley of the Vaudois.

Informed by an emissary he kept for that purpose at Chambéry, of the proposed excursion of the prince, De Waldeck had thought the opportunity too good to be lost. All had been arranged—Procope was to raise a tumult and to excite the people, so that, in the midst of the confusion, the bastard of Waldeck might be able to effect his purpose.

The only doubt now was, whether, provided the Vaudois should not interfere, Emmanuel and his valiant foster-brother were not a match for the bastard of Waldeck and his five adventurers.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PUNISHMENT.

EMMANUEL-PHILIBERT had smiled with disdain on recognizing his adversary, and then had slowly lowered his vizor. Then, prompt as lightning, without waiting for De Waldeck, the duke had seized his battle-axe, and rushing on him, had dealt him such a blow that his helmet flew in pieces. Another blow split his skull ; and, weltering in his blood, the bastard of Waldeck fell to the earth. The struggle had not lasted a minute.

Then, turning his horse, Emmanuel looked round for Scianca-Ferro.

At the onset, Malemort, flourishing his sword, rushed on Scianca-Ferro, and contriving to avoid all his thrusts, had run his weapon into his horse. The animal had reared furiously at first, but maddened by pain, and weakened by loss of blood, had fallen on his haunches—so that Emmanuel stood like King Jean at Poitiers, alone against seven men, for two of the envoys of Geneva had thought proper to take part with Procope.

But then indignation and anger had taken possession of the crowd. The elders, understanding that the duke was the victim of an ambush, of which they might be thought

the instigators or the accomplices, exclaimed, "Treason! Treason! To your forks and your flails!" and in a shorter time than it can be written, the whole population had rushed into their houses, and returned with pitchforks, and set about to revenge what they thought the treachery of the Genevese emissaries, shouting as a war cry, "Long live the Duke of Savoy!"

Scianca-Ferro had began by avenging his courser, and having struck Malemort on the head, he had felled him to the earth and left him for dead. Seeing the other six adversaries coming on, Scianca-Ferro, still defending himself, had backed against the wall of a house in order to ensure his not being attacked from behind; and here, wielding his terrible battle-axe with as much strength, but infinitely more address than Scharfenstein, he stood like a noble stag at bay.

But at the approach of the peasants with their formidable weapons, there was a moment's hesitation amongst the adventurers. Determined to profit by this temporary uncertainty, Scianca-Ferro threw his battle-axe at the head of Heinrich Scharfenstein, who fell never again to rise. Seeing themselves pressed on all sides, and the duke at that moment arriving, his bloody battle-axe in hand, the adventurers endeavored to regain the little alley, and to make good their escape. But it was too late. The Vaudois hemmed them in, and Procope, as he turned to fly, was struck down by the axe of Emmanuel.

The other adventurers now threw down their arms, notwithstanding which, they would have all fallen victims to the fury of the Vaudois, had not Emmanuel interceded for them. They were then bound, and sent prisoners to Chambéry to receive their trial as malefactors.

The duke, having warmly thanked the Vaudois for their conduct, and promised to transmit to them his views, the bodies

of De Waldeck and the others slain were left on the field, and the duke and Scianca-Ferro returned to Chambéry, the duke more than ever determined not to injure the Vaudois, and thinking how he could best turn to his advantage the unexpected events of the day.

The following day he was waited on by a deputation of the elders, who humbly submitted themselves to his mercy, themselves conducting the prisoners, for him to do with them as he thought fit.

When the deputation withdrew, one of the elders manifested to Scianca-Ferro a desire to speak to him.

"My good man," said Scianca-Ferro, "do you want any thing?"

"I wish merely to relate to you," replied the Vaudois, "a circumstance which I did not think worth telling his highness. Yesterday, his highness having given no orders as to what was to be done with the bodies of the slain, we thought proper to throw them into one of our torrents. I myself directed the proceedings. Two of the bodies were already disposed of, when, on lifting the third, we discovered that he was not dead; and, as we raised him, he uttered in a stifled voice, "Come on! come on!"

"The devil!" said Scianca-Ferro; "that fellow's soul is well screwed into his body! What did you do with him?"

"Those around were of opinion that he ought to be sent after the others; but I, my lord, was not of that opinion. So I had him taken to my house, where he recovered his senses; and by means of a salve he carried about him, he is nearly well. And now, what had I better do with him?"

"My opinion is," said Scianca-Ferro, "that as it seems impossible to kill him, the best way is to let him live. Tell

him, however, to make the best of his way out of these parts, and never to return again."

Some days afterwards, the prisoners expiated on the scaffold, the part they had taken in the attempt of the bastard of Waldeck, upon the life of the Duke of Savoy.

As for the Vaudois, not only did Emmanuel-Philibert not persecute them, but he remitted several years of the tribute they had agreed to pay.

This adventure, however, gave Emmanuel an opportunity of writing to the court of France, that the valley of the Vaudois had submitted to his authority, after a skirmish, in which three heretics, and one of their principal chiefs, had been killed—and that four others, two of whom were emissaries from Geneva, had been made prisoners, and executed at Chambéry.

This is all that Emmanuel did towards the extermination of the Vaudois—which feat, however, is attributed by serious historians, to the prince Emmanuel-Philibert.

CONCLUSION.

It was not, however, before the following year that Catherine de Medicis, fearing to make another powerful enemy, harassed as France then was by the Huguenots, withdrew her troops from Piedmont, and restored to Emmanuel the towns of Turin, Quiere, Villeneuve, Asti, Saluzzi, and Pignerolles. Some time afterwards, Spain, to testify its appreciation of Emmanuel's services, withdrew all her troops from his territories.

Just about this time, when the last seal was set to the

prosperity of her beloved Emmanuel, and that the hero of Savoy, as he was called, became to all intents and purposes, sovereign of his domains, Leona became abbess of the Convent of St. Benoit, over which she continued to preside till the year 1579, when she expired. The same year died also her faithful friend, Scianca-Ferro.

The following year, Emmanuel-Philibert expired, at the age of fifty-two. He was succeeded by *his son*—Madame Margaret of France being regent; and from that son sprang that long line of princes which have to the present day filled the throne of Piedmont.

His *adopted daughter*, at the earliest age, manifested a disposition for a religious life; and, taking the vows, she became, at the death of Leona, abbess of St. Benoit.

THE END.

