

THE  
CHRONICLES OF FRANCE

FOR THE  
REIGN OF CHARLES VI.

A ROMANCE OF REAL LIFE.

---

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF  
ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

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DUBLIN:  
PUBLISHED BY JAMES M'GLASHAN,  
21, D'OLIER STREET.

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## CHAPTER I.

ON Sunday, the 20th\* of August, 1389, at the break of day, there was a vast concourse of people on the road of St. Denis, leading to Paris.

Madame Isabel, the daughter of Duke Etienne of Bavaria, and wife of Charles VI., was about to make her first solemn entrance, as Queen of France, into the capital of the realm.

To say the truth, in justification of the curiosity thus excited, wonderful accounts had been heard of this princess. It was well known that, at his first interview with her, which took place on a Friday,† the king had fallen passionately in love with her, and that it was with great difficulty he granted to his uncle of Burgundy till the Monday following, for preparations for the marriage.

Besides, this alliance had excited great hopes in the realm. It was well known that King Charles V. had, on his death-bed, manifested great anxiety that his son should contract a marriage with a Bavarian princess, in order to counterbalance the influence of Richard of England, who had espoused the sister of the King of Germany. The young prince's love had, therefore, wonderfully seconded the wishes of his father. Moreover, the matrons upon whom the duty devolved, had declared

\* According to Froissart, the parliamentary registers say the 22nd.

† Friday, July 15, 1385.

that she was likely to give heirs to the throne; and the birth of a son, at the expiration of a year, had done honour to their experience. There were, indeed, as there are at the commencement of every reign, some prophets of evil, who foretold that the affair would turn out badly, a Friday being a unlucky day for a nuptial interview; but nothing had as yet given credence to their predictions; and their voices, had they attempted to make them heard, would have been quickly stifled by the cries of joy which, on the day when our history opens, heedlessly escaped from every mouth.

As the principal persons who will figure in this chronicle were required, either by their birth or dignity, to assume a place by the side or in the train of the queen, we will, with the reader's permission, follow the course of the procession, which only awaits the arrival of Duke Louis of Touraine, the king's brother, whose scrupulous care at the toilette, as some say, or an amour, as others declare, has already caused to be half an hour too late. This, if not a new, will at least be a convenient method of forming an acquaintance with the men and manners of the period. There will also be found some particulars in this picture, which we shall sketch from the descriptions given to us by the historians\* of the time, that will not, perhaps, be devoid of interest or originality.

We have said, then, that on this Sunday the concourse of people outside the walls of Paris was wonderfully great. The ample road was covered with men and women, as thickly pressed together as are the ears in a field of corn; and the resemblance became even more perceptible at every accident that caused this multitude to undulate like a harvest field. So dense was it, that the slightest shock, felt by one portion, instantaneously communicated itself to the whole mass.

At eleven o'clock, great cries, that were heard in front of this throng, and a vibration that ran through its entire length, announced to the impatient multitude the approach of some new arrival. It was the Queen Jeanne, and the Duchess of Orleans, her daughter, who, by means of sergeants who marched before them, striking the people with their staves, opened a passage through these living waves; whilst, to prevent them from closing up

\* The authors who give the fullest particulars of this ceremony, are Froissart, the Monk of St. Denis, and Juvenal of the Ursulines.

behind them, a chosen band of Parisian citizens, to the number of twelve hundred, marched in two lines on each side of the road. The men who had been selected to form this guard of honour, were clothed in long robes of green and vermilion silk, and their heads were covered with hoods, the ends of which fell upon their shoulders, where they floated like scarfs, when, by chance, some gentle breeze passed by, refreshing the heavy summer atmosphere, rendered even more oppressive by the clouds of dust raised by the feet of men and horses. Being torn asunder and driven back by this movement, the people rushed into the meadows that extended on each side, and the middle of the road formed a channel, of which the citizens of Paris represented the two banks, and in the bed of which the royal procession could progress freely. In those days, the deportment of the people in the presence of their king, though probably influenced by a natural degree of curiosity, was invariably distinguished by an outward display of affection and respect; and if the monarchy, from that time, occasionally enjoyed the respect of its subjects in an equal degree, certain it is, that it never again commanded the love which was displayed at this period. Such a movement as this, in our days, could not be effected without much clamour and exertions on the part of the police and military; but, on the occasion we are recording, every one gaily drew aside, and, as the meadow land was lower than the road, ran hastily to gain all the prominent situations which would command a view of the route. In one minute every house in the vicinity, from the roof to the ground floor, was covered with occupants; and every tree scattered around, from the lowest to the topmost branch, presented a mass of anxious spectators. Those who dared not attempt such perilous situations, drew themselves up on the slopes of the road, the crest of which was crowned by the citizens. The women raised themselves on the points of their toes; the children climbed up to their father's shoulders; and every one found a place, whether good or bad, some commanding a view of the citizens' hoods, and others modestly contenting themselves with the very extensive prospect afforded them through the legs of the horses.

The confusion caused by the passage of Queen Jeanne and the Duchess of Orleans, who proceeded in advance

to the palace,\* where the king awaited them, had scarcely ceased, before the long expected litter of the queen was seen to issue forth from the principal street of St. Denis.

As I have said, a vast curiosity had been excited in the immense population to see this young princess, who had not yet completed her nineteenth year, and on whom half the hopes of the monarchy reposed. And yet, perhaps, the first glance that the crowd cast on her did not justify the reputation for beauty that preceded her to the capital; for it was beauty of a singular kind, to which it was necessary to become accustomed. And this arose from the marked contrast presented by fair hair, of even a golden hue, and eye-brows as black as ebony, the distinct and characteristic emblems of the northern and southern races, that, mingling in this fair creature, at the same time gave to her heart the ardent passions of a young Italian, and to her brow the disdainful haughtiness of a German princess.

As for her person, a statuary could not have desired more harmonious proportions for a model of Diana bathing. Her countenance formed that perfect oval, to which, two centuries later, Raphael gave his name. The close-fitting robes and tight sleeves that were worn at that period, left no doubt as to the delicacy of her figure and the symmetry of her arms; and her hand, which, perhaps, through coquetry as much as from chance, she allowed to hang out of one of the windows, stood out from the stuff with which the carriage was lined, like a basso-relievo of alabaster on a ground of gold. The rest of her person was completely concealed, it was true, by the panels of her litter; but it was clearly perceptible, on looking at a body so delicate and aerial, that it must be supported by fairy limbs and infantine feet. Therefore, the feeling of singularity that was experienced on first beholding her, vanished almost as soon as it was felt; and the warm yet soft expression of her eyes resumed that fascinating empire which Milton, and all the poets after him, have made the characteristic and fatal charm of their fallen angels.

The queen's litter was attended by six of the first

\* The Palace of Justice.

\* Queen Isabel was, it is well known, the daughter of Duke Etienne of Bavaria Ingolstadt, and of Thaddea of Milan.

nobles of France. The two who marched first were the Duke of Touraine and the Duke of Bourbon. Under the name of the Duke of Touraine, which, at first, might mislead our readers, must be understood the younger brother of King Charles, the youthful and handsome Louis de Valois.

We will content ourselves, after the persons whom we have described to our readers, by simply giving the names of those who followed. These were the Duchess of Burgundy, and the Countess de Nevres, attended by Messire Henry de Bar, and the Count de Namur. There was Madame d'Orleans, on a tastefully and richly ornamented palfrey, led by Messire Jackemart de Bourbon, and Messire Philip d'Artois. There were Madame the Duchess de Bar and her daughter, accompanied by Messire Charles d'Albre and the Lord de Coucy. The name alone of the latter would awaken a lofty memento, did we not ourselves hasten to evoke it for him, by repeating his motto, the most modest or the haughtiest of the age :

" Neither Prince nor Duke am I :  
I am the Seigneur of Coucy."

We will not now mention the nobles and ladies who followed, whether on coursers, in covered chariots, or on palfreys. It will be sufficient to say, that the head of the procession, where the queen was, reached the streets of the capital when the pages and squires, who brought up the rear, had not left St. Denis. Throughout the whole of the route the young queen had been received by the cry of " Christmas," which, at that time, was used, instead of " Long live the king : " for, in those days of belief, the people had not found any word which could better express their joy than that which recalled the day of Christ's nativity. It is superfluous to add, that the looks of the men were divided between Madame Isabel of Bavaria and Madame Valentine of Milan: and those of the women, between the Duke of Touraine and the Count de Nevres.

Having reached the gate of St. Denis, the queen stopped, for here the first resting-place had been prepared for her. It was a kind of vast altar, entirely hung with blue satin, with a sky covered with golden stars. In the clouds that coursed along this sky were children dressed as angels, who sang softly and melodiously, in concert

with a young and beautiful girl, who represented Our Lady, and who held a little child on her lap, the image of the infant Jesus, who was playing with a mill made out of a large nut; and the top of this heaven, on which was depicted the quartered escutcheons of France and Bavaria, was lighted by that resplendent golden sun which, we have said, was the device of the King of France. The queen was wonderfully surprised at this spectacle, and praised the arrangement. Then, when the angels had finished their song, and it was thought that the queen had examined everything, the back part of the altar opened, displaying to view the whole of the street of St. Denis, covered in like an immense tent, and all the houses hung with camlet and silk, "as if," says Froissart, "the cloth had cost nothing, or that they had been at Alexandria or Damascus."

The queen stopped a moment. It might have been imagined that she hesitated on trusting herself in that capital which expected her with such impatience, and greeted her with such affection. Could any presentiment strike one so young and so beautiful, and who was making her entrance accompanied by such pomp and festivities, that her body would, one day, issue forth from this same city, in the midst of curses and execrations, carried on the back of a boatman, who was charged by the porter of the Hotel de St. Paul to deliver what remained of Isabel of Bavaria to the monks of St. Denis?

She, however, again pursued her course, but was seen to turn pale on entering that long street, and on dividing that mighty throng that had only to re-unite to crush between them the queen, her horses, and her litter. Nevertheless, no accident happened: the citizens kept their ranks, and they soon came to a fountain covered with azure cloth, and bespangled with golden fleur-de-lis. All round this fountain were painted and carved columns, to which were suspended the noblest escutcheons of France: instead of water, it poured forth wine in copious streams, perfumed with spices and Asiatic odours; and around the columns stood young girls, bearing in their hands golden cups and silver goblets, in which they offered the beverage to Isabel, and the princes and nobles of her suite. The queen took a cupful from one of them, raised it to her lips out of compliment to her, and returned it immediately; but the Duke of Touraine

hastily snatched the same cup from the young girl's hand, appeared to search for the place which the queen's lips had touched, and, pressing his own lips to the same spot, he swallowed at a draught the liquor on which the mouth of his sovereign had breathed. The colour, that had for an instant left Isabel's cheeks, quickly returned to them; for there was no mistaking the duke's action, which, rapid as it was, did not escape observation: so much so, that it was variously discussed at court during the evening; and the people of even the most opposite opinions, united in considering the duke very bold, in having ventured to take such a liberty with the wife of his sovereign lord and master, and the queen very indulgent, in having only shown her displeasure by a blush.

However, a fresh spectacle promptly offered to turn the attention from this incident. They had arrived opposite the convent of the Trinity, and before the door, a platform, in the shape of a theatre, had been raised, on which the passage of arms of King Saladin was to be represented. The Christians were consequently there ranged on one side, the Saracens on the other; and in these two troops were discovered all the persons who had figured in this famous joust, the actors who represented them wearing the armour of the 13th century, and the escutcheons and devices of those whose characters they exhibited. In the background sat King Philip Augustus; and, standing around him, the twelve peers of his realm. The moment the queen's litter stopped before the platform, King Richard Cœur de Lion came forth from the ranks, went up to the King of France, and kneeling before him, demanded his permission to go and contend with the Saracens. This having been graciously accorded by Philip Augustus, Richard instantly arose, and rejoining his companions, placed them in battle array, and proceeded instantaneously to attack the Infidels. Then there was a violent contest, at the termination of which the Saracens were vanquished and put to flight. One part of the fugitives saved themselves through the convent windows, which were on a level with the theatre, and had been left open for that purpose. But that did not prevent the capture of many prisoners, who were led by King Richard towards the queen, who demanded their liberty, and, for their ransom, unclasped a golden bracelet, and gave it to the conqueror.

“Oh!” said the Duke of Touraine, resting his hand on the litter, “had I known that such a recompense was reserved for the actor, no one but myself should have played the character of King Richard.”

Isabel cast her eyes on the second bracelet, with which one of her arms was still adorned; then repressing this first impulse that had betrayed her thoughts, “You are rash and foolish, my lord duke,” said she; “such games are fit for stage-players and buffoons, but would not become the king’s brother.”

The Duke of Touraine was about to reply, but Isabel gave the signal for the procession to move, and turning her head toward the Duke of Bourbon, she conversed with him, without again looking at her brother-in-law, until she arrived at the second gate of St. Denis, which was called the Gate of the Painters, and which was demolished under Francis I. There a chateau was magnificently represented, and, as at the first gate, a starry heaven, in the midst of which appeared, in all their majesty, God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and around the Trinity, were infant choristers, softly singing the *Gloria* and the *Veni Creator*. At the moment that the queen passed, the gate of Paradise opened, and two angels, with golden glories and painted wings, clothed the one in rose colour, the other in blue, wearing long shoes turned up at the toes, all embroidered with silver, came forth from it, holding a very beautiful crown of gold, garnished with precious stones; and, gliding towards the queen, placed it on her head, at the same time singing this quatrain:—

“Fair lady, crowned with fleur-de-lis,  
Bright queen art thou of fair Paris;  
Yea! queen of France, and all countries.  
Back we hie to our Paradise.”

And at the conclusion, as they had declared, they mounted again to heaven, the entrance to which closed upon them.

In the meantime, on the other side of the gate, fresh personages awaited the queen, and she was gently warned of their presence, that she might not be alarmed by their appearance, which probably would have been the case had not this precaution been taken. They were the deputies of the six companies of merchants, bearing

a canopy, and they came to claim the ancient privilege, which authorized them to accompany the kings and queens of France, as soon as they had entered Paris, from the gate of St. Denis to the palace. They were followed by the representatives of the different bodies of traders, clothed in characteristic dresses, and representing the seven deadly sins,—Pride, Avarice, Idleness, Luxury, Envy, Anger, and Gluttony; and, as a contrast, the seven Christian virtues,—Faith, Hope, Charity, Temperance, Justice, Prudence, and Resolution; whilst by their side, and forming a separate and distinct group, were Death, Purgatory, Hell, and Paradise. Although prepared for it, the queen, on perceiving this strange masquerade, manifested a certain repugnance to place herself in their hands. The Duke of Touraine, on his part, was greatly irritated at being compelled to relinquish the place he occupied near the litter; but these privileges of the people were then in full force, and secured for them their station on each side of royalty. The Duke of Bourbon and the other nobles had already left the litter, and were gone to take their places in the ranks, when Isabel turned towards the Duke of Touraine, who remained obstinately at her carriage window.

“Your excellence,” she said to him, “will it please you to give way to these good people, or do you await our leave to depart?”

“Yes, madame and queen,” replied the duke, “I was waiting for an order from you; and, more than all, for a look that would give me strength to obey it.”

“Sir, and my brother-in-law,” said Isabel, leaning towards the duke, “I do not know whether we can meet again this evening; but do not forget that, tomorrow, I am not only Queen of France, but also queen of the jousts, and that this bracelet shall be the reward of the victor.”

The duke bowed, even to the panels of Isabel's carriage. Those who were at a distance from the spot where this scene was passing, only saw, in this salutation, one of those marks of respect that every subject, were he even a prince of the blood, owed to his sovereign; but some who were nearer, and who could penetrate with their eyes into the narrow space between the duke's horse and the litter, thought they could perceive that in

that brief moment the duke's lips having met the queen's hand, had applied themselves to it with more ardour, and had pressed it for a longer time, than the etiquette of kissing hands allowed.

However this might be, the duke raised himself up on his saddle, with a brow radiant with joy and happiness; Isabel drew over her face as a veil, the long lappets of the enormously lofty cap worn at that period, and which was denominated a *hennin*; a last glance was exchanged by them through the indulgent gauze, and then the duke spurred his horse, and went to take the place of the constable Clisson, near his wife.

In the meantime, the deputies of the six companies of merchants drew near the royal litter, and placed themselves three on each side, holding the canopy over the queen. The Christian Virtues and the Deadly Sins took their place in their train; and behind them marched, at a slow pace, and with a gravity suitable to their character, Death, Purgatory, Hell, and Paradise. The procession resumed its march; but a whimsical accident shortly deranged its regularity.

At the corner of the Rue des Lombards and of the Rue St. Denis, two men, mounted on the same horse, caused a great uproar. The crowd was such that it was wonderful how they got there. It is true that they appeared perfectly careless of the threats uttered against them by the poor devils whom they overthrew in their way. Their audacity had even risen to such a pitch as to brave the sergeants themselves, and to receive with stoical indifference, the blows from their staves, by means of which they had hoped to make these men turn back. But menaces and blows had been alike thrown away upon them. They still kept advancing, returning with interest to the right and left, the blows they received; thrusting the people before them with their horse's chest, as a vessel breasts the sea with her prow, and opening amid the waves, which closed up in their wake, a slow but progressive course. They had in this manner arrived in time for the procession, and it was hoped that they meant quietly to see it defile; when, at the moment that Queen Isabel passed them, he who held the reins appeared to receive an order from his comrade. Prompt to obey, almost at the same moment he struck, with the stick that he held in his hand, the head and the crupper of the

two horses of the citizens who barred the passage. The one went forward, the other retreated, and by this interruption a kind of breach was made in the continuity of the line. The horsemen took advantage of this to rush into the middle of the procession, passing within two steps of the Duchess of Touraine's horse, which, alarmed by this sudden apparition, would infallibly have thrown Madame Valentine, if the Sire de Craon had not seized her palfrey by the bit, just at the moment that he was rearing up. By this movement they precipitated themselves towards the queen, upsetting Paradise over Hell, Death over Purgatory, and the Christian Virtues over the Deadly Sins; and thus reached the queen, in the midst of the general clamour of the populace, who took them for evil-disposed fellows or madmen, and, pursued by the Dukes of Touraine and Bourbon, who, seeing them directing themselves towards Madame Isabel, and fearing some evil intention, had come, sword in hand, to defend her.

The queen, on her part, was greatly alarmed by this tumult. She was as yet ignorant of the cause, when she beheld the two culprits between the deputies of the merchants who held the canopy, and the litter. Her first impulse was to throw herself back; but the rider, who was on the crupper, said some words to her in a low voice, raised his hood, took from it a large gold chain enriched with fleur-de-lis in diamonds, and threw it over the queen's neck, who gracefully bent forward to receive his present; and both, spurring their horse, went back again like an arrow. Almost at the same moment, the Dukes of Touraine and Burgundy came up, who, having seen nothing of what had passed, except that these two men had the queen in their power, were brandishing their swords, and crying out, "Death, death to the traitors!" The people were everywhere so closely packed, that there was no doubt of their reaching the unknown horsemen, more particularly as they found it quite as difficult to leave the Rue St. Denis as to enter it. Every one, therefore, was expecting some catastrophe, when the queen, seeing what was likely to happen, half rose from her litter, stretched her arms towards her brother-in-law, and her cousin, exclaiming—"Gentlemen, what are you about to do? It is the king!"

The two dukes stopped instantaneously; but now, ap-

prehensive that something might happen to the king, they stood up in their stirrups, and holding their swords out towards the crowd, with a gesture of command, they called out in a loud voice—"It is the king, gentlemen and nobles;" then, taking off their hoods, they added—"Honour and respect to the king!"

The king, for it was really Charles himself who was on the crupper behind Messire Charles de Savoisy, answered these words by raising his hood in his turn: and the people could recognise, by his long chestnut hair, and blue eyes, by his mouth, somewhat large, but garnished with magnificent teeth, by the elegance of his figure, but, more than all, by the benevolence diffused over his whole countenance, the sovereign for whom they preserved, in spite of the misfortunes that overwhelmed his subjects during the course of his reign, the name of "Well Beloved;" and which they had given him, by anticipation, on the day that he ascended the throne.

Then the cries of "Christmas," resounded on all sides; whilst the pages and squires waved their masters, banners, and the ladies their scarfs and handkerchiefs.—Then that gigantic serpent, which was creeping through the entire length of the Rue St. Denis, as in a great ravine, appeared to redouble its vitality, and rolled more actively, from the head to the tail, its variegated rings; for there was a vast movement, and every one endeavoured to get a sight of the king. But, taking advantage of the opening that respect had made when his incognita was discovered, Charles had already disappeared.

A good half-hour had elapsed before the disorder caused by this event had subsided.

A remnant of agitation pervaded the crowd, that prevented them resuming their ranks. Messire Pierre de Craon took advantage of it, to remark maliciously to Madame Valentine, that her husband, perhaps the only one who could abridge this delay, by returning to her side, on the contrary prolonged it, by conversing with the queen, and thus delaying the litter, the movement of which ought to be the signal of departure.

Madame Valentine endeavoured to smile unconcernedly at these words; but a half-smothered sigh escaped from the bottom of her heart, giving the lie to her eyes. She then said, in a voice, of which she in vain endea-

voured to conceal the emotion, "Messire Pierre, why do you not make this observation to the duke himself—you who are his faithful friend?"

"It is what I shall avoid, without your express command, madame: would not his return deprive me of the privilege which his absence gives me, that of alone guarding you?"

"My sole and true guardian is his excellence the Duke of Touraine; and, since you only awaited my command, go and tell him that I request him to come to me."

Pierre de Craon bowed, and went to carry madame Valentine's message to the duke.

At the moment that the duke and his friends were returning towards her, a piercing cry issued from the crowd: a young girl had just fainted. This was of too common occurrence to claim the attention of the great personages of whom we are now treating. They therefore returned, without even looking towards the spot where this event had happened, to take their places near the Duchess of Touraine; and, as if the procession had only awaited this moment, it immediately resumed its march, but soon found a motive for again halting.

At the gate of the chatelet of Paris was an erection representing a chateau, painted with stone, at the corners of which arose two round turrets, having on them sentinels completely armed. The large room on the ground-floor of this chateau was open to the public view, as if the wall towards the street had been thrown down. In this chamber was a bed, adorned and curtained as richly as was that of the king in his Hotel St. Paul; and in this bed, which represented the bed of Justice, a young girl was laid in the character of Madame St. Anne.

Around this chateau so many green trees had been planted, that it might have been taken for the thickest forest; and, in this forest, a number of hares and rabbits were running about; whilst birds of all colours were flying from bough to bough, to the great astonishment of the multitude, who wondered how animals, generally so wild, could be thus tamed. But the astonishment was still greater, when they saw come forth from this wood a beautiful stag, as large as those that are kept at the king's palace, and so skilfully formed, that it might have been supposed to be living and animated, for

a man concealed in its body made its eyes move, its mouth open, and its legs walk. Its horns were of gold; a crown, like the royal crown, was upon its head; and over its chest hung an azure escutcheon, with three golden fleurs-de-lis, representing the arms of the king and of France. Thus, proud and beautiful, the noble animal advanced towards the bed of Justice, took the sword, with its right foot, and shook it, raising it up in the air. At this moment, and from the opposite side of the forest, a lion and an eagle were seen to come forth, the symbols of force, and which wished to carry off the sacred sword by violence; but twelve young damsels, clothed in white, each bearing a golden chaplet in one hand, and a naked sword in the other, in their turn issued from the forest, and being the symbols of religion, they surrounded the stag, and prepared to defend him. After some vain and fruitless efforts to accomplish their design, the lion and the eagle, being vanquished, re-entered the forest. The living rampart that defended Justice opened, and the stag went, softly and gently, and knelt down before the queen's litter, who coaxed and caressed him, as she was accustomed to do to those that the king fed at his palace. This display was considered very curious, both by the queen and the nobles of her suite. In the meantime, evening had arrived; for, from St. Denis, they had only been able to march at a very slow pace, and the different spectacles ranged along the road had greatly retarded the procession; but, at last, they approached Notre-Dame, where the Queen was going.— They had only now to pass through the Point-au-Change, and it was thought that no new spectacle could be invented; when suddenly a wonderful and unexpected sight was seen: a man, dressed as an angel, appeared on the very top of the tower of Notre-Dame, bearing a torch in each hand, and walking on a rope, so small that it could scarcely be distinguished. He descended over the houses, appearing to glide into the air, as if by a miracle; and having made many turns and evolutions, came and placed himself on one of the houses close to the bridge.\*

\* Froissart and the Monk of St. Denis records the same fact; only Froissart mentions the Pont St Michel as the scene of this spectacle, whilst the Monk of St. Denis names the Pont-au-Change. Froissart is evidently mistaken: such a spectacle could not be prepared on the Pont

When the queen came opposite to him, she forbade him to return by the same way, for fear of some accident; but he, knowing her motive for giving the order, did not pay any attention to it, and remounting backwards that he might not turn his back upon his sovereign, he regained the summit of the tower of the cathedral, and plunged into the same opening through which he had issued. The queen inquired who this man was who was so nimble and skilful; and she was informed that he was a Genoese by birth, a great master of these kind of feats.

During this last spectacle, the bird merchants had assembled in great numbers on the queen's route, bearing a vast quantity of caged sparrows, which they allowed to fly away and escape, as she passed along the bridge. It was an old custom, by which allusion was made to the hope always entertained by the people that a new reign would furnish wings to new liberties: the custom is obsolete, but the hope still exists.

Having reached the Notre Dame, the queen found the Bishop of Paris standing off the steps of the portico, clothed with his mitre and stole, and the casque and cuirass of our Saviour. Around him were the superior clergy, and the deputies of the university, to which the title of eldest daughter of the king gave the privilege of assisting at the coronation. The queen alighted from her litter, as did also the ladies of her suite and the cavaliers, who gave their horses to the care of the pages or grooms; and accompanied by the Dukes of Touraine, Berri, Burgundy, and Bourbon, she entered the church, following the bishop and the clergy, who sang, loud and clear, the praises of God and of the Virgin Mary.

When they came to the high altar, Madame Isabel placed herself devoutly on her knees; and, having repeated her orisons, she made a present to the church of Notre Dame of four pieces of cloth of gold, and of the crown that the angels had placed on her head at the second gate of St. Denis. In exchange, Messire John de la Riviere and Messire John le Mercier brought one richer and more beautiful, equal to that worn by the king when he sat on his throne. The bishop took it by the fleur-de-lis that encircled it; and the four dukes, supporting it in their hands, gently placed it on the head

St. Michel, which is situated at the other side of the church of Notre-Dame, and which, consequently, was not in the queen's route.

of Madame Isabel. Loud cries of joy immediately rose on every side; for, from that moment, Madame Isabel was really Queen of France.

The queen and nobles then left the church, and remounted their litters, their horses and their palfreys. There were, on both sides of the procession, six hundred servants, bearing waxlights; so that there was as much light in the streets as if the sun had been in the heavens. It was thus that the queen was conducted to the palace of Paris, where the king was waiting to receive her, having, on his right, the Queen Jeanne, and, on his left, the Duchess of Orleans. When she came opposite to them, the queen descended and fell on her knees, as she had done in the church; thereby showing that she acknowledged God as her sovereign in heaven, and the king as her sovereign on earth. The king raised her up and embraced her; the people cried "Christmas;" for they believed, on seeing them so united, so young, and so handsome, that the two guardian angels of the realm of France had come down from the right and left hand of God.

Then the nobles took leave of the king and queen, to retire, each to his own hotel. Those only remained who were of the household. As for the people, they remained in front of the palace, and cried out "Christmas" till the last page had followed the last nobleman. Then the door was closed; the lights that illumined the square dispersed, or were gradually extinguished, and the crowd flowed through the thousand diverging streets, which, like the arteries and veins, carry the life to the extremities of the capital. Soon this tumult became only a sort of confused sound; then this sound itself gradually diminished. An hour later, all was silence and obscurity; and nothing was heard but that vague and dull murmur, which is composed of all those nocturnal and undefinable noises which resemble the deep breathing of a sleeping giant.

We have expatiated copiously on Queen Isabel's entrance into the city of Paris, on the persons who attended her, and on the fêtes given to her on the occasion, in order not only to give our readers some idea of the manners and customs of the times, but also to display, whilst yet timid and feeble as streams at their sources, those fatal loves and those deadly hatreds which from

that time, sprung up around the throne. Now, we shall behold them agitated by every wind, swelling amid every storm, and traversing, unbridled and destructive, that land of France, in which they were about to plough such deep furrows, and that unhappy reign which they were soon to desolate by their inundations.

## CHAPTER II.

THERE is no romance writer or historian who has not metaphysically enlarged on slight causes and great effects. It is impossible to fathom the depths of history, or the intricacies of the heart, without being alarmed on perceiving how easily a frivolous incident, which, at its birth, passed unheeded and unperceived amidst that infinite number of trifling events of which life is compounded, may, at the expiration of a certain lapse of time, become the catastrophe of an existence or an empire. Therefore it is one of the most attractive studies of the poet and philosopher, to penetrate into that fulfilled catastrophe, as into the crater of the extinguished volcano; then following it into all its ramifications, to trace it back to its source. It is true that those whose dispositions incline them to devote themselves to such researches, and who follow them for a length of time, and, enthusiastically, run the hazard of gradually exchanging their old ideas for new ones, and, according as they are guided by the torch of science or the star of faith, from religious become atheistical, or from irreligious become believers. For, in the concatenation of circumstances, the one has imagined that he has discovered the fantastic caprice of chance, and the other the intelligent hand of God. The one, like Ugo Foscolo, has uttered the word "Fatality;" the other has said, with Silvio Pellico, "Providence;" and thus has been uttered by them the only two words that have their complete equivalents in our language—despair and resignation.

It is, doubtless, from the contempt in which they have held these minute details, and the curious researches, that our modern historians have made the study of our

history\* so dry and tiresome. What is most interesting in the organization of the human machine is not the organs necessary to life, but the muscles from which it derives its strength, and the infinite combination of veins which supply it with blood.

Instead of this criticism which we would avoid, we shall, perhaps, incur the opposite reproach. We are convinced that, in the material organization of Nature, as in the moral existence of man—in the successions of beings as in the events of life—there is no inconsistency; that no one step of the ladder of Jacob is broken; and that every kind has its proper place, every thing its precedent.

We will therefore do all in our power in order that the thread may not break in our hands which unites the trivial events to the grand catastrophe; and our readers will only have to follow it, to wind through, with us, the thousand meanderings of the garden of Dædalus.

This exordium appeared necessary to us at the commencement of a chapter that might, at first, appear inconsistent with that which we have just written, and unconnected with those that are to follow. It is true that the mistake would soon be discovered; but we yield to fear from experience, and are anxious lest we should be judged partially before we have been examined universally. This explanation having been given, we return to our subject.

If the reader is not afraid of trusting himself with us in the streets of Paris, which, at the close of the preceding chapter we have shown him so deserted and gloomy, we will transport him to the Rue Coquilliere and of the Rue du Sejour. We shall scarcely be ensconced there, before we shall perceive a man issue forth from a private door of the hotel de Touraine, (which afterwards became the hotel d'Orleans,) enveloped in one of those large cloaks, the hoods of which were lowered over the face when those who wore them wished to be unknown. This man, after having stopped to count the hour, which was striking ten by the great clock of the Louvre, no doubt finds that this hour would be dangerous to him; for in order that he may not be taken unprepared, he draws his sword from the scabbard, makes it bend, by

\* It must be understood that, in charges of this nature, Guizot, Chateaubriand, and Thierry are always excepted.

placing the point against the threshold, as if to convince himself of its temper; and satisfied, no doubt, by the examination he had made, he walks carelessly forward, drawing sparks from the pavement with the point of his sword, and singing, in a low voice, an ancient roundelay of the household of De Coucy.

Let us follow him into the Rue des Etuves, but yet slowly, for he stops at the Croix des Trahoir to say a short prayer; then, rising up again, he renews his song where he had left it off, and goes down the great Rue St. Honore, singing gradually in a lower tone, as he approaches the Rue de la Ferronnerie; having reached it, he wholly ceases his singing, and silently skirts along a third part of the wall of the Cemetery des Saints-Innocents; then, suddenly crossing the street at a rapid pace, he stops before a little door at which he gives three gentle knocks. It appeared, however, that he was expected; for, soft as was the call, it was answered by these words—

“Is it you, Master Louis?” and on an affirmative response, the door was quietly opened, and again closed as soon as the threshold was passed.

And yet, great as was the apparent haste of the personage whom we have heard called Master Louis, he stopped in the passage, returned his sword to the scabbard, and, throwing the kind of mantle with sleeves that he had worn over the arm of his conductress, appeared in a costume which was at the same time simple, but elegant. This costume, which was that of a squire of a good household, consisted of a hood of dark velvet, and of a tight-fitting coat of the same material and colour, slashed from the wrist to the shoulder, to display a tight sleeve of green camlet, and was completed by tight pantaloons of violet-coloured stuff, on one of the thighs of which was embroidered an escutcheon, supporting three fleurs-de-lis in gold, and surmounted by a ducal coronet.

When he found himself relieved from his cloak, Master Louis, though he had neither light nor mirror, bestowed a minute upon his toilette; and it was not till he had drawn down his coat that it might fit gracefully to his figure, that he was certain that his beautiful fair hair fell smooth and even on his shoulders, that he said in an easy manner—

“Good even, nurse Joanna. You keep a good watch,

for which I thank you. What is your pretty mistress doing?"

"She is waiting for you."

"Very well, here I am. She is in her little room, is she not?"

"Yes, master."

"And her father?"

"He is in bed."

"Good."

At this moment, the point of his long, upturned shoe touched the first step of the winding stairs that led to the upper rooms of the house; and although there was no light whatever, he mounted the flights like a man to whom the way was familiar. Having reached the second floor, he perceived a light through the opening of a door: this he gently approached, and had only to push it with his hand, to find himself in an apartment, the furniture of which was that of a person of the middle rank.

The unknown had entered it on tiptoe, and without being heard. He could, therefore, examine for a moment the graceful picture offered to his view. Near a bed, with twisted columns, and green damask curtains, a young girl was kneeling before her praying-desk. She was clothed in a long white robe, whose sleeves, hanging even to the ground, allowed her gracefully-rounded arms to be seen from the elbow, terminated by two hands, white and tapering, on which her head was resting. Her long, fair hair, falling over her shoulders, followed the undulations of her figure, and descended, like a net-work of gold, even to the floor. There was something so simple in this costume, so celestial and aerial, that it might have been imagined that she, who bore it belonged to another world, if some stifled sobs had not denoted a daughter of earth, born of woman and made to suffer.

On hearing these sobs, the unknown made a movement. The young girl turned round. The unknown remained motionless on seeing her so sad and so pale.

Then she arose, came forward softly towards this handsome young man, who remained silent and astonished, watching her approach: then, when she was some steps from him, she put her knee to the ground.

"What are you doing, Odette?" he said to her; "and what means this attitude?"

"It is," said the young girl, sorrowfully shaking her head, "that which suits a poor child like myself, when she finds herself in the presence of such a great prince as you are."

"Are you dreaming, Odette?"

"Would to God I were dreaming, your excellence; and that, on waking, I found myself, as I was before I saw you, without tears in my eyes, without love in my heart!"

"Upon my soul you are mad, or some one must have told you a lie. Come, let us see."

At these words, he threw his arms round the young girl's waist, and raised her up; but she recoiled from the duke, by pushing him with her hands, and bending backwards, but yet without being able to break the bond that retained her.

"I am not mad, your excellence," she continued, without making any further effort to disengage her elf, of which she perceived the inutility, "and moreover, no one has told me a lie: I saw you myself."

"And where?"

"In the procession, speaking to Madame the Queen; and I recognised you, although you were magnificently dressed, your excellence."

"But you deceive yourself, Odette; and some resemblance misleads you."

"Yes, I endeavoured to think so, and perhaps I might have concluded that I was mistaken; but another nobleman went and addressed you, and I discovered the person who came here with you the day before yesterday, whom you called your friend, and who, you said, was, like yourself, in the service of the Duke of Touraine."

"Pierre de Craon?"

"Yes, that is his name, I believe: so I was told!"—She paused, and then resumed, with great sadness:—

"You did not see me, your excellence; for you had no eyes but for the queen. You did not hear the cry I gave when I fainted, and thought I was dying; for you only listened to the queen's voice, and that is natural enough, she is so beautiful—Ah! my God! my God!"

At these words, the heart of the poor child was overwhelmed with sobs.

"Well, now, Odette," said the duke, "what does it signify who I am, if I always love you?"

"What does it signify, your excellence?" said Odette, releasing herself from his arms—"what does it signify, do you say? I do not understand you."

But almost immediately, and as if exhausted by the effort, she let her head fall upon her bosom, looking still at the duke.

"And what would become of me," she said, "if, believing you my equal, I had yielded to you, in the hope of marrying me, when you implored me on your knees? This evening on coming here, you would have found me dead. Oh! but you would have soon forgotten me—the queen is so beautiful!"

"Come, then, Odette: I confess that I have deceived you, in saying that I was only a squire: I am the Duke of Touraine. It is true."

Odette heaved a profound sigh.

"But tell me, do you not love me better, rich and brilliant as you saw me yesterday, than simple and poor as you see me now?"

"I, your excellence? I do not love you."

"What! But you have told me twenty times—"

"I loved Louis the squire—I loved him who was the equal of the poor Odette of the Champs-Divers; I loved him sufficiently to give up my blood and my life for him with a smile; I would also give them, from duty, to his excellence, the Duke of Touraine. But what would the noble husband of Madame Valentine of Milan, and the gallant cavalier of Queen Isabel of Bavaria, do with my blood and my life?"

The duke was going to answer, when the nurse entered in great affright. "Oh, my poor child," said she, running up to Odette, "what do they want to do with you?"

"Who?" said the duke.

"Oh, Master Louis! they have sent for mademoiselle."

"Where from?"

"From the court."

The duke frowned.

"From the court?" And he looked at Odette. "And who has sent for her, may I inquire?" he added, looking distrustfully at Joanna.

"Madame Valentine of Milan."

"My wife!" exclaimed the duke.

"His wife!" repeated Joanna, quite astounded.

"Yes, his wife," said Odette, laying her hand upon

the nurse's shoulder, "it is his excellence the king's brother that you see there. And he has a wife, and he will have said to that wife, with a laugh, 'There is, in the Rue de la Ferronnerie, opposite the Cemetery des Saints-Innocents, a poor girl, who receives me every evening, whilst her aged father—oh, it is wonderful how she loves me!'" Odette gave a bitter laugh. "That is what he has said to her; and his wife, doubtless, wishes to see me."

"Odette," broke in the duke, with great vehemence, "may I die if it is so! I would rather have lost a hundred thousand livres than this should have happened! Oh, I swear that I will find out who has revealed our secrets; and evil betide him who has thus trifled with me!" He made a movement to leave the room.

"Where are you going, your excellence?" said Odette.

"No one in the Hotel de Touraine has any right to give an order but myself; and I am going to command the people who are below to retire instantaneously."

"You are at liberty to do just as you please, your excellence; but these men will recognise you: they will tell Madame Valentine that you are here, of which, she is, perhaps, ignorant. She will believe me more culpable than I am at present, and then I shall be lost without redemption."

"But you will not go to the hotel de Touraine?"

"On the contrary, your excellence, it is necessary that I should go. I shall see Madame Valentine; and, if she has only suspicions, I will confess everything to her. Then I will fall at her knees, and she will pardon me. As for you, your excellence, she will pardon you too; and your absolution will be even easier to be obtained than mine."

"Do what you like, Odette," said the duke; "you are always right, and you are an angel."

Odette smiled sadly, and made a sign to Joanna to give her a mantle.

"And how do you mean to go to the hotel?"

"Those men have got a litter," said Joanna, placing the mantle on the shoulders of her mistress.

"At any rate, I will watch over you," said the duke.

"God has as yet guarded me, your excellence; and I

hope that he will, in his goodness, guard me for the future."

At these words, she bowed respectfully to the duke: then descending the staircase, "Here I am, gentlemen," she said to the men who were waiting for her: "I am at your command; lead me where you please."

The duke remained a moment motionless and silent where Odette had left him: then, rushing out of the room, he rapidly descended the stairs, and stopped a moment at the street-door, to observe the direction the men who attended the litter had taken. He saw them going towards the Rue St. Honoré, with a torch on each side of it. He ran towards the Rue St. Denis, then turned down the Rue aux Fers, and, crossing the corn-market, he reached the Hotel de Touraine in time to see the train at the end of the Rue des Etuves. Certain that he had preceded them by some minutes, he entered by the private door from which we have seen him issue forth; and, gaining his own apartment, he glided noiselessly towards a cabinet which led to Madame Valentine's bed-chamber, through the windows of which he could see all that took place in that chamber.

Madame Valentine was standing, irritated, and impatient. At the slightest noise she turned her eyes towards the entrance door; and her beautiful black eyebrows, that formed such a perfect arch when her face was calm, were violently contracted. She was, however, richly and most becomingly dressed; and yet, from time to time, she went to the glass, and compelled her countenance to resume that expression of softness which constituted the principal character of her features; then she added some ornament to her head-dress; for she wished actually to crush this woman, who had the audacity to be her rival, both by the dignity of her rank and the splendour of her beauty.

At last she heard an unmistakeable sound proceed from the room leading to her own. She stopped to listen, put one hand to her brow, whilst, with the other, she sought support by resting it on the sharp projection of a carved arm-chair; for a mist passed before her eyes, and she felt her knees tremble. At last the door opened, and a servant appeared, announcing that the young female whom the duchess wished to see was waiting her pleasure to

enter. The duchess made a sign that she was ready to receive her.

Odette had left her mantle in the ante-room. She therefore made her appearance in that simple costume in which we have seen her; only she had braided her long hair into a tress, and, as she had found nothing in the litter with which to fasten it to her forehead, it fell over her bosom, even to her knees. She stopped at the door, which closed behind her.

The duchess remained mute and motionless before this fair and pure apparition. She was astonished at finding this young girl, of whom, doubtless, she had formed a different idea, so modest and dignified. At last she found that she must speak first, for all the embarrassment was on her side.

"Come forward," she said in a voice, the natural softness of which was changed by emotion.

Odette advanced, with her eyes cast down, but with a calm countenance; and, when within three steps of the duchess, she put one knee to the ground.

"It is you then," continued Madame Valentine, "who wish to injure me in his excellence's love, and who afterwards think that you have nothing to do but to kneel to me to obtain my pardon."

Odette rose up quickly; a burning blush overspread her face.

"I put one knee to the ground, madame," said she, "not for you to pardon me; for, thank heaven, I can reproach myself with no fault towards you. I put my knee to the ground, because you are a great princess, and I am only a poor girl; but, now that I have paid this honour to your rank, I will speak to you standing. Your highness may question me, and I am ready to answer you."

Madame Valentine had not expected this calmness. She comprehended that nothing but candour could support it, or effrontery counterfeit it. She saw those beautiful eyes, so soft and transparent that they appeared to be purposely made to speak all that was passing in the heart, and she felt that that heart must be as pure as that of the Virgin. The Duchess of Touraine was good. The first emotion of Italian jealousy that had made her act and speak was extinguished: she held forth her hand

to Odette, and said to her, with an inexpressible softness of voice, "Come."

This change in the tone and manners of the duchess, worked a sudden revolution in the feelings of the poor girl. She had armed herself against anger, but not against kindness. She took the duchess's hand and pressed it to her lips.

"Oh!" she said, sobbing, "I swear to you, that it was not my fault. He came to my father's house as a simple squire of the Duke of Touraine, under the pretence of buying horses for his master. I saw him myself: I saw him! he is so handsome! and I looked at him in perfect confidence—I thought he was my equal. He came and spoke to me: I had never heard such a soft voice, except in my infant dreams, at that time when angels yet descended on my slumbers. I was ignorant of everything—that he was married, that he was a duke, that he was a prince. Had I known that he was your husband, madame, and had I known that you were so beautiful and so splendid as you are, I should have soon guessed that he was only laughing at me. But at last all is said: he never loved me, and—and I no longer love him."

"Poor girl," said Valentine, looking at her—"poor girl, who believes that, having loved him once, he can be forgotten?"

"I did not say that I should forget him," replied Odette sorrowfully: "I said that I should love him no more; for one cannot love any but one's equal: it is impossible to love any one but the man whose wife you may become.—Oh! yesterday, yesterday, when I saw that magnificent procession, with its splendid dresses—when I recognised every feature of that Louis, whom I believed my own, in Louis Duke of Touraine, who is yours—oh! I swear to you, I thought that some spell had been cast over me, and that my eyes deceived me. He spoke; and I ceased to breathe and to live, that I might listen. It was his voice: he spoke to the queen. Oh! the queen!"

Odette trembled convulsively, and the duchess turned pale for an instant.

"Do you not hate the queen?" added Odette, with an expression of melancholy impossible to describe.

Madame Valentine hastily placed her hand on the young girl's mouth.

"Silence, child!" she said; "Madame Isabel is our sovereign. God has given her for our mistress, and we ought to love her."

"That is what my father said to me when I returned home almost in a dying state, and when I said that I did not love the queen."

The eyes of the duchess were fixed on Odette with an expression of extreme softness and benevolence. At this moment the young girl raised her own. The eyes of the two females met; the duchess opened her arms; Odette threw herself at her feet, and embraced her knees.

"Now I have nothing more to say to you," said Madame Valentine; "promise me to see him no more—that is all."

"I cannot promise you that, madame, unfortunately for me; for the duke is rich and powerful: he can, if I remain in Paris, force himself into my presence; and if I depart, he can follow me. I dare not, therefore, promise you to see him no more; but I can swear that I will die, when I have seen him once again."

"You are an angel," said the duchess, "and I shall hope for some happiness in this world, if you will pray for me."

"Pray to God for you, madame! And are you not one of those fortunate princesses who have a fairy for their godmother? You are young, you are beautiful, you are powerful, and you are permitted to love him."

"Then pray to God that he may love me—he!"

"I will try," said Odette.

The duchess took up a small silver whistle which lay on a table, and sounded it. At this call, the same valet that had announced Odette opened the door.

"Conduct this young damsel back to her house," said the duchess, "and take care that no accident befall her. Odette," added the duchess, "should you ever require aid, protection, and succour, think of me, and come to me." And she held her hand out to her as to her sister.

"I shall henceforth require very little in this world, madame; but, believe me, it will not be necessary to have need of you, to think of you."

She bowed, and left the room.

When alone, Madame Valentine sat down, her head

resting on her bosom, and fell into a profound reverie. She had been for some minutes absorbed by her thoughts, when the door of the cabinet gently opened. The duke entered without being heard, and approaching his wife, so that she could not see him, he went and leant upon the back of the chair on which she was seated; then, after a brief interval, seeing that she did not perceive him, he raised a necklace of magnificent pearls from his own neck, held it over the head of the duchess, and let it fall over her shoulders. Valentine uttered an exclamation, and, raising her head, beheld the duke.

The glance she cast on him was rapid and penetrating; but the duke was prepared for this investigation, and bore it with the calm smile of one who knew nothing of what had passed; and more than that, when the duchess lowered her head, he put his arm around her neck, and raising her face, he drew her gently backward, thus obliging her to look at him a second time.

"What do you want with me, your excellence?" said Valentine.

"It is really a disgrace to the East," said the duke, gently taking in his hands the chain he had just given to his wife, and separating her lips with the pearls: "here is a necklace which was sent me as incomparable by the King of Hungary, Sigismond of Luxembourg. He thought that he had made me a present worthy of an emperor, and yet here I have pearls more white and still more precious than his."

Valentine sighed; but the duke did not seem to observe it.

"Do you know that I have beheld nothing equal to you, my fair duchess, and that I am most fortunate in possessing such a vast treasure of beauty? Some days ago, the Duke de Berri vaunted so highly to me the soft eyes of the queen, which I had not yet seen, that yesterday I took advantage of the station I held near her, to examine them at my ease."

"Well, and what then?" said Valentine.

"Well, I remember that I have seen two—it is true I cannot very well recal where—that might boldly bear a comparison with them. Look at me now. Ah! yes: it was at Milan that I saw them, in the palace of Duke Galeas. They shone under the two most beautiful black eyebrows that the pencil of an Italian artist ever traced

on the brow of an Italian girl; they belonged to a certain Valentine, who became the wife of I know not what Duke of Touraine, who it must be confessed, was not worthy of his good fortune."

"And do you think that this good fortune appeared very great to him?" said Valentine, with a look of mingled sorrow and love.

The duke took her hand and placed it on his heart. Valentine endeavoured to withdraw it; the duke retained it between his own, and drawing a splendid ring from his finger, he transferred it to that of his wife.

"What does this ring mean?" said Valentine.

"It is something that properly belongs to you, my fair duchess; for it is you who made me win it. I must tell you about it." The duke left the place he occupied behind his wife's chair, and, seating himself on a footstool at her feet, he rested his elbows on the arms of her chair. "Yes, won it," he repeated, "and again of this poor Sire de Coucy."

"How was that!"

"Now you shall know; and I advise you to be angry with him, for he pretended that he had seen at least two hands as beautiful as yours."

"And where did he see them?"

"On going to buy a palfrey in the Rue de la Ferronnerie."

"And whose were they?"

"They belonged to the daughter of a horse-dealer. I denied that the thing was possible. He obstinately persisted in his assertion; so that we betted, he this ring, I the string of pearls. (Valentine looked at the duke, as if to read his very soul.) Then I dressed myself as a squire to see this paragon, and went to the old man's house in the Champs-Divers, to buy, at an outrageous price, two of the very worst steeds that a horseman bearing a duke's coronet ever mounted for the punishment of his faults. Then I saw this goddess of the white arms, as the divine Homer would have said; and it must be confessed that Coucy was not such an arrant fool as I at first thought him: indeed, it is wonderful how such a beautiful flower could have flourished in such a garden. And yet, my fair duchess, I did not confess myself vanquished. As a brave cavalier, I supported the honour of the lady of my

thoughts; whilst Coucy still maintained his assertion. In short, we were going to ask permission of our lord the king, to allow us to have a tilt to settle the question, when it was agreed to refer it to Pierre de Craon, the judge of the field, he being very expert in such matters. Many times did we go together to the house of this fair girl—faith, I believe for three days—and, upon my honour, Craon is an excellent judge, and there is the ring on your finger! Now, what do you say to all this?"

"That I knew it, your excellence," said Valentine, looking doubtfully at him.

"Oh! oh! and how was that? Coucy is too gallant a cavalier to have made you such a disclosure."

"Therefore it is not from him that I have the information."

"And from whom then?" said Louis, affecting a tone of the greatest carelessness.

"From your judge of the field."

"Messire Pierre de Craon? Ah!"

The duke's eyebrows contracted violently, and he ground his teeth; but he instantly resumed his smiling air.

"Yes, I understand," he continued: "Pierre knows that I hold him as my companion, and that he is greatly in my good graces: he has, therefore, aspired to enter into yours. Admirably well done! But do you not find it very late to be thus chatting about these nonsensical affairs? Remember that the king expects us to dinner to-morrow; that there is a joust on leaving the table; that I am going to maintain, at the point of my lance, that you are the fairest of the fair; and that there I shall not have Pierre de Craon for umpire."

At these words, the duke went to the door, into the rings of which he inserted the transverse bar of wood, covered with velvet and embroidered with fleurs-de-lis, which was to fasten it within.

Valentine followed him with her eyes; then, when he returned to her, she arose, and throwing her arms around his neck,

"Oh, your excellence!" she said, "you are very culpable indeed, if you deceive me."

## CHAPTER III.

THE next morning the Duke of Touraine arose early, and went to the palace, where he found King Charles just going to mass. The king, who was very fond of him, received him with a smile on his countenance; but he perceived that the duke appeared very melancholy. This distressed him: he held out his hand, and looking earnestly at him, "My fair brother," said he to him, with much affection, "what vexes you? Tell me, for you appear much disturbed."

"Your excellence," said the duke, "there is sufficient cause for it."

"Come," said the king, putting his arm within that of the duke, and leading him to a window, "tell me what it is, for we wish to know; and if any one has injured you, it shall be our business to have justice done you."

Then the Duke of Touraine recounted the scene that had passed the night before, which we have endeavoured to describe to the reader. He told him how Messire Pierre de Craon had betrayed his confidence, in disclosing his secrets to Madame Valentine, and that from a bad motive. Then, when he saw that the king shared his resentment, he added,

"Your excellence, I swear, by the allegiance I owe you, that if you do not give me justice on this man, I will proclaim him a traitor and liar this very day, in the presence of the whole court, and that he shall only die by my hand."

"You will take no steps in the matter," said the king, "at our entreaty, will you? But we ourselves will send him an order, at the latest by this evening, to vacate our palace, and apprise him that we have no longer any further occasion for his services. This is not the first complaint that has reached us concerning him; and, if we have turned a deaf ear to them, it has been out of regard to you, as we knew that he was one of your special favourites. Our brother, the Duke of Anjou, King of Naples, of Sicily, and of Jerusalem, in which is Calvary—(here the king crossed himself)—has, if we may believe, had much reason to complain of him, respecting va-

rious large sums which he has diverted from him. Besides, he is cousin to the Duke of Brittany, who pays no attention to our will, and gives daily proof of it; for he has made no reparation, as we required of him, with respect to our good Constable. I remember, also, that this wicked duke persists in refusing to recognize the authority of the pope at Avignon, who is the true pope; and that he continues, in spite of my prohibition, to stamp money in gold, although it is not permitted to a vassal to coin any but copper money. Then, furthermore," continued the king, growing warmer every moment, "I know, and that from good authority, my brother, that his officers of justice do not acknowledge the jurisdiction of the parliament of Paris; and what almost amounts to the crime of high treason, that he even proceeds so far as to receive the absolute oath of his vassals, without the reserve of my sovereignty as his liege lord. All these things, and many others besides, make it impossible for the relations and friends of this duke to be my friends also. Hence it is also very well that you should have some complaint to make against Messire Pierre de Craon, respecting whom I myself also began to have cause of distrust. Therefore, let us entirely drop the subject for the day; and, this evening, send and signify your will to him: I will do the same myself. As for the Duke of Brittany, it is an affair between a sovereign and his vassal; and, should King Richard grant us the three years' truce that we have demanded, although he should be supported by our uncle of Burgundy, whose wife is his niece, we will then speedily endeavour to ascertain who is master of the realm of France—he or myself."

The duke expressed his gratitude to the king for so completely sympathizing in his wrongs, and prepared to retire; but as the bell of the holy chapel was then tolling for mass, the king invited him to attend it, especially as, on this particular occasion, the service was to be performed by the Archbishop of Rouen, Messire Gillaume de Vicnne, and the queen was to assist at it, attended by the lords and ladies of the court.

After the mass, King Charles, Queen Isabel, and the Duke of Touraine entered the banquetting-room, where they found assembled, and awaiting them, all the lords and ladies that their rank, their dignity, or the pleasure of the king and queen had invited to dinner. The repast

was served on an immense marble table; besides which, against one of the columns of the room, the king's side-board had been raised, sumptuously covered with gold and silver plate. All around the table were barriers, guarded by ushers and mace-bearers, that none but those appointed to serve at the table might enter; and yet, in spite of all these precautions, it was with the utmost difficulty that the service could be performed, the press of the people was so great.

When the king, the prelates and the ladies had washed their hands in silver ewers, which the valets presented on their knees, the Bishop of Noyon, who took the head of the king's table, sat down; after him came the Bishop of Langres and the Archbishop of Rouen, and then the king. He was dressed in an outer coat or robe of vermilion coloured velvet, lined with ermine, and bore on his head the crown of France. Near him was Madame Isabel, who also wore a golden crown. To the right of the queen was the King of Armenia; and below him, in the following order:—the Duchess de Berri, the Duchess of Burgundy, the Duchess of Touraine, Mademoiselle de Nevres, Mademoiselle Bonne de Bar, the Lady de Coucy, Mademoiselle Marie de Harcourt; then, at last, below all, the Lady de Sully, wife of Messire Guy de Trimouille.

Besides these tables, there were two others, the honours of which were performed by the Dukes of Touraine, Burgundy, Bourbon and Berri, and round them were seated quite five hundred lords and damsels; but the press was so great, that they were served with much difficulty.

“As for the dishes, which were excellent and remarkable,” says Froissart, “I have only to call your attention to them; but I will enlarge more on the *entremets*\* which were so well arranged that nothing could be better.”

This kind of spectacle, which at this epoch divided the repast into two parts, was greatly in use and much esteemed. Therefore, as soon as the first course was finished, the guests arose, and went to take the best places they could find at the windows, on the benches, and even on the tables, placed purposely around the

\* This term is at present used to denote the dainty dishes served between the courses, and which are now substituted for the amusements here described.—TRANSLATOR.

court. There was such a vast throng, that the balcony occupied by the king and queen was, like the others, encumbered with lords and ladies.

In the middle of the court-yard of the palace, was erected a chateau in wood, forty feet high, and sixty feet long, including the wings. At the four corners of the chateau, there were four towers, and in the middle a fifth, higher than all the others. Now this chateau represented the great and strong city of Troy, and the lofty tower the palace of Ilion. Around the walls were the banners with the arms of King Priam, of his brave son Hector, and of the kings and princes who were shut up in Troy with them. This edifice was placed on four wheels, which men directed from within, and by the aid of whom all the movements necessary for its defence could be regulated. Their adroitness was soon put to the test; for, from two quarters, a tent and a vessel advanced to assail them, mutually supporting each other. The tent represented the camp, and the vessel the fleet of the Greeks. Both of them were hung with the arms of the most valiant knights who followed King Agamemnon, from the swift-footed Achilles, to the prudent Ulysses. There were at least two hundred men in the tent and the vessel; and, under the door of the king's stables, appeared the head of the wooden horse, which was awaiting with laudable tranquillity the time when it was to enter upon the scene. But to the great grief of the spectators, the entertainment could not reach this point; for, at the very moment that the Greeks of the vessel and the tent, with Achilles at their head, assailed with undaunted courage the Trojans in the chateau, which was bravely defended by Hector, a great crash was heard, followed by frightful motions and noises. It was then discovered that one of the scaffolds had broken down before the door of the Parliament, precipitating with it, in its fall, all those it supported.

Then, as always happens in such cases, every one, dreading the same misfortune for himself, screamed out as if this had actually taken place. There was, therefore, a vast confusion amid all this crowd, for all wished to get down stairs at the same moment, and rushed towards the staircase, which also broke down. Although the queen and the ladies, who were on the stone balconies of the palace, had nothing to fear, the alarm did not the less in-

vade them like a panic; and, whether from inconsiderate terror of a danger which could not reach them, or to avoid seeing the scene of confusion which was passing under their eyes, they pressed backwards, and endeavoured thus to re-enter the banquetting-room; but behind them were drawn up and accumulated a thick rampart of squires and pages; and behind these were the people, who had taken advantage of the eagerness with which the ushers and mace-bearers had pressed towards the windows, to take possession of the apartment; so much so, that Madame Isabel could not penetrate this crowd, and fell, half dead and quite insensible, into the arms of the Duke of Touraine, who was by her side.

The king then gave orders that the amusements should cease. The tables were removed, and when the second course was arranged, the barriers erected around were removed, so that the guests might more freely circulate in the spaces they occupied. Fortunately, no serious accident happened. Madame de Coucy, however, had been slightly bruised, and Madame Isabel still remained insensible. They conveyed her to a remote window, which they broke to give her air more quickly, which soon restored her to consciousness; but she had been so much terrified, that she wished to depart immediately. As for the spectators in the courtyard, some had been killed, and a great number had received injuries, more or less severe.

In consequence of this, the queen mounted her litter, and, attended by lords and ladies, forming a train around her of more than a thousand horses, she betook herself to the Hotel de St. Paul. As for the king, he entered a boat above the Pont-au-Change, and ascended the Seine with the knights who were to take a part in the joust, which he was to lead.

On reaching his palace, the king found a beautiful present, which forty of the principal inhabitants of the city came to offer him, in the name of the citizens of Paris. They were all attired in raiment of the same colour, as if in uniform. This present was in a litter, which being covered by silk crape, allowed the jewels of which it was composed to be seen. They were four goblets, four coolers, and six dishes, all of massive gold, and weighing fifty marks.\*

\* A mark is eight ounces. — T.A.

When the king appeared, the litter-bearers, who were dressed as savages, set it down before him in the middle of the apartment; and one of the citizens who accompanied it placing his knee to the ground before the king, said,

“Most dear sire and noble king, your citizens of Paris present you, at the joyful commencement of your reign, all the jewels that are within that litter, and similar presents are now being made to Madame the Queen, and Madame the Duchess of Touraine.”

“Many thanks!” replied the king. “These presents are beautiful and rich, and we will remember under all circumstances, those who have made them.”

In fact, two similar litters were waiting upon the queen and the Duchess of Touraine. That of the queen was borne by two men, disguised, the one as a bear, the other as a unicorn; and it contained an ewer, two flasks, two bowls, two salt-cellars, six goblets, six coolers, all of massive gold; and twelve lamps, twenty-four porringers, six large dishes, and two silver basins, in all weighing three hundred marks.

As for the porters who carried the litter destined for Madame the Duchess of Touraine, they were dressed as Moors, had their faces blackened, wore white turbans, as if they had been Saracens or Tartars, and were covered with rich stuffs of silk. The litter contained, in gold, a vase, a large goblet, two comfit boxes, two large dishes, two salt-cellars; and, in silver, six goblets, six dishes, four-and twenty porringers, four-and-twenty salt-cellars, and twenty-four cups; and all, as well in gold as in silver, weighed two hundred marks. The total value of the gifts presented amounted, says Froissart, to more than 60,000 golden crowns.

The citizens, by making these splendid presents to the queen, hoped to gain her good graces, and to induce her to be confined in the city of Paris, in order by that means, to obtain some diminution of the imposts. But it turned out quite otherwise; for when the time of her accouchement arrived, the king carried Isabel away; the excise tax was raised; and the silver coin of twelve and four pennies, which had been current since the time of Charles V., was again debased; so much so, that as this coin was that of the lower ranks of people and mendi-

cants, they were in want of the necessaries of life, from not being able to pass it.\*

These presents, however, greatly delighted the queen and Madame Valentine, who graciously thanked those who had brought them. They then prepared to set out for the field of St. Catherine, where lists had been prepared for the knights, and galleries erected for the ladies.

Of the thirty knights who were to tilt this day, and who were designated the Knights of the Golden Sun, because they carried a radiant sun on their bucklers, twenty-nine were already waiting, armed, in the lists. The thirtieth entered, and all the lances were lowered to receive him: it was the king.

Almost at the same moment, a vast murmur announced the arrival of the queen. She seated herself in the gallery prepared for her, having on her right the Duchess of Touraine, and on her left Mademoiselle† de Nevres. Behind the two princesses stood Duke Louis and Duke John, from time to time exchanging some words, few and far between, with that cold politeness familiar to people who, from their position, are obliged to conceal their thoughts. The queen being seated, all the other ladies, who only waited for this moment, flocked in crowds into the space reserved for them, which was soon bespangled with stuffs of gold and silver, and radiant with diamonds and precious stones.

At this moment, the knights who were to joust marshalled themselves one after the other, with the king at their head. After him came the Dukes of Berri, Burgundy, and Bourbon; then the other twenty-six champions, marching according to their rank and dignity. Each, on passing the queen, lowered his lance, even to the ground, and the queen bowed to each knight separately.

This evolution being finished, the champions separated into two troops. The king took the command of one, and the constable of the other. Charles led his to the foot of the queen's balcony; Clisson retired to the opposite extremity.

\* Froissart, and the Monk of St. Denis.

† Every woman whose husband had not yet been dubbed a knight was called Mademoiselle.

"Your excellence of Touraine," then said the Count de Nevres, "have you felt no desire to join these noble knights, and to break a lance in honour of Madame Valentine?"

"My cousin," drily responded the duke, "the king my brother has permitted me to be the sole champion to-morrow. It is not in a *melee*, but in a joust—it is not one against one, but alone against all, that I wish to uphold the beauty of my lady and the honour of my name."

"And you might add, your excellence, that both might be maintained with other arms than the childrens' playthings that are used in such games."

"Therefore, my cousin, I am ready to maintain them with those that may be used to assail them. There will be at the entrance of my tent, a shield of peace, and a shield of war; those who shall strike the shield of peace will do me honour; those who shall strike the shield of war, will give me pleasure."

The Count de Nevres bowed, like a man who, having gained all the information he wanted, wishes the conversation to drop. As for the Duke of Touraine, he appeared as if he did not understand the object of these questions, and began to play carelessly with the bands of lace that depended from the queen's head dress.

At this moment, the trumpets sounded. The knights, to whom this signal announced that the *melee* was about to commence, buckled their shields round their necks, fixed themselves firmly in their saddles, and placed their lances in rest so quickly, that every one was ready when the flourish of the trumpets ceased, and at the same time the voices of the judges of the field\* were heard crying out, from each end of the list—"Laissez aller."

Scarcely were the words pronounced, when the sun was obscured by the clouds of dust, in the midst of which it was impossible to follow the combatants.—Almost at the same instant was heard the noise which the two troops made in rushing against each other; and the lists appeared like a troubled sea, rolling its billows of steel and gold. From time to time, some noble plume appeared on the summit of one of them, like the foam-flake on the top of a wave. But almost all the flakes of arms of this first course were lost to view; and it was

\* Called by Scott, in "Ivanhoe," the marshals of the field.—T.P.

not until the trumpet had sounded the recall, and the two troops retreated, each to their own ground, that it could be discovered which side had the advantage.— Eight knights, mounted and armed, yet remained round the king; they were, the Duke of Burgundy, Messire Guillaume de Namur, Messire Guy de Tremouille, Messire Jean de Harpedanne, the Baron de Very, Messire Regnault de Roze, Messire Philippe de Bar, and Messire Pierre de Craon.

The king had at first thought of prohibiting this latter from jousting, on account of the anger that he had conceived against him; but he had reflected that his retirement would disarrange the *melce*, for which an equal number of antagonists was absolutely necessary.

Six only remained with the constable: they were, the Duke de Berri, Messire Jean de Barbancon, the Lord of Beaumanoir, Messire Geoffroy de Charny, Messire Jean de Vienne, and the Sieur de Coucy. All the others had either been borne to the earth, and therefore had no longer the right to remount their horses; or they had touched the barrier in retreating from their adversaries, and by this act were considered vanquished. The honour of the first passage, therefore, rested with the king, who had preserved the greatest number of knights.

The pages and valets took advantage of this moment of repose to water the lists, in order to keep down the dust. The ladies much approved of this contrivance; and the knights, certain that their prowess would henceforth be seen and applauded, assumed fresh courage. Each, therefore, called his page or his squire, made him examine his armour, gird up his horse, buckle his shield tighter, and prepared anew for the combat.

The signal was not long delayed. The trumpets sounded a second time, the lances were again placed in rest, and at the words "Laissez aller," the two little troops, already diminished by half; rushed one upon the other.

All eyes were turned towards the king and Messire Oliver de Clisson, who were opposed to each other. They met in the middle of the list. The king struck his adversary in the middle of his shield so full and firmly, that the lance was broken; but, although the shock was great, the old soldier remained firm and upright in his saddle. His horse, however, was rather forced back up-

on his haunches, but righted himself nobly at the first touch of the spur. As for the constable, he had placed his lance in rest, as if to attack the king; but, when he had reached him, he raised its point, thereby indicating that he considered it an honour to have jousted with his sovereign, but that he respected him too much to strike him even in sport.

"Clisson, Clisson," said the king, laughing, "if you do not use your constable's sword more skilfully than your knight's lance, I will take the blade from you, and leave you only the scabbard. I would recommend you to come to the joust with a reed for your arms, for it will render you as much service as your lance, if you mean always to use it in that manner."

"Your excellence," replied Clisson, "with a reed I would face your highness's enemies, and, with God's aid, I hope that I should triumph over them; for the respect and love which I feel for you would give me as much courage to defend you, as they have given me fear to attack you. As for the way in which I calculate on making use of my lance against all others than yourself, if you wish to judge of it, look, your excellence, and that immediately."

In fact, Messire Guillaume de Namur, after having unhorsed Messire Geoffroy de Charney, had again taken the field, and was looking for a fresh adversary. But every one was engaged; and, although he had the right to assist those of his party who were too much pressed, he disdained this inequality. At this very moment he heard the voice of the constable, who cried out—"Here I am, if you wish for any one, Messire de Namur!"

Guillaume bowed his head, in token of his accepting the defiance, fixed himself firmly in his stirrups, set his lance in rest, gathered up his reins and run at Messire Oliver, who, on his part, put his horse to a gallop to meet his adversary half way. They encountered.

Messire Guillaume had directed the point of his lance against Clisson's helmet; and the blow was so well directed that it reached the constable on the top of his visor, and tore off his helmet. At the same moment, Messire Olivier's lance had struck his adversary in the centre of his shield. Guillaume de Namur was too perfect a knight to lose his seat; but the violence of the blow was so great, that the girth broke, and the knight, com-

pletely unsaddled, rolled ten paces from his horse. The applause resounded from every side, and the ladies waved their scarfs. It was one of the most splendid courses that had been run.

Clisson did not give himself time to call for another casque, for he saw that his little troop, which had not been able to recover its advantage, was greatly pressed. He threw himself with his uncovered head, into the middle of the *melee*, broke his lance, already shaken by three courses, on the casque of Messire Jean de Harpedanne, whom he unhelmeted by the blow, and, drawing his sword, pressed him so vigorously, before he had time to recover himself, that he made him touch the barrier. Then he returned to the field of battle. Two knights only were now engaged; they were Messire de Craon, and the Lord of Beaumanoir. As for the king, he had remained a spectator of the joust, and had not resumed any share in it since he had run against Clisson. The constable now followed his example, and awaited the result of the combat of his last knight, against his last antagonist. The advantage appeared to lean towards the Lord of Beaumanoir, when his sword broke on Messire Pierre de Craon's buckler. As it was only permitted to use the sword and lance, and the Lord of Beaumanoir had broken both these weapons, he found himself, greatly to his vexation, without any means of continuing the combat, and made a sign with his hand, that he considered himself vanquished. Messire Pierre de Craon turned round, believing that he remained the sole champion on the field, when he saw Clisson, his old enemy, at ten paces from him, and looking at him with a smile. The honour of the day was to be decided by these two.

Pierre de Craon coloured beneath his visor; for, although he was a skilful knight, and accomplished in all feats of arms, he well knew the man of iron against whom he was about to contend. Yet he did not hesitate one instant, and loosening the reins on his horse's neck, he bent himself back almost to the crupper, took his sword with both his hands, and rushed upon the constable. As he went, this sword was seen to turn twice, as rapid and flashing as lightning; then it fell, with a crash equal to that of a hammer striking an anvil, on the buckler by means of which Clisson defended his bare head. Most assuredly, if this sword had been sharp, the shield, thick,

and of fine steel as it was, would have been found a feeble defence against such a blow. But they contended with arms of courtesy, and the constable did not appear to be more shaken by this terrible blow, than if it had been struck by a willow-wand, in the feeble hand of a child.

The old warrior turned towards Pierre de Craon, who, carried away by his horse, had gone some steps beyond him; but who, already on his guard, awaited him, with his point directed towards his face. This time it was the constable who attacked, and Pierre who defended himself. The attack was very simple: the constable beat off his enemy's sword with his own; then, in his turn, taking his sword with both hands, and as if he disdained to make use of the blade, he struck such a violent blow with the pommel, full on Messire de Craon's helmet, that he drove it in, as he would have done with a mace. The knight stretched out his arms, and fell insensible, without uttering a single word.

Then the constable, going towards the king, leaped from his horse, and taking his sword by the point, he presented him the handle, thus declaring that he considered himself vanquished, and that he yielded to the king the honour of the day. But the king, who saw that this was an act of pure courtesy, dismounted in turn, embraced Clisson, and led him, amid the applause of the ladies and lords, to the foot of the queen's balcony, where he was for a long time congratulated by Madame Isabel, by the Duke of Touraine, who had seen with great pleasure the misadventure that had befallen Messire Pierre de Craon, and by the Duke de Nevres, who, although but little influenced by friendship to the constable, was too good a jousting himself not to admire the great feats of arms that he had performed.

At this moment, a cavalcade stopped before the church of St. Catharine.—He who appeared to be the leader dismounted from his horse, and came towards the lists. He entered booted, and covered with dust, and going straight up to the king, he put his knee to the ground, and presented a letter, sealed with the arms of the King of England. Charles opened it: it contained the truce granted by King Richard and his uncles, which truce was to last for three years by land and sea: that is to say, from the first of August, 1389, to the nineteenth of August, 1392. The king immediately read it out in a loud

voice; and this news, which every one anxiously expected, and which reached them at such a moment, appeared yet a fresh and excellent presage of the happiness they hoped for from a reign commencing under such benignant auspices. Therefore, the Lord of Chateaufort, who was the bearer of this message, was greatly complimented by the court; and the king, to do him honour, and as a mark of his satisfaction, invited him to dine at his own table, and led him away, booted as he was, without even allowing him to change his dress.

The evening of the same day, the Lord of La Riviere, and Messire Jean Lemercier, from the king, and Messire Jean de Beuil, and the Seneschal of Touraine, from the duke, presented themselves at the hotel of Messire Pierre de Craon, which was situated near the cemetery of St. John, and signified to him, in the name of the king and the duke, that neither the one nor the other had any further occasion for his services.

The following night, although he was in great pain, and suffering from the blow he had received, and from the fall that followed it, Messire Pierre de Craon left Paris with his retinue, and took the road to Angou, where he possessed a large and strong chateau, which was called Sable.

#### CHAPTER IV.

THE next morning, at break of day, heralds, in the livery of the Duke of Touraine, went through the streets of Paris, preceded by trumpets, stopping at all the crossways and squares, and there reading letters of defiance, which, for the last month, had been sent through all parts of the kingdom, as also into the principal towns of England, of Italy, and of Germany. They were conceived in the following terms:

“ We, Louis of Valois, Duke of Touraine, by the grace of God, son and brother of the King of France, from the great desire that we have of seeing and knowing the noble gentlemen, knights or squires, whether of the realm of France, or of other realms, make it known, not through pride, hatred, or malevolence, but from the desire of their honourable company, with the consent of the king, our

brother, that we will keep the lists, from ten o'clock in the morning to three o'clock in the afternoon, and that against every one who may offer himself; and outside of our tent, which will be elevated at the entrance of the field, our shields and bucklers will be suspended, painted with our arms and escutcheons: that is to say, our shields of war, and our bucklers of peace: and whoever shall wish to joust, shall send his squire to touch, or shall himself touch, our buckler with the wood of his lance, if he wishes for the joust of peace; and our shield with the iron of his lance, if he wishes for the joust of war. And that all gentlemen, noble knights and squires, to whom this thing shall become known, may consider this firm and determined, we have made these letters public, and have sealed them with our arms. Written, executed, and given at Paris, in our hotel of Touraine, the 20th day of June, in the year 1389 since the incarnation of our Saviour.

The declaration of a joust, where the first prince of the blood\* was to keep the lists, had for a long time caused a vast sensation. The king's counsellors had endeavoured to oppose it, when the Duke of Touraine came to demand his brother's permission to undertake the enterprise, on the occasion of Madame Isabel's entrance; and the king, who was himself fond of these kind of games, and excelled in feats of arms, yet sent for the Duke of Touraine, to entreat him to renounce this project. But he had replied, that he had undertaken this joust in the presence of the ladies of the court; and the king, who well knew the value of such a declaration, had allowed the affair to proceed.

Besides, there was little danger incurred in such games. The adversaries almost invariably contended with arms of courtesy; and the shield of war, which accompanied the buckler of peace before the tent of the champion, was only there to indicate that its master would not recoil from any enterprise, and was ready to accept every kind of challenge. And yet it sometimes happened that indi-

\* It must not, however, be understood that the princes of the blood were at that time what they have become since the days of Henry IV. They were, in reality, only considered the first gentlemen of the kingdom, and did not in any degree partake of the sacred character with which royalty was already clothed.

vidual and particular enmities, taking advantage of this opportunity, insinuated themselves into the lists as friends, and there, suddenly unmasking themselves, came to offer a real instead of a pretended combat. There was always, therefore, in the tent, in case this should happen, sharpened weapons, and a horse armed for war.

Madame Valentine, although sharing the chivalrous enthusiasm of the period, was not, however, without anxiety concerning the event of the day. The opposition of the council had appeared very just to her, and she had feared from the heart what the others had inferred from the deductions of their reason. She was therefore immersed in the various reflections which the subject naturally produced, when she was informed that the same young girl, for whom she had sent on a previous evening, was waiting in the anteroom, till it might be her pleasure to receive her. Madame Valentine advanced some steps towards the door to meet her, and Odette entered.

There was still the same beauty, the same grace, the same candour; but the whole appearance of this tender creature had assumed an air of profound melancholy.

"What is the matter with you?" said the duchess, alarmed by her paleness; "and what is the reason that I am now so happy as to see you?"

"You have been so good to me," replied Odette, "that I did not wish the grate of a convent to separate me from the world, without bidding you adieu."

"What, poor child," said Madame Valentine, much affected, "are you then going to take the veil?"

"Not yet, madame; for my father has made me promise not to take the vows whilst he lives. But I wept so long and so bitterly on his bosom, I implored so fervently at his knees, that he has permitted me to retire, as a pensioner, into the convent of the Trinity, of which my aunt is the superior, and I am going there."

The duchess took her hand. "That is not all you have to confide to me, is it?" said she; for there was a vivid expression of sorrow and fear still remaining in the young girl's eyes.

"No—I wished to speak to you of—"

"Of whom?"

"And of whom would you have me speak, if not of

him? For whom would you have me fear, if not for him?"

"What can you fear?"

"You will pardon me, will you not, Madame Valentine, for speaking to you of his excellence the Duke of Touraine; but yet, if some danger--"

"Some danger!" exclaimed Madame Valentine: "explain yourself; you frighten me to death."

"The duke is going to hold a joust to-day, is he not?"

"Yes, and what then?"

"Well, then, there came yesterday to my father's—you must know, my father has the reputation of possessing the best war-steeds that can be found in the city of Paris—well, some men came yesterday, who asked to see the strongest and hardiest war-horse that he had to sell. My father inquired whether it was for to-day's joust, and these men replied that it was—that a foreign knight wished to run a course there. 'There will, therefore, be a joust of war,' said my father. 'Certainly,' they answered, laughing, 'and a rough one, too.' Then, terrified as I was at these words, I followed them, and went down with them: they chose the strongest horse in the stables, and tried on him a *chamfrain* of battle."—Odette sobbed—"Do you understand, madame? Oh, tell this to the duke—tell him that there is a project and a threat against him—tell him to defend himself with all his powers, and all his address." She fell on her knees. "That he must defend himself, for you who are so beautiful, and who love him so much! Oh! speak to him, as I speak to you, on your knees, and with hands spread—speak to him as I would myself speak, were I in your place."

"Thank you, my dear child, thank you."

"You will tell his squires, will you not, to choose the strongest armour for him? When he went to Italy for you, he must have brought back some from Milan, where they say that they make the best in the world. Tell him to take care that his helmet be securely fastened; and then, if you see, which indeed is impossible, for the Duke of Touraine is the handsomest, the bravest, and the most accomplished knight in the kingdom—what am I saying? Oh! yes, if you see that he falters, for his adversary may employ some spell against him, entreat the king,—the king will be there, will he not?—entreat

the king to put a stop to the joust; he has the right to do it, as I have learned from my father. The judges of the field have only to throw their baton between the combatants, and the combat must cease. Well, then, tell him to put a stop to this unhappy conflict, since it cannot be prevented; and I, during the time—” She stopped herself.

“Well, what will you do?” inquired the duchess, more coldly.

I will shut myself up in the convent chapel. Now that my life belongs to God, I ought to pray for all men, and particularly for my sovereign, his brothers, and his sons. Well, then, I will pray for him with my brow on the marble. I will ask God to take my days, for I no longer value them, in exchange for his; and God will hear me—God will perhaps grant my prayer. Do you, on your part, pray to God also. God will no doubt hear your voice before mine; for you are a great princess, and I am only a poor girl. Adieu, madame, adieu!”

At these words, Odette rose, kissed the hand of the duchess for the last time, and left the room.

The Duchess of Touraine went immediately to her husband’s apartments; but he had already been in his tent for an hour, having gone there beforehand to fit on his best armour.

At the same time she was informed that the queen was waiting for her to repair to the field of St. Catherine.

The joust was prepared in the same place as on the previous day; only, in the interior of the enclosure, and underneath the king’s balcony, the tent of the Duke of Touraine had been erected, surmounted by a flag with his arms, and communicating with a large chamber, constructed of wood, in which were his squires and horses, the latter being four in number, three intended for the peaceful joust, and the fourth caparisoned for battle. On the left of the tent was the duke’s shield of war, without any emblazonment, and displaying for its sole device, a knotted club, with these words, “I offer the challenge.”

To the right was the buckler of peace, bearing in its centre three golden fleurs-de-lis, on an azure ground, which were the arms of the sons of France. Opposite, at the extremity of the list, and leading to a plain ad-

joining the courts, was a gate which was destined for the entrance of the knights.

As soon as the king, the queen, and the lords and ladies of the court, had taken their places, a herald advanced, preceded by two trumpets, and read in a loud voice the challenge which we have given in the commencement of this chapter. But the judges of the field had now added a clause, relating to the manner of jousting; that is to say, that any knight or squire who should touch the buckler of peace should engage to run only two courses: as for those who should strike the shield of war, the custom was that they should have the choice of arms.

This proclamation being made, the herald returned to the tent. The judges of the field, who were Messire Olivier de Clisson and the Duke of Bourbon, then placed themselves on each side of the enclosure, and the trumpets sounded a flourish of defiance. Madame Valentine was as pale as death.

There was a momentary silence; at the expiration of which, another trumpet replied outside the lists, repeating the same notes; the gates at the extremity opened; a knight came forward, with raised visor, and every one could recognize the young Messire Boucicaut. The duchess breathed freely on seeing him.

As soon as he was known, a favourable murmur pervaded the whole gallery. The lords saluted him with their hands, and the ladies waved their handkerchiefs, for he who entered was one of the bravest and most accomplished jousts among the knights of the day.

Messire Boucicaut first bowed in gratitude to the spectators for the reception they had given him; then going straight up to the queen's balcony, he gracefully saluted her, lowering the point of his lance even to the earth; then, pulling down the visor of his helmet with his left hand, he courteously struck the Duke of Touraine's buckler of peace with the wood of his lance, and putting his horse to a gallop, gained the opposite extremity of the lists.

At the same moment, the duke came forth, fully accoutred, his buckler fastened to his neck, and his spear in rest. He wore steel armour of Milan, of the finest description, all incrustated with gold. The caparisons of his horse were of vermilion velvet; and everything

which is commonly of iron, such as the bit and stirrup, was of pure silver. His cuirass was, above all, so skilfully fabricated, that it yielded to all its master's movements with the same flexibility as a shirt of mail, or a garment of cloth.

If a murmur had greeted Messire Boucicaut, the most lively shouts of applause saluted the duke, and they did not cease until he had closed his visor. Then the trumpet sounded, the two champions placed their lances in rest, and the judges of the field called out "Laissez aller."

The two knights gave the spur, and rushed upon each other with all the violent impetuosity of their horses: both struck fairly in the middle of the shield, and shivered their lances; both horses stopped short, recoiled upon their haunches, and righted themselves trembling, but neither knights had lost even a stirrup. They turned round immediately, and each went to receive a fresh lance from the hand of his squire.

Scarcely were they stationed, ready for the second course, before the trumpets again sounded. Then they again rushed towards each other, perhaps even more swiftly than the first time; but now each changed the direction of his lance: both struck the visor, unhelmetted each other, and passed on: then, returning towards each other, they bowed courteously. It was impossible to have maintained a more perfect equality; therefore it was decided that this course was alike honourable to both champions.

The two knights left their helmets to be picked up by their squires, and returned with their heads bare: Messire Boucicaut to the gate by which he had entered, the Duke of Touraine to the tent from which he issued forth.

A flattering murmur accompanied the last, even to his tent, for he looked like the Archangel Michael, so handsome was he, with his long fair hair, his blue eyes, soft as those of a child, and his complexion like that of a young girl.

The queen leant forward, with her whole person over the balcony, that she might see him the longer; and Madame Valentine, remembering what Odette had said to her, looked at the queen with a foreboding fear.

At the expiration of a minute, the trumpets announced that the duke was ready for another passage. Some

minutes elapsed without an answer, and it began to be doubtful whether such a noble joust would not be abruptly terminated for the want of champions, when another trumpet sounded a foreign air; at the same instant the gate opened, and a knight appeared, with his visor lowered, and his shield on his neck.

Madame Valentine trembled, for she did not know this new opponent; and the joust of war, which she dreaded, infused a vague and unceasing fear into her soul, which augmented as she saw the unknown approaching the tent. Having reached the royal balcony, he stopped his steed, rested the butt-end of his lance on the ground, steadied it against his knee, and pressing the spring of his casque, unhelmetted himself. They then saw a handsome young man, of about twenty-four years of age, whose pale and haughty countenance was unknown to most of the spectators.

"Health to our cousin of Lancaster, the Earl of Derby," said the king, who recognised the cousin of Richard of England. "He knows that there was no need of the truce which has been just accorded us by our brother beyond the sea, whom may God preserve! to make him welcome at our court. Our envoy, Messire Chateaufort, apprised us of his arrival yesterday, and he is a messenger of good tidings."

"Your excellence," said the Earl of Derby, again bowing, "a report has reached our isle of marvellous jousts and enterprises which were to take place at your court; and wholly English as we are in body and mind, we yet wished to cross the sea to break a lance in honour of the ladies of France. I hope that his excellence, the Duke of Touraine will forget that we are only the king's cousin."

The sarcastic bitterness with which the Earl of Derby uttered the concluding words, proved that, even at this time, he was already meditating on overstepping the limit which separated him from the throne.

Then, bowing for the last time to the king and Madame Isabel, he replaced his helmet, and went and struck the Duke of Touraine's buckler of peace with the butt of his lance. The colour, that fear had banished, again appeared on Madame Valentine's cheeks, for she had been apprehensive that the national hatred of England against France, had brought the Earl of Derby to this tournament.

The two combatants, before they commenced the jousts, saluted each other with a courtesy which ought ever to distinguish such gallant knights. Then the trumpets sounded, they placed their lances in rest, and rushed against each other.

They struck each other full on the shield, but their horses having crossed, they were compelled to relinquish their lances, which fell into the lists. The respective squires came forward immediately to pick them up, and to present them to their masters; but each, at the same moment, made a sign, and the English squire went and offered the Earl of Derby's lance to the Duke of Touraine, whilst the French squire presented the Duke of Touraine's lance to the Earl of Derby. This action was much applauded, and was regarded as the most accomplished chivalry.

The two knights again crossed to resume their places; then, placing their lances in rest, they thundered on each other.

This time the horses responded better to the skill of their riders, for they charged so direct that it might have been expected both their heads would have been fractured by the shock. This time, also, the knights struck each other so fully in the centre, that their lances were shivered to atoms, and only a stump remained in the hand of each.

Both then bowed: the Duke of Touraine returned to his tent, and the Earl of Derby left the lists. At the gate he was met by one of the king's pages, who came to invite him, in the king's name, to take his place amongst the spectators to the left of the queen. The earl accepted the honour, and shortly afterwards appeared in the royal balcony in full armour, as he had combatted, with the exception of his helmet, which a page in his livery bore behind him. As soon as the earl was seated, the trumpets sounded a third challenge.

This time the answer was so prompt that it might have been taken for an echo. It was, however, given with one of those long war-trumpets which were only used in battle, and whose clanging and terrible sound was intended to intimidate the enemy. Every one started, and Madame Valentine crossed herself in great trepidation, saying, "God, my Saviour, have pity on me!"

All eyes were fixed on the gate, which opened and admitted a knight armed in all points for a joust of war; that is to say, with a very strong lance, with one of those long swords which could be used indifferently with one or both hands, and with a battle-axe. He had his shield buckled round his neck, his target on his arm; and his device, to respond to that of the Duke of Touraine, (which we have said was a knotted club, with the motto, "I offer the challenge") was a carpenter's plane, intended to remove the knots from the club, with the response, "I accept it."

Every eye was turned upon this knight with the curiosity which such a circumstance universally excites; but his visor was hermetically closed. No heraldic emblazonry sparkled on his target; his helmet alone bore an ornament that admirably attested either his birth or his rank: it was an earl's coronet of pure gold.

He advanced along the lists, making his war-horse caracole with a graceful dexterity that denoted a knight habituated to feats of arms. Having arrived opposite the royal balcony, he bent his brow even to the mane of his steed; then, in the midst of a silence which respiration scarcely dared to disturb, he went up to the Duke of Touraine's tent, and struck the war-shield of the noble champion violently with the iron head of his lance. The mortal defiance resounded from one end of the enclosed lists to another. The queen turned pale, and Madame Valentine uttered a slight scream.

A squire of the Duke of Touraine instantly appeared at the door of the tent, examined what were the offensive and defensive arms of the knight, and then, bowing courteously to him, "It will be as you desire, your excellence," said he, and retired.

The knight took his station at the end of the lists, where he was to wait till the Duke of Touraine had made his preparations. At the expiration of ten minutes, the latter came forth from his tent, wearing the same armour that he had used since the morning, but mounted on a fresh and vigorous horse. Like his adversary, he bore a strong lance, with a sharp iron point, a long sword at his side, and a battle-axe at his saddle-bow; all these accoutrements were, like his cuirass, marvellously rich, and inlaid with gold and silver.

The Duke of Touraine made a signal with his hand, to

denote that he was ready. The trumpets sounded; the champions steadied their lances by fixing them in the rest, and pressing them under their arms: then spurring their horses, they rushed at full speed upon each other, and encountered exactly in the middle of the lists, so much eagerness had each shown to come forward to meet his adversary.

Each had done his devoir vigorously and honestly; for the lance of the unknown knight had caught the helmet of the Duke of Touraine by the eyehole, and tearing it from his head, had cast it ten paces behind his horse. On his part, the lance of the Duke of Touraine had struck his opponent full on his buckler, and piercing it through and through, it had encountered the cuirass, and gliding under the shoulder, had wounded him slightly in the left arm. This blow had broken the lance within a foot of the iron, and the stump remained in the buckler.

"Your excellence of Touraine," said the knight, "put on, I pray you, another helmet, whilst I take out this stump, which does not wound, but incommodes me."

"Thank you, my cousin of Nevres," replied the duke, for he had discovered him by that deep and sensitive hatred which each of them nourished in his heart, "thank you; I will give you sufficient time to have your arm bandaged and staunched, but I will continue the combat in this manner."

"Let it be just as you choose, your excellence; but as the combat can continue as well with the iron head of a lance in the buckler, as with an unhelmetted head, I require no more time than is necessary to throw away this lance and to draw this sword." And suiting his action to his words, he presented himself sword in hand.

The Duke of Touraine followed his example; and, dropping his horse's reins, he covered his unarmed head with his buckler. As for the Count de Nevres, he allowed his left arm to hang down, as the armour, being bent by the stump of the lance, would not permit him to make use of it. The squires, who had come forward to assist their masters, retired when they saw them continuing the combat.

In reality, it had been renewed with fresh vigour. The Count de Nevres distressed himself very little with the inconvenience he suffered from the impossibility of using his left arm; and, calculating on the temper of his

armour, he opposed himself, entirely covered by it, to the blows of his adversary, whose bare head, being no longer sheltered by anything but the buckler, he, on his part, attacked without intermission, and every one of his blows resounded upon it like a hammer on an anvil; whilst the Duke of Touraine, more remarkable even for his elegance and address than for his strength, turned round the count, seeking with his sword for any defect in his armour, and attacking with the point what he had no hopes of penetrating with the edge.

There was a profound silence throughout the whole circle. Nothing was heard but the shock of steel against steel. It might be even supposed that a breath feared to leave the mouth of the spectators, and that the entire existence of this motionless crowd had passed into their eyes, and was concentrated in their looks. And yet, as every one was ignorant of the name of his opponent, all the sympathies, all the wishes were for the Duke of Touraine, whose head, over which his buckler cast a shade, might have served as a model to an artist of the Archangel Michael. The thoughtless character of his countenance had disappeared: his eyes shot forth flames, his hair floated around like a glory, and his lips, separated by a nervous contraction, allowed the white enamel of his teeth to be seen; so that, at each blow struck incessantly by the pitiless sword of his opponent, a shuddering pervaded this assembly, as if all the fathers were trembling for their sons, all the women for their lovers.

In fact, the protecting buckler was being carried away piecemeal: each blow, as if it had been struck on wood, took off a fragment of steel; and, in a short time, it was cut in halves, and the duke felt the blows on his arm, which had hitherto fallen on his buckler. At last, a blow, glancing along his arm, fell on his head, and slightly wounded his forehead.

Then the Duke of Touraine, seeing that his mutilated buckler was no longer anything but a useless defence, that his sword was too slight to penetrate his adversary's armour, made his horse take a bound backwards, and throwing from him his buckler with his left hand; and his sword with his right, he seized with both of them the heavy battle axe hanging at his saddle-bow, and returning towards the Count de Nevres, before he suspected his intention, he dealt him such a blow on his helmet, that

the laces of his visor broke, and the count, without being unhelmeted, found that his countenance was discovered. He shook his head, and his casque fell: every one uttered a loud cry on recognising him.

At the same moment, and just as he raised himself upon his saddle, to requite blow with blow, the batons of the two judges of the field fell between him and the Duke of Touraine, and the strong voice of the king was heard above them all, exclaiming, "Enough, gentlemen, enough!"

The fact was, that, at the Count de Nevre's blow, and on seeing the blood trickle down the duke's face, Madame Valentine had fainted; and the queen, pale and trembling, had seized the king's arm, saying to him, "Stop them, your excellence! in the name of heaven, stop them?"

The two combatants, bitterly exasperated as they were, stopped immediately. The Count de Nevres let his sword hang by the chain, the Duke of Touraine again fastened his battle-axe to his saddle-bow. The squires came up to their masters: some staunched the blood that was trickling from the brow of the Duke of Touraine; others drew the stump of the spear from the Count de Nevres' buckler, the iron of which had penetrated even to his shoulder.

When this double operation had been performed, they saluted each other with a cold politeness, like gentlemen who had been engaged in an ordinary pastime. The Count de Nevres left the lists, and the Duke of Touraine proceeded to his tent, to procure another helmet.

The king rose up in his balcony, and said, in a loud voice, "Gentlemen, it is our pleasure that the joust should now terminate and finish."

Therefore, the Duke of Touraine, instead of continuing his course, went towards the royal balcony, to receive the bracelet that was the prize reserved for the champion of the joust; but when he had reached the foot of it, Madame Isabel graciously said to him,

"Come up to us, your excellence, for to make our present the more valuable we wish ourselves to attach it to your arm."

The duke leaped lightly from his horse. A moment after he received, on his knees before the queen, the bracelet that she had promised him during the procession,

and whilst Madame Valentine was wiping her husband's forehead, to satisfy herself that the wound was not deep, and the king was inviting the Earl of Derby to dinner at the palace, Madame Isabel's hand met that of the duke, and the first adulterous favour was secretly given and received.

## CHAPTER V.

ALL these entertainments and jousts being terminated, the king turned his thoughts to the government and administration of his kingdom. All was externally peaceful, and France could, for a time, slumber in tranquillity in the midst of her allies. To the east, there was the Duke Galéas Visconti, whom the marriage of Madame Valentine connected, through the Duke of Touraine, with the royal family; to the south, there was the King of Arragon, a kinsman of the king's, through his wife, Ioland de Bar; to the west, the Duke of Brittany, a turbulent and disobedient vassal, but not as yet a declared enemy; and lastly, towards the north, was England, the oldest and most deadly enemy of France, but who, feeling in her own bosom the throbs of an incipient civil war, had just permitted her enmity to slumber, and had, as a favour, accorded to her rival a truce of three years, which she might well have solicited for herself as an indulgence.

The provinces, therefore, now alone claimed the attention and anxiety of the king; but they claimed it immediately. Successively ruined by the consecutive administrations of the Dukes of Anjou and Berri, Languedoc and Guienne, drained of treasure and blood, stretched their emaciated and suppliant hands towards their young sovereign. Messire Jean Lemercier and the Sire Guillaume de la Riviere, who were the king's most intimate counsellors, had been exhorting him, for a long time, to visit the distant boundaries of his kingdom. This was at last resolved upon, and his departure was fixed for the ensuing St. Michael. (Sept. 29, 1389.) The route was marked out by way of Dijon and Avignon, and, consequently, the Duke of Burgundy and Pope Clement were advertised of the approaching passage of the king.

On the appointed day, Charles left Paris, accompanied by Duke Louis of Touraine, by the Sire de Coucy, and many other knights. At Chatillon-sur-Seine, he was joined by the Dukes of Bourbon and the Count de Nevers, who came to meet him, and to do him honour. Having reached Dijon, he there found the Duchess of Burgundy, who had collected a court of ladies and damsels, who, she knew, were most agreeable to the king. They were Madame de Sully, Mademoiselle de Nevres, the Lady de Vergy, and others besides, the opening blossoms on the stems of the noblest families of France.

Here the entertainments were continued for ten days; and the king took leave of his aunt, with many compliments and presents to the ladies of her court. As for the duke, he embarked in a large boat, descended the Rhone, and reached Avignon almost as soon as the king.

Do you know Avignon, the holy city, at present sad and gloomy, like a fallen power, and who eternally looks at herself in the Rhone, seeking the papal tiara for her brow? She was the mistress of Clement VII. A grand master of the order of Malta had just girded round her waist a new belt of ramparts.\* John XXII., Benedict XII., Clement VI., and Urban V., had endowed her with her pontifical palace, and Saint Benezet with her miraculous bridge. She had a court, adorned with licentious cardinals and mundane abbesses. They lived, by day, in an atmosphere perfumed by the incense of ceremonies and fêtes; by night, they slept voluptuously to the melodious songs of Petrarch, and the distant murmurs of the fountain of Vaucluse.

It was Philip the Fair, who, snatching at the papal crown that had fallen from the head of Boniface VIII., from the buffet given him by Calonne, had placed it on the brow of Clement VI., and who, to unite in his own hand, and in that of his successors, the powers spiritual and temporal, conceived the gigantic project of disinheriting Rome of its Catholic royalty, and of endowing France with it. Avignon received the sacred lord of the Vatican; and the Rhone saw the vicar of Christ stretch forth from his balcony that hand that binds and loosens; and the French for the first time heard pronounced the universal benediction, "*Urbi et orbi.*"

\* Louis VIII. had thrown down the first.

But a vast schism had arisen in the church. Rome, at first terrified, had recovered her courage, and had raised altar against altar. The Christian world was divided into two parties: the one acknowledging the Pope at Avignon, the other denying that a pontifical see could exist except in the city where St Peter had founded it. The popes, on their part, far from remaining inactive in this civil war, in which they had such a deep interest, had constituted themselves the leaders of the double and vast Christian army, and, mutually anathematizing their respective opponents, they ruined their power by its own aid, and imprudently destroyed their spiritual thunders by launching them against each other.

In this great quarrel, and according as they had been friends or enemies of France, the people had, in turn, acknowledged the pope of Avignon or the pope of Rome. The only monarchs who then acknowledged the supremacy of Clement VII., were the Kings of Spain, of Aragon, and of Scotland; and, as they did so only from respect towards the King of France, it was a grand festival for Clement VII. to receive the only sovereign who still supported him against the pretensions of his rival; and if, at the dinners and entertainments that he gave him, he caused himself to be served at a separate table, and took precedence of him, he quickly endeavoured to make him forget the supremacy of the altar over the throne, by surrendering to the king the nomination of seven hundred and fifty benefices, which he might choose in favour of the poor clergy of his kingdom; and by according him the power of appointment to the bishoprics of Chartres and Auxerre; and, lastly, by ordaining, as Archbishop of Rheims, the learned Ferry Cassinel, whom the king honoured with his protection, and who died a month after his election, being poisoned by the Dominicans.

The King of France, in exchange for these favours, engaged to give him aid and assistance against the anti pope, and promised that, on his return to France,\* he would actively employ himself even by force of arms, to destroy the existing schism. At last, after having remained eight days in Avignon, the king took leave of Clement, and returned to Villeneuve. There, to their

\* Avignon was not in France; it was the capital of a separate state, under the title of "Comtat,"

great astonishment, he thanked his uncles, the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy, for their kind attendance, and declared that it was his wish that they should return, the one to Dijon, the other to Paris; whilst, as regarded himself, he should continue his journey towards Toulouse, accompanied by the Dukes of Touraine and Bourbon.

The king's two uncles now first comprehended the true motive of this journey, and that its sole object was to institute an inquiry into the arbitrary government that had just desolated Languedoc. They left with the king Messire de la Riviere and La Mercier, Montague and Le Begue de Villaine, who, they knew, were upright and strict men, whom the Duke de Berri regarded as his personal enemies, but who, in reality, were only the enemies of his exactions. Therefore the two dukes departed from Villeneuve in a very melancholy mood.

"What do you think of this, brother?" said the Duke de Berri to the Duke of Burgundy, on leaving the town.

"I think," he replied, "that our nephew is young, and that misfortune will befall him for listening to young counsellors; but, at present, we must submit to it. A day will come, when those who direct him will repent it; and the king also. As for us, my brother, let us return to our country; as long as we are united, no one can injure us; for, after the king, we are the most powerful men in the realm of France."

The next day, the king reached Nismes, and, without stopping in the old Roman town, he went and slept at Lunel. On the following day he stopped to dine at Montpelier, and it was there that he began to hear groans and complaints; moreover, he was told that the further he went, the more completely would he find the country ruined; and that his two uncles, the Dukes of Anjou and Berri, who had successively governed it, had left it so poor, that the most rich and powerful had scarcely wherewith to weed their vines and to cultivate their lands.

"It would greatly excite your pity, sire," they said to him, "to see your children ransomed at a third, a fourth, or a twelfth of their property, paying five or six taxes a year, and always crushed by a new tax before they had paid off the old one; for the two lords, your uncles, have arbitrarily levied more than 30,000 livres between the Rhone and Gironde. The Duke of Anjou only took

from the rich and powerful, but when the Duke de Berri succeeded him, he spared neither rich nor poor; he mowed and reaped everything before him." It was added, that all these exactions had been made by his treasurer, Betisac, gleaning where his master had reaped, did not even leave for the people what the farmer left for the birds of the air—the ear that fell from the harvest waggon.

To these communications the king replied, that if God enabled him, all these evil practices should cease; that he would have no more consideration for the dukes, his uncles, than if they were not his father's brothers; and that, as for their wicked advisers and agents, he would cause an impartial and strict inquisition to be made concerning them.

It was in the midst of this concert of maledictions that the king entered the town of Beziers, where Betisac resided; but he enjoined secrecy as to the complaints that had been made, and ostensibly devoted the three or four first days after his arrival to entertainments; whilst he had secretly appointed commissioners of inquiry to make investigations. On the fourth day, these commissioners informed him that the charges made against his uncle's treasurer were altogether unpardonable, and were such as involved capital punishment.

The king's council was therefore assembled; and Betisac was arrested at his own house, and brought before his judges, who showed him on the table a mass of papers and documents, establishing the reality of his exactions, and said to him, "Betisac, examine, and answer. What have you to reply to these accusations?"

At these words, an usher took them one by one, and read them all to him; but for each he had his answer ready. Those which had his signature he readily acknowledged; but, he added, that he had acted in pursuance of the Duke de Berri's orders, and that they had only to question his master. As for the others he denied them, saying, "I know nothing of them; speak to the seneschals of Beaucaire and Carcassonne respecting them, or, rather, to the Chancellor de Berri."

The commissioners were greatly embarrassed; but, in expectation of fresh proofs, they sent him to prison. As soon as he was shut up there, they went to his house, and seized all his papers, which they carried off, and examined

at their leisure. From these they found that he had committed such exactions, and levied such sums on the king's seigneuries and manors, that those who heard them read, doubted those who read them. He was again brought before them, and acknowledging the accuracy of the accounts, said that all the sums were correct and true, but he added, that they merely passed through his hands, and were turned to the profits of his excellence of Berri; and that, in a room of his house, which he designated, he had receipts for everything. These documents were brought before the council, compared with the accounts, and were generally found to be correct. There were acknowledgments for a sum amounting to three millions.

The commissioners were perfectly astounded by such evidence of the Duke de Berri's cupidity, and asked Betsiac what his master had done with such sums as these. "I am unable to say, your excellence," he replied; "but I imagine that a large portion of it was expended in the purchase of chateaux, hotels, estates, and jewels, for their excellencies, the Counts of Boulogne and Etampes, whose establishments as you know, are splendidly supported; he also gave so much to Thibaut and Morinot, his valets, that at this time they are rich men."

"And you, Betsiac," said the Sire de la Riviere, "have you not had a hundred thousand francs for your share of the pillage?"

"Messire," replied Betsiac, "his excellence the Duke de Berri held his power from the king, and I held mine from the duke. I am, therefore, in fact, accredited by the king, since I was the representative of his governor, and consequently all the taxes I levied are lawful. As for what remains in my own hands, it was through the permission of his excellence the Duke de Berri, who likes his own people to be rich: my wealth is, therefore, valid and reasonable, since it is derived from him."

"You speak foolishly," replied Messire Jean Lemercier. "No wealth is valid and reasonable that is improperly acquired. Return to prison, whilst we consider what you have said. We will lay your defence before the king, and it will be settled by his decision."

"May God direct him!" said Betsiac; and upon that he bowed to his judges, and was taken back to prison.

However, as soon as it was made known through the

neighbourhood, that Betisac was in prison by the king's authority, and was going to be tried, all the people of the surrounding country flocked into town. The unhappy wretches whom he had pillaged forced themselves even into the king's hotel to demand justice; and when he went out, they threw themselves on their knees in his path, and overwhelmed him with supplications and complaints. Some were from children, whom he had made orphans; others from women whom he had made widows; others from girls whom he had made mothers. Where persuasion failed, he had had recourse to force. He had withered everything, had that man—treasures, life, and honour. The king plainly saw that the blood of the poor people cried and groaned aloud, calling for vengeance on this double dealer; and he ordered the council to issue their sentence against him.

But at the very moment when the judges were assembled, two knights made their appearance: they were the Sires de Nantouillet and De Mespain, who came, in the name of the Duke de Berri, to acknowledge everything that Betisac had done, and to demand of the king and his council to deliver this man into their hands, and to turn the inquiry, if such was their pleasure, against the duke himself.

The council now found itself in a most embarrassing position. The Duke de Berri might, some day or other, regain the influence over the king that he had now lost; and, under such an apprehension, every one feared to displease him. On the other hand, the crimes and oppressions of Betisac were so glaring and visible, that it would be setting all law at defiance to permit him to leave prison unscathed. It was, therefore, proposed to seize all his goods and possessions, to offer them to sale, and to distribute the proceeds amongst the poor people. By this means, he would become as poor and naked as the Duke de Berri had found him. But the king did not approve of this partial justice. He said, that this restitution would be satisfactory to those only whom he had ruined; while his death and degradation could alone compensate those families amongst whom he had sown death and dishonour.

Whilst engaged in these discussions, an old man presented himself before the council: he had heard what was taking place, and came to propose to the king and

the commissioners of inquiry to make Betisac confess a crime that should be entirely personal, and for which the Duke de Berri could not make himself responsible. They inquired by what means he proposed to effect this.

"I must be placed in the same cell with Betisac," he replied. But he would give no further explanation, saying the rest was his business, as he had engaged to bring it to a successful issue.

The thing, therefore, was done as he desired: some guards led him publicly to the prison; the jailor, who had received his orders, conducted the new comer into the prisoner's dungeon, and closed the door upon him.

The old man appeared to be entirely ignorant that the dungeon was already inhabited. He stretched out his arms before him, like a man who could not see clearly; then, when he had reached its extremity, he placed his back against the wall, and drawing up his knees, rested his elbows on them, and let his head fall on his hands.

Betisac, whose eyes had, in eight days, become habituated to the obscurity, observed the actions of the new tenant with all the curiosity of a man in such a situation. He made a movement to attract his attention, but the old man remained motionless, and as if buried in profound thought. Then he determined to address him, and asked him whether he had not come from the outside of the prison.

The old man raised his eyes, and perceived his interrogator in a corner; he was on his knees, in the attitude of prayer. This man dared to pray.—The old man started, on seeing himself so near the man he had promised to destroy. Betisac repeated his question.

"Yes," replied the old man, in a hollow voice.

"And about what are they talking in the town?" he demanded, affecting an air of indifference.

"About a certain Betisac," replied the old man.

"And what did they say respecting him?" continued he who had such a vast interest in the question he had put.

"They said, that at last justice would be done, and that he was going to be hanged."

"Oh Jesus, my Saviour!" said Betisac, rising up.

The old man let his head again fall on his hands, and the silence of the dungeon was only broken by the deep

breathing of him who had just received this terrible communication.

He remained perfectly motionless for a minute, but soon his limbs failed him, he leant his back against the wall, and wiped his brow. Then, after an instant of utter prostration, he continued in a hoarse voice, and without changing his position :

“Holy Mary! is there no hope for him?”

The old man remained silent and motionless, as if he had not heard the question.

“I ask you whether there is no hope?” said Betisac, going up to him, and shaking his arm in a sort of frenzy.

“Yes,” said the old man, “there is one—that the rope may break.”

“Oh, my God! my God!” exclaimed Betisac, wringing his hands, “what can be done? and who will give me any advice?”

“Ah!” said the old man, looking at him with a gloomy expression of countenance, as if he did not wish to lose one single emotion of his despair; “ah! it is you, then—you are the man whom all the people curse. Are not the last hours of such a life a heavy burden to be borne?”

“Oh!” said Betisac, “let them take all—furniture, money, houses! let them scatter them among the clamoring people—only leave me my life! should I even pass it in this dungeon, chained hand and foot, without ever revisiting the light of day! But life! life! Oh, I wish to live!”

The miserable wretch rolled himself on the floor, like one distracted. The old man watched him whilst he did so, and, when he saw him palpitating and exhausted,

“And he who should give you the means of escaping this?” said he.

Betisac raised himself on his knees, and looked at the old man, as if he would read the very bottom of his heart.

“What is that you are saying?”

“I say that you excite my pity, and that if you will follow my advice, all will turn out well.”

“Oh, speak! I am rich—my whole fortune—”

The old man began to laugh.

“That’s it: you hope to redeem your life with that which has destroyed it, do you not? and then you will

consider yourself acquitted and cleared before both God and man."

"No, no, I must always be a great sinner; I know it, and I repent in the bitterness of my soul. But you told me that there was a means of escape; what is it?"

"If I were in your place—and God defend me from it—this is what I would do."

Betisac actually devoured the words as they issued from the old man's mouth. He continued:

"When I again appeared before the king's council, I would continue to deny my guilt."

"Yes, yes," said Betisac.

"But I would say that, touched by repentance for another crime, I wished to confess myself, for the salvation of my soul—I would say that I had, for a long time, erred against the faith; that I was a Manichœan and a heretic."

"That is not true," said Betisac. "I am a good Christian, believing in Jesus and the Virgin Mary."

The old man continued, as if Betisac had not spoken:

"I would say, therefore, that I was a Manichœan and a heretic, and that I still hold my opinions. Then the Bishop of Beziers would lay claim to me; for, from that time I should belong to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction. He would send me to the pope at Avignon; and as our holy father Clement is a great friend to his excellence the Duke de Berri—"

"I understand," said Betisac, interrupting him; "yes, yes, our Lord de Berri will not allow me to be injured. Ah, you are my saviour!"

And he wished to throw himself into the old man's arms, but he repulsed him. Just at this moment the door opened: they came to conduct Betisac before the council.

Then he thought the time was arrived to make use of the stratagem that had been suggested to him; and putting one knee to the ground, he demanded permission to speak: this was immediately granted him.

"Noble lords," said he, "I have examined my present circumstances and my conscience, and I fear that I have greatly provoked the wrath of God, not for having pilaged or stolen the property of the poor; for, God be thanked, it is evident to all, that I only acted by my

master's orders; but for having erred against the faith."

The judges looked at each other in great astonishment.

"Yes," continued Betisac, "yes, your excellencies; for my mind cannot bring itself to believe in the Trinity, nor that the Son of God could ever have degraded himself so much as to descend from heaven to become incarnate in a woman; and as for my soul, I think that nothing will remain of it after my death."

A murmur of astonishment ran through all the assembly. Then the Sire le Mercier, who was, nevertheless, his most deadly enemy, arose, and said to him, "Betisac, think of what you have said; for these are words which severely wound the holy church, our mother, and which demand the fire. Recollect yourself, therefore."

"I know not," replied Betisac, "what my words require, whether the fire or the water; but this has been my opinion since I had the power of reasoning and thought, and it will be mine until I lose it."

Then the judges made the sign of the cross; and fearing for their own salvation, if they heard any more, they sent him back to prison.

On entering it, he looked about for the old man, to tell him all that had happened: but he was no longer there.

What passed in the soul of the culprit from that hour until the following morning, was known to God alone. On the next day, however, it might have been denied that he was the man of the previous evening. God had changed his hours to years; and in one night his hair had become grey.

The king was much astonished on hearing Betisac's declaration.

"Ah!" he said, "he is a bad man; we only thought him a rogue, and behold he is a heretic; we thought that he only merited the cord, and he requires the stake. Well, then, be it so: he shall be burnt and hung; and now, should my uncle, the Duke de Berri, come to make himself responsible for his misdeeds, we shall see whether he agrees with him on this point."

The report of Betisac's avowals was soon spread through the city; and a vast throng of people might be seen rejoicing in all the streets, for he was immoderately hated and execrated. But none were more astonished on

hearing the news than the two knights who had come to claim him in the name of the Duke de Berri: they clearly perceived that he was lost, and thought that he had only made such a confession by the advice of an enemy. But by whomsoever the advice had been given, the confession had been made, and the king had pronounced the sentence: there was, therefore, only one hope, which was to make him deny, on the following day, his declaration of the evening before.

With this view, they hastened to the prison to endeavour to see him, and to prepare his defence; but the jailor replied, that he had received the most strict injunctions to permit no one whatever to speak with Betisac, who was now guarded by four men, specially appointed to prevent all intercourse at the peril of their lives. The knights looked at each other in great tribulation, and regaining their hotel, they mounted their horses, and returned to the Duke de Berri.

The next day, about ten o'clock in the morning, the officers of justice came to the prison for Betisac. When he perceived that they were conducting him, not before the king's council, but to the bishop's palace, he began to recover his spirits. There he found assembled the king's commissioners of inquiry, and the officers of the church, which convinced him that there was a contention between the temporal and ecclesiastical jurisdictions. In a short time, the magistrate of Beziers, by whom he had hitherto been kept in prison, said to the bishop's people:

"My lords, here is Betisac, whom we delivered up to you, as a heretic, and for publishing opinions contrary to the faith: if his crime had fallen within the cognizance of the royal jurisdiction, justice would have been executed on him by it; but since, through his heresy, he belongs to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, do with him what his actions require."

Betisac imagined that he was saved.

The bishop's official now demanded whether he was as great a criminal as had been affirmed; and he, seeing that the affair took the turn that he had been assured would be most favourable to him, replied in the affirmative. Then the public was admitted, and Betisac was ordered to repeat his confession before it; and so thoroughly had the old man infatuated him, that he thrice repeated it, and thrice did the people receive this

avowal with a roar resembling that of a lion at the scent of blood.

On a signal from the official, Betisac was delivered up to the officers of justice, who took him away in the midst of them; whilst the people descended the steps of the palace around and beheld him, surrounding and pressing upon him, as if fearful that he might yet escape. As for Betisac, he believed that they were merely taking him out of the town, to conduct him to Avignon. At the bottom of the stairs he recognized the old man, seated on a post: his countenance had an expression of joy, which Betisac interpreted favourably. He nodded his head to him.

"Yes, yes; all goes on well," said the old man, "does it not?"

And he began to laugh: then, getting on the top of the post, and looking over the whole crowd, he called out:

"Betisac, do not forget to whom you are indebted for the advice that now leads you where you are going: it is to me."

Then descending from the post, he took a cross street leading to the palace, with all the rapidity that his age permitted.

Betisac, on his part, was led there by the principal street, still surrounded by the crowd, who from time to time uttered one of those vast shouts which we so well know, from having heard them so often. The criminal did not perceive in these shouts anything more than the wrath of the populace on finding that its prey was about to escape. He was, on the contrary, rather astonished that they allowed him to leave the walls of Beziers so quietly. But on reaching the Place du Palais, a vast shout rose up from the spot, and was echoed back by the crowd that accompanied him. The throng opened, and precipitated towards the centre, where a pile was erected, from the midst of which rose up a gibbet, stretching towards the great street its long link arm, from the end of which depended an iron collar. So great was the eagerness with which every one had pressed forward, to secure the best places around the scaffold, that Betisac found himself alone in the midst of his four guards.

Then the truth, in all its naked deformity, arose up before this man; and it had the form of death.

"Ah, your excellence the Duke de Berri," he exclaimed, "it is all over with me. Help me! help me!"

The crowd answered by cries and maledictions against the Duke de Berri and against his treasurer. Then, as the criminal refused to advance, the officers of justice took him in their arms, and carried him; he struggled, and cried out that he was not a heretic, that he believed in Christ made man, and in the blessed Virgin Mary. He called God as a witness to the truth of his words, and begged for mercy from the people; and each time his prayer was greeted by bursts of derisive laughter. He called for aid from the Duke de Berri, and every time the cries, "To death! to death!" responded to the invocation.

At length the officers of justice set him down at the foot of the pile, near one of the posts that enclosed the barrier: the old man was leaning against the post.

"Ah, cursed wretch!" exclaimed Betisac, on seeing him, "it is you who have brought me here! My lords, my lords, I am not guilty! Here is the wicked man who has reduced me to this state. Help me, my lords, help me!"

The old man began to laugh.—"Come, you have a good memory," said he, "and do not forget those who give you good counsel. Therefore receive my last advice, Betisac—think of your soul."

"Yes, my lords," cried Betisac, who hoped thus to gain time: "Yes—a priest, a priest!"

"And for what purpose?" exclaimed the old man, "since he has not a soul to save, and his body is already condemned."

"To death with him! to death!" roared out the people.

The executioner came up to him. "Betisac," said he, "it is decreed that you must die! your bad deeds have brought you to a bad end."

Betisac was perfectly motionless: his eyes had lost all speculation, his hair was bristling up. The executioner took him by the hand; he allowed himself to be led forward like an infant. When they reached the pile, he raised him in his arms, and his assistants, opening the hinge of the collar, passed it round his neck. Betisac remained suspended, but not strangled. At the same moment, the old man hastily seized a resinous torch that

was burning in a brazen furnace, and set fire to the pile; the executioner and his assistants jumped down.

The flames restored all his energies to the wretch it was about to devour. Without uttering a cry, without any longer demanding pardon, he seized the chain by which he was suspended with both his hands, and, mounting the rings by the strength of his wrists, he reached the transverse beam of the gibbet, which he embraced with his hands and knees, removing himself as far as he could from the pile. By this means he kept himself beyond the reach of the fire, so long as it burnt only the lower part of the pile; but soon the flame extended itself to the upper part, and, like an animated and intelligent being, like a serpent that erects itself, it raised its head towards Betisac, thrusting towards him the smoke and sparks; then, at last, it appeared to lick him with its fiery tongue. The wretch uttered a scream at this deadly caress, for his clothes had just caught fire.

There was now a solemn silence, that nothing might be lost of this last struggle between the creature and the element of life and death. The pitiable moaning of the one, and the joyous roaring of the other, were heard at the same instant. The man and the fire—that is to say, the criminal and the executioner—appeared to entwine themselves together, to clasp and wreath in each other's arms. But in a moment, the man confessed himself vanquished: his enfeebled knees abandoned their support, his hands could no longer clasp the reddening chain; he sent forth a piteous scream, and letting himself fall, he found himself suspended in the midst of the flames. For a few more seconds, the misshapen being, who had been a human creature, struggled convulsively in the middle of the fire: then he stiffened, and then became perfectly motionless. A moment after, the ring that was fastened to the gibbet was separated from it, for the wood of the gibbet itself was calcined; and then, as if he had been dragged down to hell, the dead body fell, and disappeared in the midst of the burning pile.

Immediately, all the crowd melted away, mute and silent. The old man alone remained at the foot of the pile; and every one asked himself, if this individual were not Satan himself, coming to lay claim to the condemned soul.

The old man was one whose daughter Betisac had dishonoured.

## CHAPTER VI.

Now, if our readers, to enable them to embrace with more facility the details of the whole of the events that we have undertaken to place before them, will follow us beyond the walls of Béziers; if they consent to abandon the rich plains of Languedoc and Provence—the cities, with their sonorous names, where they speak a language the daughter of Rome and of Athens—the fields of olive trees, with their gray leaves, where the streams flow bordered by oleanders—the shores bathed by the waves still warm from the sun of the Bosphorus; if they will exchange these for the mountainous plains of Brittany, for those forests of venerable oaks, for that primitive language, and for its ocean with its deep green waters, we will lead them some leagues from the ancient town of Vannes, and will introduce them into one of those strong chateaux, the prudent residences of those great vassals always ready to become rebels. There, partially opened the carved door of a low chamber that serves as a dining-room, we shall see two men seated at a table, having between them a goblet of chased silver, full of spiced wine, which one of them frequently and lovingly caresses; whilst the other, as gloomy as if here under a medical regimen, repulses all the advances made to him, and covers his glass with his hand every time that his companion, unable to make him empty the virgin liquor that half fills his cup, would at any rate augment the quantity.

He whom we have indicated as having the least pretensions to be regarded as a partisan of temperance, is a man of from fifty to sixty years of age, grown old under the harness of war, with which, even now, he is almost entirely clothed. His brow, brown and reddened, on the middle of which his grey hair is parted, is furrowed, less by age than the constant weight of his casque. In the intervals of repose that the occupation in which we have seen him engaged leaves him, his elbows lean upon the table; then his chin rests upon his two powerful

hands; and his mouth, shaded by a thick moustache, which he nibbles habitually with his lower lip, thus finds itself on a level with the goblet, into which he from time to time plunges his eyes, as if to pursue the retreating liquor that is gradually disappearing from his reiterated attacks.

The other is a handsome young man, covered with silk and velvet, carelessly reclined on a large ducal arm-chair, on the back of which his head is thrown, and who only quits this easy attitude to stretch forth his hand, as we have seen, over his glass, every time the old warrior threatens him with an increase of liquor, which they appear to appreciate so differently.

"By heaven! my cousin of Craon," said the old man, replacing the goblet on the table for the last time, "to say the truth, for a descendant of King Robert, as you are by the female line, you have taken in a marvellously philosophic manner the affront that his excellence the Duke of Touraine has put upon you."

"Ah, your excellence of Brittany," replied Pierre de Craon, without changing his attitude. "what would you have had me do against the king's brother?"

"Against the king's brother? So be it; although, after all, that would not have any effect on me. The king's brother is only a duke and a gentleman, as I am; and if he had acted to me as he has done towards you—but I will not even expose myself to such a chance: therefore, let us not talk of him. But, do you see, there is a man who is at the bottom of this business."

"I think so," replied the chevalier, phlegmatically.

"And this man, do you see," continued the duke, again filling his glass, which he raised half way to his lips—"this man, as true as that this hypocras, which, by the way, does not appear to your taste, is nevertheless composed of the best wine that is grown at Dijon, and of the best honey that can be got at Narbonne, and of the finest spices that can be gathered in the lands of Asia"—(the duke emptied his glass)—"this man, do you see, is no other than that infamous Clisson;" and he struck the table at the same time with his fist and the bottom of the cup.

"I am of your opinion, your excellence," replied Messire Pierre, with the same tranquillity; for he appeared

to have taken upon him to redouble his coldness in proportion as the Duke of Brittany increased his wrath.

“And with that conviction in your heart, you actually quitted Paris without endeavouring to avenge yourself on that man?”

“I had formed such an idea for an instant, but one reflection arrested me.”

“And what was that, may it please you?” said the duke, in turn throwing himself back in his chair.

“What was it?” said Pierre, resting his elbows on the table, and his chin on his hands, and looking earnestly at the duke—“what was it? You shall hear, your excellence. I said to myself, ‘this man, who has just insulted me—me, a simple knight—once most outrageously insulted one of the first peers of France—a duke; and a duke so mighty and wealthy, that he could have made war upon a king!’ This duke had given the chateau of Gavre to the famous John Chandos; and when he informed Clisson of this donation, which he certainly had a right to make, Clisson’s sole reply was, ‘The devil take me, your excellence, if an Englishman shall ever be my neighbour.’ That very evening the chateau of Gavre was attacked, and the next day it was razed to the ground. I do not now remember to whom the constable offered this insult: but I know it was to a duke. To your health, your excellence.”

Pierre de Craon now took his glass; emptied it at one draught, and replaced it on the table.

“By the soul of my father!” cried the duke, turning pale, “you say that to wound our feelings, my cousin; for you know very well that it was to us the thing happened; but you also know that, six months afterwards, the criminal was a prisoner in the same chateau where we now are.”

“And which he left safe and sound.”

“Yes, on paying me one hundred thousand livres, and giving up to me a town and three chateaux.”

“But on preserving his accursed life,” said Craon, raising his voice—“his life, which the powerful Duke of Brittany dared not take, for fear of incurring the enmity of his sovereign. One hundred thousand livres, one town, and three chateaux! Oh, the glorious vengeance, to inflict upon a man who possesses a million and a half

of livres, ten towns, and twenty fortresses! No, no, my cousin, let us speak frankly. You had him here, disarmed, and chained in the darkest and deepest of your dungeons—you hated him mortally—and yet you dared not kill him.”

“I gave the order to Bavalan, and Bavalan did not execute it.”

“And he was right, your excellence; for, should the king have claimed him as the murderer of the constable, perhaps he who gave the order would not have dared to incur the royal anger; perhaps the faithful servant—who would, however, have been only the sword—would have been abandoned by the arm that wielded it; and the finer the steel of which the sword is made, the more easily is it broken.”

“My cousin,” said the duke, rising up, “you suspect my honour, I believe. We gave Balavan our word to protect him, and, by heaven, we would have done so, even had it been against the King of France, had it been against the Emperor of Germany, had it been against the Pope of Rome! We have only one regret,” he continued, reseating himself with a gloomy air, and resuming all his hatred, “which is, that Balavan disobeyed us, and that no one will undertake what he refused to do.”

“And if any one should offer himself for that purpose, would he be sure, when the thing was done, to find an asylum and defence at the hands of the Duke of Brittany?”

“An asylum as secure as is the sanctuary of a church,” replied the duke, in a solemn voice; “a defence as powerful as this arm can give: and this I swear by the tomb of my fathers, by the emblazonry of my arms, by the cross of my sword! Let the man come: it is a genuine offer.”

“And it is accepted, your excellence,” exclaimed Craon, rising, and pressing the old duke’s hand, with a force of which he might have been thought incapable. “Why did you not say so sooner? The thing might have been already done.”

The duke regarded Craon with astonishment.

“That is to say,” continued Craon, crossing his arms, “that you imagined that this offence glanced along my bosom as a lance over the steel of a cuirass. No, no! it penetrated deeply, and has been eating into my heart. I appeared gay, and indifferent to you: yes; but yet you

often told me that I was pale. Well, then, it was this cancer that was gnawing me, and will continue to gnaw my breast, with the teeth of that man, so long as that man lives. Now, the tokens of joy and health will soon revisit my cheek: from this very hour my convalescence will begin, and in a few days I hope to be entirely well."

"How so?"

Craon again sat down.

"Listen, your excellence, for I only waited for this promise to tell you all. I have at Paris, near the Cemetery of St. John,\* a large hotel, which is only under the care of a porter, a man entirely devoted to me, and on whom I can depend. I have instructed him, more than three months ago, to lay in an abundant store of wine, bread, and salt meats, at this hotel; to purchase armour, coats of steel, gauntlets, and caps of steel, sufficient to arm forty men I have undertaken to engage, and have chosen them, your excellence. They are bold fellows, fearing neither God nor devil, and who would go down to hell itself, if I would lead them."

"But," said the duke, "you will excite observation, if you enter Paris with this troop."

"Therefore I shall guard against it. For the last two months, according as I engaged them, I have despatched them to the capital in small parties of three or four. Having once reached the hotel, they have orders never to leave it, and the porter is commanded to refuse them nothing. They are a species of brotherhood, who are candidates for hell. Do you understand now, your excellence? This infamous constable passes almost every evening with the king, and leaves him at midnight; and to reach his hotel, which is situated in the grand Rue de Bretagne, he passes behind the rampart of King Philip Augustus, into the desolate streets of St. Catherine, and the Poulies, before the Cemetery of St. John, where my hotel is situated."

"Faith, my cousin," said the duke, "the thing has a good beginning."

"And it shall finish well, your excellence, if God does not interpose; for it is altogether a devil's business."

"And how long will you yet remain with us?—where however, you are most welcome."

"The time which it will take to saddle my horse; for

\* Now St. John's Market.

here is a letter from the porter, which came this morning by one of my messengers, and which informs me that the whole of my men are arrived, and that my company is complete."

At these words, Pierre de Craon whistled for his squire, and ordered his horse to be prepared.

"Will you not remain one more night in my chateau de l'Hermine, my fair cousin?" said the duke on seeing these preparations.

"I am very grateful to your excellence; but now I know that all is ready, and that they only wait for me, how can you wish me to delay one hour, one minute, one second? How can you wish me to rest in my bed, or that I should sit at a table? I must depart, your excellence, by the shortest and most direct road. I want air, space, and also motion. Adieu, your excellence: I have your word."

"And I renew it."

"To demand a second would be to doubt the first: thank you."

And as he thus spoke, Messire Pierre de Craon buckled the belt of his sword round his loins, drew his grey leathern boots, turned down with red plush, above his knees, and taking a last leave of the duke, threw himself lightly on his horse.

He rode with such diligence, that towards the evening of the seventh day after his departure from the chateau de l'Hermine, he saw Paris before him. He awaited the obscurity of night before he entered it, and reached his hotel without attracting more notice than had each of the men he had sent forward; only, scarcely had he dismounted, before he sent for the porter, who had the care of the gate, and ordered him, on peril of having his eyes torn from his head, to suffer no one to enter the chamber where he was. The porter instantly communicated the same order to the servant who had the care of the hotel, and confined his wife, his children, and his housemaid to their chambers.

"And it was perfectly right," says Froissart, with great simplicity; "forasmuch as, if his wife and children had been allowed to go through the streets, the coming of Messire Pierre had been quickly disclosed; for women and children naturally conceal with difficulty what they see, and what is required to be concealed."

These precautions having been taken, Messire Pierre de Craon chose the most intelligent of his men, and made known to the porter that they were to go out and come in freely. They were commanded to watch all the constables, proceedings, and to follow him step by step, that his enemy might be informed of all he did. Therefore, every evening, he knew where he had been during the day, and where he was going at night; and yet matters remained in this state, and without any favourable opportunity being offered to gratify his revenge, from the sixteenth of May, to the eighteenth of June, the day of the "Fête Dieu."

Now, on this day of the "Fête Dieu," the King of France held an open court at his hotel of St. Paul, and all the barons and lords who were in Paris had been invited to dinner, which the Queen and the Duchess of Touraine would attend. After this dinner, to amuse the ladies, there had been a joust, in the enclosure of the hotel, by the young knights and squires; and Messire Guillaume de Flandre, Count de Namur, having been proclaimed victor by the heralds, had received the prize from the hands of the queen and Madam Valentine, and then, in the evening, they had danced till an hour after midnight; when every one thought of returning to his hotel or lodging, and almost all departed without any guards.

Messire Olivier de Clisson was one of the last who retired; and, having taken leave of the king, he passed through the apartments of the Duke of Touraine, and found him engaged in arranging his dress, instead of taking it off. Seeing him thus occupied, he inquired, with a smile, if he was not coming to sleep at Poulain's? This Poulain was the treasurer of the Duke of Touraine; and under pretence of verifying his accounts, but in reality to have more liberty, the duke frequently left the Hotel de St. Paul in the evening, (which he could not do at night, guarded as it was as a royal residence.) betook himself to the cross of Tiroy, where this man lived, and from thence went wherever his pleasure called him. The duke understood well enough what the constable meant; and, putting his hand on his shoulder, he answered him, laughing,

"Constable, I do not yet know where I shall sleep, and whether I must go far or near for my bed. Perhaps

I shall not leave the hotel de St. Paul to-night; but as for you, go along, for it is full time for you."

"May God give your excellence a good night," said the constable.

"Thank you. But in that respect," replied the duke, laughing, "I have nothing to complain of; and I am inclined to think that he occupies himself more with my nights than with my days. Adieu, Clisson."

The constable saw plainly that he would be in the way if he remained any longer; he therefore bowed, and took his leave, and went to rejoin his people and his horses, which were waiting for him in front of the hotel. His attendants were eight in number, besides two servants bearing torches.

When the constable had mounted his horse, the two servants lighted their flambeaux, and preceded him some steps. They took the way of the Grande Rue St. Catharine. The rest of his people followed him, with the exception of a squire, whom he had called to his side, to enjoin him to superintend a dinner which he was going to give the next day to the Duke of Touraine, the Sire de Coucy, Messire Jean de Vienne, and some others, and for which he desired that nothing should be spared.

At this moment, two men passed close to the torchbearers, and extinguished their torches.

Messire Olivier stopped short; but thinking it was some pleasantry of the Duke of Touraine's, who was coming behind him, he cried out, gaily, "Ah! faith, your excellence, this is too bad; but I pardon you; for you are young, and jesting and pleasure are everything with you now." At these words, he turned round, and saw that a great number of strange horsemen were mixed with his men, and that two of them were only a few paces from him. Then the suspicion of some danger suggested itself to him, and he stopped, saying—"Who are you, and what means this?"

"Death! death to Clisson!" replied the man nearest him, drawing his sword.

"Death to Clisson!" exclaimed the constable: "these are very insolent words; and who are you, then, who make use of them?"

"I am Pierre de Craon, your enemy," said the knight, "and you have exasperated me so greatly, that I must revenge myself." Then rising in his stirrups he turned

towards his followers:—"I have found him I wanted," he cried: "Come on! come on!"

So saying, he rushed upon the constable, whilst his people dispersed his attendants. But, although unarmed, and taken unawares, Messire Olivier was not the kind of antagonist to be easily overcome. He drew a small cutlass, about two feet long, that he had worn more as an ornament than for defence, and, covering his head with his left arm, he drew his horse back towards the wall, that he might only be attacked in front.

"Shall we kill them all?" cried out Pierre de Craon's people.

"Yes," he answered, whilst striking at the constable. "But, come here—come here to me, that this cursed constable may die! Come!"

Two or three men detached themselves from the main body, and hastened to him.

In spite of Clisson's strength and skill, such an unequal contest could not long continue, and whilst he was parrying a blow with his left arm, and striking one with his right, Pierre de Craon's sword fell on his naked head. Clisson emitted a sigh, dropped his sword and fell from his horse, his head striking against a door, which gave way to the blow. He was, therefore, extended on the ground, with half his body in the house of the baker who made his bread, and who, hearing a great disturbance of men and horses, had partly opened his door, to see what was the cause of all this commotion.

Messire Pierre endeavoured to enter this house, mounted as he was; but the door was too low, and he could not proceed.

"Shall I dismount and finish him?" demanded one of his men.

Craon, without answering, made his horse stamp on the constable's legs and thighs; and seeing that he gave no signs of life, "It is useless," he said, "and we have done quite enough. If he be not dead he is not worth much more than a dead man: he has been hit on the head, and that by my arm; I can swear to that. Therefore, gentlemen, be off with you! and get beyond the gate of St. Antoine."\*

\* Craon indicated this gate, because, since the revolt of the Mallotins, the chains and barriers had been removed from it, by order of the constable himself.

The assassins were scarcely gone, before the constable's people, who had not suffered much, reunited around their master's body. The baker, finding that the sufferer was the constable, offered his house with the greatest alacrity. They therefore laid the wounded man on a bed, brought a light, and on seeing a large wound on his forehead, and so much blood on his face and clothes, they concluded that their master was killed.

In the meantime, one of them had run to the Hotel de St. Paul; and, as he was known as one of the constable's followers, he was introduced into the chamber of the king, who, fatigued with the day and the ball, had retired from the queen's apartments, and was preparing to pass the night in his own. He was, therefore, ready to get into bed when this man entered, pale, frightened, and exclaiming, "Oh! your majesty, your majesty, what a sad affair, and what a terrible misfortune!"

"What is the matter, then?" demanded the king.

"Messire Olivier de Clisson has just been assassinated!"

"And who has committed this crime?" said the king.

"Alas we know not; but this misfortune has happened near your palace, in the Grand Rue St. Catherine."

"Quick, quick!" exclaimed Charles: "torches, torches! my servants. Dead or alive, I wish to see my constable once more." He threw a cloak over his shoulders; his shoes were soon put on his feet; and, in five minutes, the men-at-arms and ushers, who were ordered to clear the way, were assembled. The king did not even wish to wait till they brought him a horse; and issued forth on foot from the Hotel de St. Paul, accompanied only by his torch-bearers, and his chamberlains, Messire Guillaume Martel, and Messire Héliou de Lignac. He walked at a rapid pace, and soon reached the baker's house: his chamberlains and torch-bearers remained outside; but he himself entered eagerly, and, walking straight up to the bed, he took the hand of the wounded man, saying, "It is me, constable; how do you feel?"

"Dear sire," replied the constable, in a low and feeble voice.

"And who has put you in such a state as this, my brave Olivier?"

"Messire Pierre de Craon and his accomplices, who

traitorously attacked me when I was defenceless and unsuspecting."

"Constable," said the king, stretching his hand over him, "never shall a crime be atoned for as this shall be, I swear to you! But, in the meantime, let us occupy ourselves with your preservation. Where are the physicians and surgeons?"

"They have been sent for, sire," said one of the constable's men.

At this moment they arrived. The king went to meet him who entered first, and led him up to the bed.

"Examine my constable for me, gentlemen," said he, "and endeavour to tell me quickly in what state he is; for I am more sorry for his wound than if the sword had struck myself."

The physicians examined the constable; but the king was so impatient that he scarcely gave them time to dress the wound.

"Is there any danger of death, gentlemen?" he demanded every moment: "why do you not answer me?"

Then he who appeared the most skilful turned towards the king.

"No, sire," said he; "and we promise you that, in a fortnight, we will put him on his horse again."

The king looked for a chain, a purse—something, in fine, to give to this man; but finding nothing, he embraced him, and went to the constable.

"Well, now, Olivier, you hear," he said to him: "In a fortnight you will be as well as if nothing had happened. You have given me valuable information, gentlemen, and we will not forget you. As for you, Clisson, do not disturb yourself about anything but getting well; for I have already told you, and I repeat it, never shall crime have incurred such a punishment as I reserve for this—never shall traitors have been punished more severely for their treason—never shall the shedding of blood have caused more blood to be shed! Rely, then, upon me: this affair is my own."

"May God reward you, sire," said the constable; "and, more than all, may he repay you for the kind visit with which you have honoured me."

"And it will not be the last, my dear Clisson; for I

shall give orders to have you transported to my hotel, which is less distant from this place than your own."

Clisson wished to carry the king's hand to his lips; but Charles embraced him as if he had been his brother.

"I must now leave you, Clisson," he said to him; "for I have sent for the provost of the city of Paris to come to St. Paul, and I have some orders to give him."

At these words he took leave of the constable, and returned to the palace, where he found him for whom he had sent.

"Provost," said the king to him, throwing himself into a chair, "take men from every quarter whence you can procure them; mount them on good horses; and, by fields and by roads, by mountains and by valleys, pursue that traitor Craon, who has wounded my constable; and know, that you cannot perform a more agreeable service than to find him, to take him, and to bring him here."

"Sire, I will do all I can," replied the provost; "but what road is it supposed that he has taken?"

"That is your affair," said the king: "inquire about that, and be diligent. Go."

The provost left the room.

The provost's commission was a very difficult one; for, at that time, the four principal gates of the city remained open night and day, in virtue of a decree that had been made on the return from the battle of Rosebeque, where the king defeated the Dutch. It was Messire Olivier de Clisson himself who had caused this order to be issued, so that the king might be always master in the city of Paris, whose citizens had revolted during his absence. From that time the gates had been taken off their hinges, and the posts levelled with the ground. The chains had also been removed from the streets and cross-ways, so that the king's watch might pass through them in the night. And was it not extraordinary, that Messire de Clisson, who had obtained this decree, should thus reap the bitter fruits of it? If the gates had been closed, and the chains up, Messire Pierre de Craon would never have dared to commit this outrage on the king and the constable; for he would have known full well that, having committed the crime, he would not have been able to escape the punishment.

But it was not so. On reaching the place of appointment, Messire de Craon and his accomplices found the

gates open and the roads clear. Some say that he crossed the Seine at the bridge of Charenton; others pretend that he went round the ramparts, passed by the fort of Montmartre, and leaving the gate of St. Honore to the left, went and crossed the river Poncon. This, however, is certain, that he reached Chartres by eight o'clock, with the best mounted of his troop: for the rest were dispersed, either to avoid exciting suspicion by such a large cavalcade, or by the fatigue of their horses. There he found horses ready, at the house of a canon who had been his chaplain, and who, without knowing what they were for, had collected them by his order. One hour later he was on the road to Maive; and thirty hours after, in his Chateau of Sable. There only did he stop, for there alone did he consider himself safe.

In the meantime, the provost of the châtelet had, by the king's order, left Paris, without about sixty armed men; he had taken his course through the gate of St. Honoré, and, finding the recent traces of horses, he had followed them even to Chenevière: there perceiving that they continued in the direction of the Seine, he had demanded of the bridge-ward of Poncon whether any one had passed during the morning. The reply was, that, about two o'clock, he had seen a dozen men and horses crossing the river; but that he had not recognised any of them, seeing that some were armed from top to toe, and the others enveloped in their cloaks.

"And what road have they taken?" demanded the provost.

"The road to Evreux," replied the man.

"That is it," responded the provost:—"they are gone straight to Cherbourg." Then he took the road to that town, leaving that of Chartres. After having proceeded about three hours, they met a gentleman who was hunting hares, and who, in answer to their inquiries, replied, that he had that morning seen about fifteen men on horseback, who appeared undecided and lost, but who, at last, had taken the road to Chartres. This gentleman himself conducted them to the place where the horsemen had crossed the fields; and, as the earth was soft and fresh from the late rains, they saw the tracks of a considerable troop on the soil; and the provost took the road to Chartres at a round trot. But the wrong

direction they had taken had lost them much time, and they did not reach Chartres until the evening.

There they learnt that Messire Pierre de Craon had passed through in the morning ; and they also ascertained the name of the canon at whose house he had breakfasted and changed his horses. But all this information came too late : it was impossible to overtake the culprit. The provost, therefore, gave orders to return to Paris, where he arrived on the Saturday evening.

The Duke of Touraine, on his part, had sent Messire Jean de Barres in pursuit of his old favourite. Having collected about fifty horsemen, and following the proper road at first, he had issued forth with his troop by the gate of St. Antoine ; but there, having neither guide nor information, he had turned to the right, had passed the Maine and the Seine at the bridge of Charenton, had arrived at Etampes, and, at last, on the Saturday evening, reached Chartres. There he procured the same intelligence that had been given to the provost ; and, like him, despairing of overtaking him whom they had both been pursuing, he had turned round, and retaken the road to Paris.

In the meantime, the king's sergeants, who were scouring the country, had found, in a village some leagues from Paris, two men-at-arms and a page, who had not been able to follow the main troop on account of their horses. These were immediately secured, brought back to Paris, and shut up in the chatelet. Two days afterwards, they were led to the Grand Rue St. Catherine, before the baker's house, where the crime had been committed : there they had their hands cut off. They were next taken to the market-place, where they were beheaded ; and, finally, to a gibbet, from which their bodies were suspended by the feet.

On the following Wednesday, the same punishment was inflicted on the porter, for, by not giving information of the crime, he had incurred the same forfeiture as those who had committed it.

The canon, at whose house Messire Pierre de Craon had changed his horses, was taken and tried by the ecclesiastical jurisdiction. He was deprived of all his goods and benefices ; but, through special indulgence, and because he constantly denied my knowledge of the crime, his life was spared : although he was condemned

to perpetual imprisonment, and to live on bread and water.

As for Messire Pierre de Craon, his judgment was pronounced for contumacy: his property was confiscated, and his estates distributed amongst the Duke of Touraine and the king's courtiers.

The Admiral Jean de Vienne, charged with the seizure of the estate of Chateau-Bernard, entered the mansion at night with his men-at-arms. He caused Jeanne de Chatillon, the wife of Pierre de Craon, one of the most beautiful women of her times, to be taken from her bed, and turned naked from the gates of the house with her daughter. As for the hotel where the plot was hatched, it was utterly demolished, and the ground upon which it stood, after having been turned up by the plough, was given to the Cemetery of St. John; whilst the Rue de Craon, which its noble owner had thus named, received the appellation of the Rue des Mauvais Garçons, which it bears even in our days.

When he heard of these circumstances, and the proceedings that were taken against him, Messire Pierre de Craon did not think himself any longer safe in his Chateau of Sable, and betook himself to the Duke of Brittany. The latter had already learnt the result of this wicked enterprise, and knew that their common enemy was not dead. Therefore, when he saw Pierre de Craon enter, quite abashed, the same apartment from which he had so proudly gone forth, he could not refrain from calling out, from one end of the room to the other,

"Ah! my cousin, it was very contemptible of you, not to have killed a man who was so completely in your power."

"Your excellence," replied Pierre de Craon, "I believe that all the fiends in hell guarded and delivered him from my hands; for I struck at him myself more than sixty times; so much so, that when he fell from his horse, by my God, I thought he was dead. But his good fortune so willed it, that a door was partly open, instead of being fastened, and that he fell inside, instead of outside: had he fallen in the street, we should have ground him under the feet of our horses."

"Yes," said the duke, with a gloomy air, "but it happened quite otherwise, did it not? And, since you are here, I am certain it will not be long before I hear

some good tidings of the king. But, never mind, cousin: whatever hatred and contention I incur on your account, you had my word that you might come here; and here you are: be you welcome."

The old duke held out his hand to the knight, and whistled for a servant to bring some hypocras and two glasses.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE Duke of Brittany had formed a correct judgment of the danger he had incurred by affording an asylum and protection to Messire Pierre de Craon. In fact, three weeks after the event that we have just recorded, a mounted man-at-arms belonging to the king, arrived at the gate of the Chateau de l'Hermine, demanded to see the duke in his master's name, and delivered to him a letter, sealed with the arms of France.

This letter was completely that of a sovereign lord to his vassal. King Charles proclaimed, in the name of the Parisian jurisdiction, Messire Pierre de Craon as a traitor and assassin, and threatened the Duke of Brittany, in case of refusal, to come himself to seek the culprit with a large assemblage.

The duke received the royal messenger nobly, took off a magnificent gold chain which was sparkling on his own breast, passed it over his neck, and ordered his people to entertain him sumptuously, whilst he himself was preparing his reply to the king: The day after the morrow, the answer was delivered to the courier, with fresh proofs of liberality.

The duke, in his answer, affirmed that the king had been deceived when he was told that Messire Pierre de Craon was in Brittany; that the duke was ignorant both of the knight's place of retreat, and of the cause of the hatred that he bore to Olivier de Clisson; and, that, consequently, he begged the king to hold him excused.

The king received this letter in the midst of his council; he read it over several times, and each time with a more gloomy expression of countenance; then, at last, crushing it in his hand, he exclaimed, with a bitter laugh:

“Do you know, gentleman, what my cousin of Brittany says to me? He tells me, and that on his honour, that he does not know where that traitor and murderer De Craon is. Do you not think, I pray you, that his honour is greatly perilled? Let me hear your opinions.”

“Fair cousin,” said the Duke de Berri, rising, “I think that the Duke of Brittany says what he ought to say; and, since Messire de Craon is not with him, he cannot be responsible for him.”

“And you, my brother, what do you think about it?”

“With your permission, sire, I think that the Duke of Brittany has thus acted, only to give the murderer time to pass over to England—”

The king interrupted him.

“And you are right, Touraine: it is precisely as you say. As for you, my fair uncle, we are well aware that the constable is not one of your friends; and we have heard it reported, although we said nothing to you concerning it, that, on the very day of the assassination, one of De Craon’s confidential servants revealed the whole plot to you; and that, under pretence of the little credit you gave to his intelligence, and not to disturb the entertainment, you allowed the affair to proceed. We know this for a certainty, my fair uncle. Besides, there is a method of proving that we are in error, or badly informed, which is, to accompany us into Brittany, where we are going to make war. This duke, who is neither English nor French, neither dog nor wolf, irritates and annoys us; for it is impossible to decide whether he is braying or barking. Brittany cannot forget that it was once a kingdom; and it cannot consent, without much reluctance, to become a province. Well, if necessary, we will strike so forcibly and well on the ducal coronet, that we will make the leaves of the vine fall; and we will give it as a barony to one of our followers, as we now give the Duchy of Orleans to our brother, in lieu of that of Touraine.”

The duke bowed.

“Yes, yes, my brother,” continued the king, “and we give it to you such as Philip had it, with all its revenues and dependencies; and, from henceforth, we shall no longer call you Touraine, for that duchy shall from this day be reunited to the crown, but Orleans; for this very day that duchy belongs to you. You have heard, my

fair uncle, that we are all going to set off; and you join us, do you not?"

"Dear sir," replied the Duke de Berri, "it will always be most delightful to accompany you wherever you may go; but I think we ought also to have our fair brother of Burgundy in our company."

"Very well," said the king, "we will pray him to do us that honour; and should that not be sufficient, we will command him; and should that also be insufficient, we will go for him ourselves. Would you have our word that we will not journey without him? We give it you. When the King of France is insulted, the nobility is insulted; and no emblazonry is pure when the royal escutcheon is stained. Prepare, then, your war equipments, my fair uncle; for before the expiration of a week from this day, we shall set out for Brittany."

The king then dismissed the assembly, but it was to shut himself up with his secretaries.

The same day, twenty nobles of consequence, at the head of whom was the Duke of Burgundy, were ordered to assemble with the greatest number of followers that they could collect. This order was promptly executed, for the Duke of Brittany was greatly detested by all that was truly French. It was said that the king had, for a long time, been desirous to march against him, but that he had been prevented by the Count of Flanders and Madame of Burgundy; that the duke was English at heart, and that the only reason he hated Clisson so much was because he had become French. But, on this occasion, the orders were so precise and positive, that it was hoped the king would actually execute his projects, should no treason intervene; for it was foreboded that many who marched with the king would not act heartily, and the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy were both secretly named.

In fact, the Duke of Burgundy made them wait for him. He alleged that this expedition would fall heavily on his provinces; that it was a needless war, and would terminate badly; that there were many individuals who had no interest in the dispute between the constable and Messire Pierre de Craon; that it was unjust to compel those who were thus situated to engage in war for them; and that they might just as well let them settle their

quarrel themselves as oppress and wrong the provincials.

The Duke de Berri expressed similar sentiments; but as the king, the Duke of Orleans, and all the council, were of a contrary opinion, it was obligatory on the two dukes to obey. Therefore, as soon as the constable could mount his horse, the king gave the order to leave Paris. The same evening, he took leave of the queen, of Madame Valentine, and of the ladies who resided in the Hotel de St. Paul; and went, with the Duke of Bourbon, the Count of Namur, and the Lord of Councy, to sup at the Sire de Montaignu's, where he slept.

The next day he set off with great military pomp, but stopped at St. Germain-en-Laye to wait for the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy. Finding that they did not arrive, he sent them commands, the disobedience of which would have constituted the crime of rebellion; and then renewed his march, although in opposition to the advice of his physicians, who declared that his health was not, at that time, in such a state as to capacitate him for the undertaking. But he was urged on by so strong an impulse, that his reply to all their observations was, that he did not understand what they meant, and that he never found himself better in all his life.

He therefore set off in spite of their remonstrances, passed the Seine, took the road to Chartres, and went on without a halt to Anveau, a beautiful and noble castle belonging to the Sire de la Riviere, who entertained the king sumptuously and honourably. Charles remained there three days, and in the morning of the fourth, set off for Chartres, where he was received at the episcopal palace, as also were the Dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, by the brother of the Sire de Montaignu, who then held the see of the bishopric.

After waiting here two days, the the king was joined by the Duke de Berri and the Count de la Marche. He inquired whether they had any tidings of the Duke of Burgundy, and was informed, that the duke was approaching behind them. At last, on the fourth day, intelligence was brought the king that he was entering the town.

The king remained seven days at Chartres, and then he took the road to Mans. Throughout the whole route, he was hourly joined by men-at-arms, who came from

Artois, from Picardy, from the Vermandois, and even from the more distant parts of France. All these people were greatly incensed against the Duke of Brittany, who gave them so much trouble; and the king most carefully nourished this wrath, and fed it with his own.

He had, however, presumed too much on his own strength. The constant irritation produced by the perpetual obstructions thrown in his way by his uncles, in order to impede the expedition, had heated his blood to such a degree, that, on halting at Mans, he was become so feverish as to be incapable of proceeding on horseback. He was, therefore, constrained to halt, although he declared that repose was more injurious to him than fatigue; but his physicians, his uncles, and the Duke of Orleans himself, were of opinion that it was absolutely necessary to remain where they were for a fortnight or three weeks.

They took advantage of this halt to persuade the king to send another message to the Duke of Brittany. In consequence, Messire Regnault de Roye, the Sire de Garenchiere, the Sire de Châtelmorand, and Messire Taupin de Cantemelle, who was governor of Gisors, were commanded on this journey; but, this time, the king wished the embassy to have a character which could not be misunderstood by him to whom it was sent. The four envoys, therefore, left Mans, accompanied by forty lances, passed through the town of Angers with trumpets at their head and flags flying, and, two days after, reached Nantes, where they found the duke.

They laid before him the command of the king, which was, that he should deliver up Pierre de Craon to him; but, as on the first occasion, after having made splendid presents to the ambassadors, the duke replied, that it was impossible for him to deliver up the man whom they demanded, seeing that he knew not whither they had gone; that he had certainly heard that Messire Pierre de Craon hated the constable most heartily, and had sworn a deadly warfare against him; that the knight himself had told him, that wherever he might meet Clisson, whether by night or day, he would put him to death; but that he knew nothing more, and that he much marvelled why the king should make war against him for a thing which concerned him so little.

The king was very ill when this answer was brought to

him. Nevertheless, he gave orders to proceed forward, and called for his squires to arm him. At the very moment that he rose from his bed, an envoy arrived from Spain, and, being introduced into his presence, he delivered to him a letter, bearing this address—"To our redoubted Lord the King of France;" and signed, "Iolande de Barre, Queen of Arragon, of Majorca, and Lady of Sardinia."

This letter was, in reality, from the Queen of Arragon, who wrote to the king, that, anxious to please him in every respect, and knowing the object that now engaged his attention, she had arrested, and kept in confinement at Barcelôna, an unknown knight, who wished to hire him a vessel at a great price, to convey him to Naples. Suspecting this knight to be Messire de Craon, she imparted these suspicions to the king, that he might promptly send men to examine him, and to take him back, should she not have been mistaken; and she concluded by saying, that she would be delighted if this intelligence should prove agreeable to her cousin and lord.

On the receipt of this letter, the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy exclaimed, that the campaign was finished, and that nothing remained to be done, but to give every one leave to depart, as there could no longer be any doubt that the man they sought was taken. But the king did not view the matter in this light, and all they could obtain from him was, to send some one to ascertain the truth. Three weeks afterwards the messenger returned, and announced that the knight who had been arrested was certainly not Messire Pierre de Craon.

The king was now greatly exasperated against his uncles, for he clearly perceived that all these delays emanated from them. He therefore resolved to listen no longer to anything but his own wishes; and, as he was yet too ill to leave his chamber, he sent for his marshals into his own apartment, and there commanded them, with the utmost diligence, to make all their troops and equipages file off towards Angers, his determination being, not to retire till he dispossessed the duke, and appointed a guardian for his children.

The next day, between nine and ten in the morning, after having heard mass, and fainted away during its performance, the king mounted his horse: he was so weak that the Duke of Orleans was obliged to assist him to

get into the saddle. The Duke of Burgundy shrugged his shoulders on seeing this obstinacy, and said that when such warnings were sent from heaven, it was tempting God to wish to go forward; but the Duke de Berri who had heard these words, came up to him, and said in a low voice:

“Make yourself easy, my brother: I have provided for the last extremity, and if God be propitious to us, we shall return, I hope, to sleep this night in the town of Mans.”

“I do not understand your meaning,” said the Duke of Burgundy; “but any expedient, by which this unhappy expedition can be broken up, will be a good one.”

In the meanwhile, the king set off, followed by his attendants. Soon afterwards they entered a large and gloomy forest, cotemporary with the Druids. The king was sad and melancholy, allowing his horse to proceed as he liked, and scarcely answering those who addressed him. They therefore permitted him to go forward alone, as appeared to be his wish. They had proceeded thus in silence for about an hour, only speaking in a low voice, when, suddenly, an old man, with a winding-sheet, rushed forth from between two trees by which he had been concealed, seized the bridle of the king’s horse, and, stopping it short, exclaimed:

“Oh, king! king! ride not on any further; but turn back—for thou art betrayed!”

The king shuddered through his whole frame at the sight of this unexpected apparition: he stretched out his arms, and would have cried out, but he could not give utterance to his thoughts: all that he could do was to indicate, by his gestures, that he wished this phantom to be removed. The men-at-arms therefore rushed upon the intruder, and struck him so as to make him relinquish his hold of the bridle. But, at the same moment, the Duke de Berri came to his rescue, and releasing him from their hands, told them that it was useless thus to punish a poor madman, for it was evident the man could be nothing else, and that they ought rather to send him away. Although, most assuredly, such advice ought not to have been attended to, and it would have been better to arrest this unknown, and question him as to his intentions, yet, so universal was the confusion produced by the occurrence, that the Duke de Berri was allowed

to act and speak as he thought proper ; and thus, whilst all were engaged in assisting the king, the individual who had caused this commotion disappeared, and no one afterwards saw him again, or knew anything concerning him.

In spite of this incident, which appeared to have greatly excited the hopes of the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy, the king continued his progress, and shortly arrived at the extremity of the forest. But they had no sooner left its cool shade than they found themselves exposed to the scorching rays of a meridian sun, which filled the whole atmosphere. It was one of the hottest days of July ; and, as far as the sight extended, the burning rays glanced over plains of sand, that undulated like waves, reflecting the light. The proudest steeds lowered their heads, and gave a melancholy neigh ; the strongest men felt languid, and breathed with difficulty. The king, for whom they had feared the freshness of the morning, was clothed with a tight-fitting coat of black velvet, and wore a simple hood of scarlet cloth, in the folds of which he had twisted a chaplet of large pearls, which the queen had given him on parting. They allowed him to ride on alone that he might not suffer from the dust : two pages only kept at his side, marching one after the other. The first wore on his head a casque of Montauban, of fine polished steel, that glittered in the sun ; the second carried a red lance, with a pendant of silk ; at the end of this lance was a steel point, marvelously wrought, and which came from the workshops of Toulouse. The Sire de la Riviere had purchased twelve of these lances, which he had presented to the king ; and the king had given three of them to the Duke of Orleans, and three to the Duke of Bourbon.

Now it happened that, whilst riding in this manner, the second page, yielding to the heat that overpowered him, fell asleep, and that, in his sleep, he permitted the lance to escape from his hands. The steel point hit the helmet of the page who was in front, and the shock of the steel against the helmet produced a sharp clear sound. Then the king was seen to start suddenly. He fixed his terrified eyes before him, and turned frightfully pale ; then suddenly burying his spurs in his horse's sides, he drew his sword from the scabbard, and rushed upon the two pages, exclaiming, with a loud voice :—

“Forward! forward! On these traitors!”

The affrighted pages separated, and fled different ways. The king continued his course, and came straight upon the Duke of Orleans, who was uncertain whether he ought to wait for or to fly from his brother, until he heard the Duke of Burgundy exclaim:

- “Fly, fair nephew of Orleans! fly! His majesty wishes to kill you!”

Meantime, the king was still rushing towards him, brandishing his sword like a madman, so that the duke had only just time to make his horse spring on one side. The king continued to press forward; but, encountering in his progress a knight of Guienne, named the Bastard of Poligniac, he buried his sword in his throat: the blood spouted forth, and the knight fell. The sight of this blood, instead of calming the king, only redoubled his frenzy. He galloped on, without following a direct course, striking at everything he met, giving no remission to his force, and incessantly exclaiming, “Forward! forward! on the traitors!” His squires and knights, who were covered with armour, now gathered around him, allowing themselves to be struck without returning the blows, until they saw his strength failing him; and then a knight of Normandy, named Messire Guillaume Marcel, came behind, and seized him round the waist. The king struck a few more blows; but at last the sword fell from his hands, and he threw himself back, uttering a loud cry. Having lifted him from his horse, which was covered with foam, and trembling in all its limbs, they took off his coat and hood, to refresh him. His uncles and his brother then came up to him; but he had entirely lost all consciousness; and, although his eyes were wide open, it was evident that he distinguished nothing that passed around him.

The lords and knights were utterly confounded: no one knew what to say or do. The Duke de Berri pressed his hand, and spoke to him kindly and soothingly; but as the king did not reply, either by sign or word, the duke shook his head, and said:

“My lords, we must return to Mans: the expedition is finished, at least for this season.”

To guard against the consequences which might result from a return of his paroxysm, the king was bound, and having placed him on a litter, they retraced their melan-

choly way to the town, which, as the Duke de Berri had predicted, they re-entered the same evening.

The physicians were immediately summoned; for some said that the king had been poisoned before he left Mans; whilst others attributed his malady to supernatural causes, and asserted that a spell had been cast over him. As, in either case, suspicion would attach to the princes, they required the physicians to institute a strict inquiry. They demanded from those who had served him at dinner, whether he had eaten much or little; and were informed, in reply, that it was with difficulty he had been persuaded merely to taste one or two dishes, and that he did nothing but meditate and sigh, pressing his brow from time to time with both his hands, as if his head pained him. Robert de Tokes, his chief cup-bearer, was then sent for, and questioned as to which of his butlers had last served him with wine. He replied, that it was Helion de Lignac, who was instantly summoned, and asked whence he had taken the wine which the king had drunk before his departure. He said he did not know, but that he had proved it with Robert de Tokes. Having thus spoken, he took the half-emptied bottle, poured some of the same wine into a glass, and drank it.

At this moment, a physician came out of the king's chamber, and, hearing the discussion, went up to the princes, and said to them, "My lords, you are labouring and arguing in vain. The king is neither poisoned nor bewitched: the king is seized with a violent fever—the king is mad!"

The Dukes of Burgundy and Berri looked at each other. The king being mad, the regency of the kingdom devolved, by right, either upon the Duke of Orleans, or on themselves. The Duke of Orleans was too young to be entrusted by the council with such a weighty charge. The Duke of Burgundy, therefore, broke the silence. Addressing the other two dukes—"My good brother and fair cousin," said he, "I believe that we had better return to Paris as speedily as possible; for the king will be there better treated and tended than on the long march in which we are engaged, and then the council will decide into whose hands the regency should fall."

"I am of your opinion," said the Duke de Berri; "but whither shall we conduct the king?"

"Certainly not to Paris," said the Duke of Orleans

with great vivacity. "The queen is near her confinement: and such a spectacle might do her great harm."

The Dukes of Burgundy and Berri exchanged a smile.

"Well then," replied the latter, "we have nothing to do but to take him to the Chateau de Creil. The air is good, the prospect pleasant and cheerful, and the river flows at its foot. As for the queen, what our fair cousin of Orleans says is too true; and, if he wishes to depart before us to prepare her for this news, we will remain a day or two with the king, to see that he wants for nothing, and then we will rejoin him in Paris."

"Let it be as you say," replied the Duke of Orleans; and he left the room to order his equipages.

The Dukes of Burgundy and Berri remained behind, and retired into the recess of a window, to converse more quietly.

"Well, what do you think of all this, fair brother?" said the Duke of Burgundy.

"What I always thought: that the king's mind was influenced by too young counsels, and that this war of Brittany would have a bad termination. But they would not believe us. Every thing, now-a-days, proceeds from obstinacy and caprice—nothing from reason."

"It is necessary to correct all this, and promptly too," said the Duke of Burgundy. "There is no doubt but that the regency of the kingdom will fall into our hands. Besides, our fair nephew of Orleans is too much occupied greatly to desire this government. Therefore, brother, remember what I said to you when the king dismissed us at Montpellier. We are the two most powerful noblemen of the realm; and, so long as we remain united, no one can resist us. Well, the time is come when we may do whatever we think best.

"In so far as it may accord with the interests of the realm, my brother, it is to our advantage to remove our enemies from the government. Besides, they would oppose all our projects, would shackle all our decisions. The kingdom, drawn to one side by them, and to the other by us, would suffer greatly. It is necessary, for the regular administration of government, that there should be a harmonious union between the head and the hands. Do you think that the constable would heartily obey our orders? This disunion might materially injure

France, in case of war. The sword of the constable ought to be held by the right hand of the government."

"You are quite right, my brother. But there are those also who are as dangerous in time of peace as the constable would be in the time of war. I allude to Messires de la Riviere, de Montaigu, le Begue de Villaine, and others.

"Yes, yes: we must remove all those men who have led the king into such errors."

"But will not the Duke of Orleans support them?"

"And have you not perceived," said the Duke de Berri, looking round, and lowering his voice, "that our fair nephew of Orleans has the great cares of love upon him at this present time? Let us leave him his liberty, and, believe me, he will leave us ours."

"Silence, here he is," said the Duke of Burgundy.

In fact, the Duke of Orleans, anxious to return to Paris, as the two uncles had anticipated, came to take leave of them. He proceeded to the king's chamber, with the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy, to ascertain from the chamberlains whether the royal sufferer had slept, and they were informed that he had not, and that he could not obtain a moment's rest.

The Duke of Burgundy shook his head. "This is a sad intelligence, my fair cousin," said he, turning towards the Duke of Orleans.

"God will protect him," replied the duke.

He went up to the king's bed, and asked him how he was. The invalid did not reply. His whole frame trembled; his hair was bristling up, his eyes fixed, and a cold perspiration was trickling down his forehead. From time to time, he raised himself up in bed, exclaiming, "To death! to death with the traitors!" Then he fell back exhausted, until a new accession of fever, by scorching him afresh, gave him renewed energy.

"We can render no service here," said the Duke of Burgundy, "and we harass him more than we aid him. He has more need of his physicians and doctors, at present, than of his uncles and brother. Therefore, believe me, we had better retire."

The Duke of Orleans, being left alone, stooped towards the bed, took the king in his arms, and looked at him sorrowfully: then, his eyes filled with tears, which rolled

silently down his cheeks. And it was not without cause: for the poor insensate who was lying there, had dearly loved him; and perhaps, he had bitterly to reproach himself for having returned this holy love with nothing but treason and ingratitude. It is certain that, at the moment when he was about thus to leave him, perhaps again to betray him, he had scrutinized his own heart, and had perceived, with feelings of remorse, that, after the first moment, he had not been so sorry for the misfortune that had befallen this beloved brother, as he ought to have been.

We always endeavour to ascertain (so much does evil predominate over good in our hearts) by what means the misfortunes of others may become advantageous to ourselves; and whether, from the miseries and tears of another, some fountain of happiness or pleasure, as yet unperceived, may not spring up. Then, if this should be the case, our sensibility is blunted, the heart grows cold, the veil that was spread before our eyes is removed; the future, that we fancied was for ever obscured, again gleams forth from some one of its thousand aspects; the good and the evil principle yet struggle for a time together; but most frequently, wretched that we are, it is Arimane that carries the day. So true is this, that very often, with eyes moistened and heart joyful, we would not wish, on the morrow, that the misfortune of the evening before had not occurred: for it is egotism that is the medicine of the heart.

In the meantime, the king's uncles gave orders to all the marshals, that the nobles and their knights should set out on their return to their provinces, gently and quietly, without doing any injury to the country; adding, that wherever any violence should be committed, the nobles should be responsible for the crimes of their men-at-arms.

Two days after the departure of the Duke of Orleans, the king began his journey, carried in a soft and commodious litter, and proceeding by short stages. The report of his accident had spread with marvellous rapidity. Bad news has eagle's wings. Every one talked of it in a different manner, and, according to his individual opinion, attributed it to different causes. The nobles saw in it a diabolical influence; the priests a divine chastisement; the partisans of the Pope of Rome said

that the thing had happened as a punishment for having recognized Pope Clement; the followers of Pope Clement pretended, on the contrary, that God had struck him with this rod because he had not destroyed the schism, by carrying the war into Italy, as he had promised. As for the people, they were very sorry for this misfortune: they had indulged great hopes in the goodness and justice of the king; therefore, they thronged the churches, in which public prayers had been ordained, at every place where there was any saint who was known to cure madness. Men were despatched in haste, who were bearers of presents; and an image of the king, of the natural size, modelled in wax, with a magnificent wax taper, was sent to Saint Aquaire, the most renowned in this respect, that he might supplicate the Almighty for an alleviation of the king's malady. But all was useless; and the king reached the Chateau of Creil without any apparent amelioration of his condition.

And yet, human means were not neglected. The Sire de Coucy had mentioned a very wise and learned physician, named Messire Guillaume de Hersilly; and he had been sent for from a village near Laon, where he dwelt. He had, therefore, assumed the management of the king's disease, which he declared he perfectly understood.

As for the regency of the kingdom, it had fallen, as might be easily foreseen, into the hands of the king's uncles. The council, after a fortnight's deliberation, had declared that the Duke of Orleans was too young to undertake such a weighty office, and had, consequently, charged the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy with it. The day after they had been appointed, the Sire de Clisson presented himself, with his attendants, at the Duke of Burgundy's residence, in his office of the constabulary. The porter opened the gate to them as usual. They dismounted from their horses, and Clisson, followed by a single squire, ascended the stairs of the hotel. Having reached the first room, he found two of the duke's knights; and having inquired where their master was, and whether he could speak with him, one of them left the room, and went to find the duke, who was conversing with a herald concerning a great entertainment that had been held in Germany.

"Your excellence," said the knight, interrupting the duke, "here is Messire Olivier de Clisson, who desires

an interview with your highness, if such be your pleasure."

"For heaven's sake!" he cried, "let him come in, and immediately; for he arrives just in time for what we want to do with him."

The knight therefore returned to the constable, leaving all the doors open, and making him a sign that he might pass through them. The constable entered, and the duke changed colour on perceiving him. Clisson did not appear to remark it, but taking off his hood and bowing,

"Your excellence," he said, "I am come to receive your orders, and to inquire how the kingdom will from henceforth be governed."

"How the kingdom will be governed, Clisson?" replied the duke, in an agitated voice: "that is a thing that concerns me, and no other person. As for my orders, they are as follow:—you must leave my presence instantaneously; in five minutes, this hotel; and in one hour, Paris."

It was now Clisson, who, in his turn became pale. The duke was regent of the kingdom, and he was bound to obey him. He therefore left the room, traversed the apartments with head depressed, and, absorbed in painful reflections, remounted his horse, and returned to his hotel, where he ordered his equipages to be forthwith in readiness. On the same day, accompanied only by two attendants, he left Paris, crossed the Seine at Charenton, and did not halt, until in the evening, he had reached the Chateau of Monthéry, which belonged to him.

The course which the duke had pursued with regard to Clisson was extended to all the king's favourites. Therefore, when Montaignu learned what had happened to Clisson, he left Paris secretly by the gate of St. Antoine, took the road to Troyes in Champagne, and did not stop till he reached Avignon. Messire Jean de Lemercier wished to do the same; but, less fortunate, he found guards at his door, and was conducted to the palace of the Louvre, where Messire Lebeque de Villaine was already awaiting him. As for the Sire de la Riviere, although he was warned in time, he did not consider it necessary to leave his chateau, saying that he had nothing for which to reproach himself, and that he would patiently await the result, whatever it might be. Therefore, when he was apprised that armed men wished to enter his house, he

caused all his doors to be thrown open, and advanced courteously to receive them.

Then were all the consequences of a complete reaction experienced by these innocent men, who were subjected to the same punishment that had been awarded to the murderer Craon. All the property belonging to Jean Lemercier in Paris, and in other parts of the kingdom, was seized and divided; a handsome house that he possessed in the diocese of Laon, and of which the embellishments alone had cost him upwards of 100,000 livres, was given to the Sire de Coucy, with all its dependencies, rents, lands, and possessions.

Still greater severity was used towards Messire de la Rievriere, from whom, as from Lemercier, they took everything, merely leaving to his wife the property she possessed in her own right. Moreover, he had a daughter, young and beautiful, who had married the lord of Chatillon, whose father was afterwards the commander of the French cross-bow men. Everything that was powerful amongst men had sanctioned this marriage; everything sacred in the sight of God had consecrated it. This union was broken without pity or remorse. They disunited what the pope alone had power to unbind; and the two young people were remarried to different persons, in spite of their own inclinations, and merely to gratify the wish of the Duke of Burgundy.

All these persecutions were inflicted without the king being able to oppose them; for his state became every day worse, and the only hope now remaining was that the queen's presence might produce a favourable effect upon him. As it was her whom he had loved the most, it was imagined that, after having forgotten all the world, he would yet remember her.

## CHAPTER VIII.

As we have seen in the preceding chapter, the king's disastrous illness had produced an entire revolution in the affairs of the kingdom. The favourites of his reason were disgraced during his insanity. The government of the state, escaping from his feeble hands, had fallen

entirely into those of the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy, who, subjecting the general policy to their own individual passions, had struck with the sword of hatred, and not with the glave of justice.

The Duke of Orleans alone could have balanced their influence in the council; but, completely absorbed in his love for the queen, he had easily abandoned his pretensions to the regency, and had not felt the courage to struggle either for himself or his friends. Confiding in his title of the king's brother, and resting on his ducal power—wealthy from his immense revenues, and young and inconsiderate, he suppressed, in his heaving bosom, every breath of ambition that might have cast a cloud over the azure-tinted heaven of his days. Henceforth at liberty to see his royal mistress at all times, and in all places, this happiness satisfied his life; and if, from time to time, a stifled sigh betrayed the remorse buried at the bottom of his heart, or if his brow suddenly furrowed at some sad recollection, one word from his mistress sufficed to smooth his brow, one caress to tranquillize his heart.

As for Isabel, all young as she was, and we already know that she was an Italian, she possessed the love of a wanton, and the hatred of a lioness, knowing nothing of life but its most violent feelings, seeking for nothing in it but its extreme emotions, uneasy under all ordinary circumstances, because something was necessary to her, as the simoom is necessary to the desert, or the storm to the ocean.

And beautiful withal she was—beautiful enough to destroy every soul on earth; for, were it not for that bellish gleam that occasionally illumined her eyes, her appearance was altogether that of an angel; and whoever had seen her, reclined as she was, at the time when we return to her, having a praying-desk near her bed, and on this praying-desk an open book, would have taken her for some pure virgin, expecting the kiss that her mother came every morning to imprint on her brow. It was an adulterous wife, who was expecting her lover; and this lover was the brother of her husband, of her lord, and of her king, then insane and dying.

In a short time, a door concealed in the tapestry, and which led to the king's apartments, opened, and the Duke of Orleans made his appearance. He looked to see if any one was with the queen; and perceiving that she

was alone, he closed the door, and went hastily towards the bed. He was pale and agitated.

"What is the matter with you, my fair duke?" said Isabel to him, stretching out her arms to him, and smiling; for she was accustomed to see these clouds of the heart that obscured her lover's brow; "come and tell me what it is."

"Ah! what have I just heard, madame," said the duke, kneeling down by the queen's bed, and passing one arm round her neck—"that you are ordered to Ureil, and that it is necessary for you to be near the king!"

"Yes; it is Guillaume d'Hersilly, who pretends that my presence will do him a great deal of good. What do you say to it, your excellence?"

"I say that the first time he leaves the chateau to cull simples in the forest of Beaumont, I will have him hanged to the strongest branch on the most firmly-rooted tree. Wretched fool! who, having exhausted his stock of science, wishes to make use of you as a remedy, without thinking of the danger he exposes you to."

"Indeed! and do I run any risk?" inquired the queen, looking tenderly at the duke.

"Oh, madame! risk of your life. The king's madness is furious; and, at the moment that it seized him, did he not kill the Bastard of Polignac, and wound three or four noblemen? Do you think that he will know you—you—since he did not know me? since he rushed upon me, his brother, with sword raised on high, and that I only escaped death by the activity of my horse? After all, perhaps, it would have been better if he had killed me."

"Kill you, your excellence! Oh! value your life more highly. Do we not make it more brilliant and happy by our love? and is it not very uncourteous of you thus to despise it?"

"It is my fear for you, Isabel, which makes me tremble at every sound that issues from that horrible apartment, and shudder at the sight of every servant who opens my door—it is to know that you will be alone, every hour of the day and night, with a madman!"

"Oh! there is no danger, your excellence; and I believe that you create visionary fears. It is the noise of steel, it is the sight of arms, that renders him furious." She looked earnestly at the duke. "Instead of this, I will use the tenderest tone of voice when I address him,

and he will recognize it. Then, by the softness of my caresses, I shall turn the lion into a lamb; you know he loves me."

As she spoke these words, the duke's brow flushed. At last, rising abruptly, and releasing himself from the queen's arms,

"Yes, yes; he loves you: I know that," replied the duke, in a hollow voice. "Ah! this is the real cause of my anguish. No, he will, doubtless, do you no harm; on the contrary, as you have said, your voice will calm him, your caresses will soften him. Your voice! your caresses! Oh, my God!" He buried his face in his hands. Isabel looked at him, half rising on her arm. "And I, the more calm I see him, shall say to myself, 'the more tender was she.' And then you will make me curse heaven for what I ought to bless it—for the restoration of my brother; and, from the ungrateful wretch that I now am, you will make me—Your love, your love! it was my Eden, my Paradise; and I had habituated myself to the sole possession of it. What shall I do when it is shared? Oh, keep it undivided—this fatal love—either for him or for me!"

"Why did you not say so at once?" said the triumphant Isabel.

"Why?" interrupted the duke.

"Because I would have immediately declared that I will not go to the Chateau of Creil."

"You will not go!" exclaimed the duke, rushing towards the queen. Then checking himself: "but how will you manage not to go? What will the Dukes of Burgundy and Berri say?"

"Do you think they sincerely desire the king's recovery?"

"No, upon my soul! The Duke of Burgundy is insatiable of power; and the Duke de Berri, of money. My brother's madness doubles the power of the one, and coins money for the other. But they know how to dissemble; and, when they see you refusing to go there—Besides, can you? Oh, my brother! my poor brother!" and tears fell from the duke's eyes.

The queen raised her lover's head with one hand, and dried up his tears with the other.

"Comfort yourself, my fair duke," said she, "for I will not go to Creil. The king will recover; and your frater-

nal heart," she added, slowly, and with a slightly ironical accent, "will have nothing for which to reproach itself; we have discovered a method."

She smiled with an indescribable expression of malice.

"Ah! what is it?" said the duke.

"We will tell you that hereafter; it is our secret. In the meantime, tranquillize yourself, and turn upon us the tenderest expression of your eyes."

The duke looked at her.

"How handsome you are, your excellence!" continued the queen: "you really have a complexion that makes me quite jealous."

"My Isabel!"

"Here, your excellence," said the queen, taking a miniature from under her pillow, "what do you say to this picture?"

"Your portrait!" exclaimed the duke snatching it from her hands, and pressing it to his lips; "your dear, your adorable portrait!"

"Quick! conceal it! some one is coming."

"Yes, yes—in my bosom—on my heart, for ever."

The door opened, and the Lady de Coucy entered.

"The person whom Madame the Queen sent for is here," said she.

"Observe, Madame de Coucy," continued Isabel, "here is our brother-in-law of Orleans, who has entreated us on his knees not to go to the Chateau of Creil, where he fears that our person may incur some danger. This was also, we believe, your opinion, when the Duke of Burgundy, our much-beloved uncle, came yesterday to inform us that the physician given by your husband to the king declared that our presence might, in some measure, alleviate his excellence's disease. Are you of the same opinion now?"

"Yes, madame; and it is also the opinion of many persons about the court."

"Well, that will completely determine me; decidedly I will not go. Adieu, duke; we thank you for your consideration for us, and are very grateful for it."

The duke bowed, and left the room.

"It is the superior of the convent of the Trinity, Madame de Coucy, is it not?" continued Isabel, turning towards the lady of honour.

"The same."

"Introduce her."

The superior entered, and Madame de Coucy left her alone with the queen.

"My mother," said Isabel, "I have wished to speak to you, without any witness, on a subject of great importance, and which has only relation to affairs of the realm."

"To me, Madame the Queen!" said the abbess, with great humility; "and how can I, retired as I am from the world, and entirely devoted to God, mix myself up with the affairs of this earth."

"You know," continued the queen, without replying to her question, "that, after the beautiful spectacle that was exhibited to me before your convent, on my entrance into the city of Paris, I sent you, as a token of my gratitude, and to indemnify you, a silver shrine, destined for St. Martha, for whom I know you entertain a special devotion."

"I am from Taraston, Madame the Queen, where St. Martha is held in great honour, and I have been very grateful for such a costly present."

"Since that, I have always selected your community, as you know, in which to pay my devotion at the fetes of Easter; and, on each of these occasions, I hope you have had cause to be satisfied that the Queen of France is neither avaricious nor forgetful."

"We are the more grateful for this favour, that we have not, as yet, the good fortune to do anything to merit it."

"We have sufficient influence over our holy father at Avignon, to add spiritual to our temporal gifts; and he certainly would not refuse us the indulgences which we might solicit for your community."

The eyes of the abbess sparkled with a holy ambition.

"Madame, you are a great and potent queen," she said, "and if our convent could do anything to acknowledge—

"Not your convent, but you, perhaps, my mother."

"I, Madame! Command; and, if it be in my power—"

"Oh! it is a very easy matter. The king, as you know, is attacked by a severe fever. Hitherto, he has been shut up with men clothed in black, and masked, who inspire him with terror, as they are the persons who have compelled him to obey the regulations of the physicians. But the state of excitement produced and en-

couraged by this violence prevents the remedies from having their full and complete effect upon him. It is, therefore, desirable to endeavour to obtain, by persuasion, a result which has, as yet, been only effected by compulsion; and it is hoped, that one of your sisters, for instance, one who is very young, and very gentle—appearing to him like an angel in the midst of these phantoms which environ him, might be like a celestial vision to him; that his nerves might recover some of that tranquillity which alone can restore reason to his poor bewildered head. Then I thought of you, and I wished that the honour of the king's recovery should redound upon your convent. It will certainly be attributed to your prayers, to the intercession of St. Martha, and to the holiness of the worthy abbess who governs the fair flock of the Sisters of the Trinity. This is the reason why I sent for you, my mother. Have I deceived myself when I anticipated that such a proposition would be agreeable to you?"

"Oh! you are too good, Madame the Queen; and this day only has our convent been truly the chosen one. You know most of my daughters: select yourself the one for whom you reserve the honour of watching over the precious invalid, for whose recovery the whole of France offers up the most fervent prayers."

"That I leave entirely to your anxious care, my mother; choose whom you prefer for this holy mission. The doves which the Lord has intrusted to you are all beautiful and pure; take one fortuitously; God will guide your hand. The blessing of the people will rest upon her, and the favours of the queen will be abundantly diffused to her family."

A gleam of ambition illumined the old abbess's brow, beneath her coif.

"I am ready to obey your orders, Madame the Queen," she said, "and my choice is fixed: only tell me what more have I to do."

"As soon as possible you will conduct this young girl to the Chateau of Creil, where orders will be given that the king's chamber shall be thrown open to her. The remainder is in the hands of God."

"The abbess bowed, and was about to retire.

"By the way," said the queen, "I forgot to tell you, that I have given orders for a reliquary of pure gold to

be taken to your house this morning, in which is enclosed a portion of the true cross, which was sent to me by the King of Hungary, who had it from the Emperor of Constantinople. It will, I hope, attract the favour of our Lord to your convent, and the arms of the faithful to your treasury. You will find it in your church."

The abbess again bowed, and left the room. The queen immediately called her women, caused herself to be dressed, and, ordering her litter, went out to visit a small mansion that she had just bought in the Rue Barquette, and where she calculated on occasionally residing for a short time.

In the meantime the king, as she had said, surrounded by a dozen men clothed in black and masked, did nothing except by compulsion. A prey to a gloomy melancholy, his days were divided by intervals of fury and extreme depression, according as the fever attacked or left him. In the first condition he appeared to be burnt up by all the fires of hell; in the second, he trembled, as if exposed in a state of nudity to the severest cold. In conjunction with this, there was no memory of the past, there was no perceptible power of exercising the judgment, there was no consciousness but of his own misery.

Since his first arrival, Master Guillaume had studied the king's malady with the greatest attention; and he had remarked, that every vibrating sound made him start, and disturbed him for a long time: he consequently gave orders that the bells should cease to toll. He perceived, without being able to conjecture the cause, that the sight of the fleur-de-lis irritated the invalid, and all these heraldic emblems of royalty were removed. He refused to eat and drink; he was unwilling to go to bed when he was up, or to get up when he was in bed. Then the physician resolved upon having him attended by men strangely attired and besmeared with black; these men entered abruptly: and the moral courage of the king disappearing with his reason, left him only the animal instinct of preservation. Charles, so resolute and brave, trembled like a child, obeyed like an automaton, scarcely breathed, and left off speaking, even to complain. But the skilful physician had not failed to remark, that the physical advantages of the remedies he thus compelled the invalid to take were greatly diminished, if not wholly destroyed, by the moral destruction that this method in-

volved. It was then that he resolved to substitute gentleness for violence. Whether it was caused by some progress towards recovery, or was only a more complete prostration of his powers, the king was sensibly tranquilized. He therefore hoped that a voice which he had loved might find in his heart that memory which had forsaken his head; and that he would recognise with pleasure, a soft and gentle countenance succeeding the hideous faces of his keepers. It was then that he thought of the queen, and had required her presence to continue the recovery he had so happily commenced. We have just seen the motives which had prevented Madame Isabel from lending herself to this plan, and by what substitution of person she still hoped to accomplish it.

Master Guillaume was, therefore, apprised of the modifications that had been made in his project. Although less confident of success, on account of this change, he, nevertheless, decided on carrying it into execution, and awaited the arrival of the young sister with some degree of hope.

She appeared at the appointed time, accompanied by her Superior. It was, indeed, the angelic head of which the doctor must have dreamed for this wonderful cure; only she was not clothed in the holy dress of the Sisters of the Trinity, and her beautiful long hair announced that she had not pronounced her vows.

Master Guillaume thought it might be necessary to encourage the poor girl; but he found her so submissive and resigned, that he could only call down blessings on her head. He had procured a long string of instructions and injunctions, not one of which issued from his mouth, and he left it all to the feeling and inspiration of that poor soul, who thus devoted itself.

Odette—for it was she—had yielded to the solicitations of her aunt, as soon as she understood that the request which was made really implied a vast act of devotion. When love is imprinted on a generous soul, it comes forth sooner or later, in the shape of some exalted virtue. It is only those who raise the veil by which it is concealed who discover what it is; but the common herd, viewing it only with a transitory glance, retain their error, and designate it by the name it bears.

Charles was out with his keepers: the mid-day sun

gave him pain, and the morning and evening were chosen for his walks. Odette, therefore, found herself alone in the royal apartment. Strange feelings and emotions passed through the soul of this young girl, born at such a distance from the throne, yet whose destiny continually thrust her towards it like a poor bark towards a rock. Everything in this chamber indicated the presence of mercenary attentions and the abandonment of affection. Then she felt herself captivated by extreme compassion for this mighty misfortune. Royalty, covered with mourning, and dethroned, imploring the attentions of a young, low-born girl, appeared to her to be sublime: in the same sense that Christ scourged and bearing his own cross, is more sublime than Jesus driving the buyers and sellers from the temple.

All was silent and sad in the immense chamber, into which the light only penetrated through painted windows. A large, sculptured stone chimney, in which a blazing fire was burning, although it was the hottest period of summer, was directly opposite to a large bed, with curtains of green damask, with flowers of gold, which, all torn and hanging in tatters, attested the frenzied struggles that madness had there sustained. The carpet was strewn with fragments of furniture and vases, that the king had broken in his paroxysms, and of which they had neglected to remove the wrecks. Everything, in short, presented the image of a shattered intellect. It was evident that matter alone dwelt in that chamber; and the desolation and destruction, of which the traces were so perceptible, seemed rather to be produced by the presence of a wild beast than by that of a human being.

At this sight, the personal fear peculiar to the weakness of her sex invaded Odette. She felt that, like a timid gazelle, she was cast into a lion's den; that the madman to whom they had conducted her had only to touch her also, to shatter her, like one of those pieces of furniture, the wrecks of which she trod upon—her, who had not the harp of David to charm Saul.

She was completely absorbed by these thoughts, when she heard a tumultuous noise. It was the plaints and cries that a man utters who is in fear; then, to this noise was added the sound of many other persons who appeared as if they were pursuing some one. In fact, the

king had escaped from the hands of his keepers, who had only just overtaken him in the adjoining room, and there a struggle had ensued. On hearing some strange vociferations, Odette felt herself tremble: she sought for the secret door in the tapestry by which she had entered, that she might fly; and, not finding it, she ran to the other door. But the noise had come so near, that it appeared as if the door alone separated her from those who caused it. Then she threw herself against the corner of the bed, rolling herself up in the curtains, to conceal herself, if possible, from the first regards of the furious king. Scarcely was she there, before the voice of Master Guillaume was heard, exclaiming, "Let the king go!" and the door opened.

Charles entered: his hair was bristling, his face was pale, and covered with perspiration, his dress was hanging in tatters. He ran to the end of the room, looking for some weapons with which to defend himself; but finding none, he returned in great terror to the door: it had been closed behind him. This appeared to reassure him a little: he looked earnestly in that direction for a short time; then, going on tiptoe, that he might not be heard, he turned the key rapidly in the lock, thus fastening himself in. Then he looked about for what new means of defence he could yet call to his assistance; and, seeing the bed, he took hold of it on the side opposite to that where Odette was, and dragged it before the door, which he wished to defend against his enemies. Then he burst into one of those insane laughs which makes those shudder who hear them, and, letting his hands fall by his sides, and his head on his bosom, he went slowly, and seated himself before the chimney, without seeing Odette, who had remained in the same place, but was now uncovered by the removal of the bed.

At this time, either because the excess of fever had passed away, or the terror had vanished, with the disappearance of the objects that caused it, weakness succeeded to fury, and the king sank back in the chair on which he sat, uttering soft and melancholy plaints. In a short time he began to tremble through his whole frame, and his teeth chattered. It was evident that he was a prey to the most horrible suffering.

At this sight, terror was extinguished in Odette's soul. In proportion as the king became weak she became

strong. She stretched out her hands towards him ; and, without yet daring to rise, she said to him, in an accent of timidity :—

“ Sire, what can I do for you ? ”

The king turned his head at this voice, and perceived Odette at the other end of the room. He looked at her for a moment with that soft and melancholy expression which was habitual to him when he was in health : then he said, slowly, and in a voice that gradually became weaker,

“ Charles is cold—cold—cold.”

Odette went hastily up to him, and took his hands ; they were, in truth, of an icy coldness. She then went to the bed, and taking off the coverlet, she warmed it at the fire, and wrapped it round the king. He felt some relief from it, for he began to laugh like a child : this encouraged Odette.

“ And why is the king cold ? ”

“ What king ? ”

“ King Charles.”

“ Ah ! Charles.”

“ Yes, why is Charles cold ? ”

“ Because Charles is afraid ; ”—and he began to tremble again.

“ And why should Charles, who is a great and a brave king, be afraid ? ” inquired Odette.

“ Charles is great and brave, and is not afraid of men,”—he lowered his voice—“ but he is afraid of the black dog ! ”

The king uttered these words with such an expression of terror, that Odette looked around her, to see if she could discover the animal he mentioned.

“ No, no, he has not come in,” said Charles : “ he will come in when I am in bed : that is the reason I do not like to go to bed, I do not wish it—I do not wish it—Charles likes to remain near the fire. Besides Charles is cold—cold—cold—”

Odette again warmed the coverlet, and again covered the king with it, and sitting down at his feet, she took both his hands in hers.

“ Is he very savage, then, this black dog ? ” said she.

“ No ; but he comes out of the river, and is frozen.”

“ And did he run after Charles this morning ? ”

“ Charles went out, because he was burning hot, and

wanted air. He went into a beautiful garden, where there were flowers, and Charles was happy."

The king drew his hands from those of Odette, and pressed them on his forehead, as if he wished to deaden a pain that affected him there. Then he continued :

"Charles walked a long time on some green turf, full of meadow daisies. He walked, and walked, and walked, till he was tired. Then he saw a beautiful tree, that had apples of gold, and leaves of emerald, and he laid himself down under it, looking up to the sky : it was all blue, with stars like diamonds.—Charles looked at it for a long time, for it was a beautiful sight ; when suddenly he heard the dog howl, but yet a long, long way off. Then the sky turned black, and the stars red ; the fruit on the tree rocked backwards and forwards, as if there had been a great wind, and every time the apples struck against each other, they made the same noise that a lance does in falling against a helmet. Soon two large bats' wings came out of each of these beautiful golden apples, which began to move ; then eyes came out of them, and a nose, and a mouth, like the heads of dead men. The dog again howled, but nearer—nearer. Then the tree shook to the very roots, the wings vibrated, the heads uttered cries, the leaves were covered with perspiration, and each drop fell cold, cold, cold upon Charles : then Charles wished to get up and fly ; but the dog howled a third time, close by his side—close by his side. And he felt him lying down at his feet, benumbing them with his weight ; and he crawled slowly, slowly up his bosom, pressing him down like a mountain ; he wished to thrust him down with his hands, and he licked his hands with his tongue of ice—Oh ! oh ! oh !—Charles is cold—cold—cold."

"But if Charles went to bed," said Odette, "perhaps he would be warmer."

"No, no ; Charles does not wish to go to bed—he does not wish it. As soon as Charles is in bed, the black dog comes in, walks round the bed, raises the coverlet, and lies down on his feet ; and Charles would rather die."—The king made a motion as if to fly.

"Well, then, no, no," said Odette, raising up, and taking the king in her arms, "Charles shall not go to bed."

"But Charles would like to sleep," said the king.

“ Well, then, Charles shall sleep on my bosom.” And seating herself on the arm of the chair, she put her arm round the king’s neck, and placed his head on her bosom.

“ Is Charles more comfortable now ?” she said.

The king raised his eyes to her with an ineffable expression of gratitude.

“ Yes, yes,” said he ; “ Charles is well—well—well.”

“ Then Charles may sleep: Odette will watch near him, that the black dog may not come in.”

“ Odette!” said the king ; “ Odette!” And he began to laugh with infantine intelligence. “ Odette!” and he reposed his head on the bosom of the young girl, who remained motionless, and scarcely breathing.

Five minutes afterwards, the little door opened, and Master Guillaume entered softly. He advanced on tiptoe towards this motionless group, took the king’s hand, which was hanging down, and felt his pulse ; put his ear to his breast, and listened to his respiration. Then, rising up with a joyful countenance, he said, in a low voice,

“ The king sleeps better than he has done this month. May God bless you, young damsel! for you have performed a miracle.”

## CHAPTER IX.

THE news of the king’s malady was disseminated in England as quickly as in France, and, as in France, it produced great disputes. King Richard and the Duke of Lancaster, who had an affection for Charles, were much grieved by it. The Duke of Lancaster more especially deplored this accident as fatal not only to France but to all the Christian world’ “ This madness is a vast misfortune,” he often repeated to the knights and squires who surrounded him ; “ for King Charles was a man who only desired peace so much between the two countries, that he might march against the infidels ; and now the affair is greatly retarded, for he would have been the soul of this crusade, and God knows whether it can now take place.”

In fact, Mourad Bey (whose name we have changed in

French into that of Amurat, and whom Froissart calls, in his old language, the Morabquain,) had just taken possession of the kingdom of Armenia, and threatened to destroy the Christian empire of the east. King Richard and the Duke of Lancaster were, therefore, of opinion, that the truce granted on the entrance of Madame Isabel into Paris ought to be maintained, and even prolonged.

The Duke of Gloucester and the Earl of Essex were, however, of a contrary opinion, and had gained over to their party the Earl of Buckingham, constable of England. They were also supported by all the young knights, who were anxious to flesh their swords. They demanded war, affirming that the moment was propitious, and that it was necessary, at the termination of the truce, to take advantage of the great confusion produced in France by the king's malady, to demand the execution of the treaty of Brittany. But the will of King Richard and the Duke of Lancaster preponderated; and the parliament assembled in Westminster, composed of the prelates, the nobles, and the citizens, determined that the truce by sea and land, which had been signed with France, and which would expire on the 16th of August, 1392, should be prolonged for another year."

During this period, the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy were managing the kingdom of France according to their fancy. They had not forgotten their hatred towards Clisson, and his banishment from Paris did not appear to them to be a sufficient punishment. Their vengeance demanded more, and it obtained it. As the constable had left Monthéry, which was too near Paris for him to consider himself in security, and had gone to a fort that he possessed in Brittany, named Castle Gosselin, they despaired of arresting him. But they were resolved, at all events, to deprive him of his dignities and his office; he was therefore cited to appear before the parliament of Paris, to answer for the misdemeanours of which he was accused, under pain of being degraded from his titles, and losing his office as constable. The process was, after all, quite regular; all the delays that are allowed to criminals under such circumstances, being accorded to him. At last, when the final adjournment of a fortnight had terminated, he was thrice summoned in the chamber of the parliament, thrice at the bottom of the stairs of the court; and, as he did not answer, nor any

one for him, he was banished from the kingdom, as a false and wicked traitor against the crown of France, and condemned to pay a fine of 100,000 silver marcs, as a restitution of the extortions he was accused of having committed during the exercise of his charge; and, lastly, he was for ever deprived of his office of constable. The Duke of Orleans was invited to assist at this sentence; but, not being able to prevent it, he would not sanction it by his presence, and refused to make his appearance in the chamber. The Dukes of Berri and Burgundy, however, did not fail to attend, and the condemnation was issued in their presence, and in that of a great number of the barons and nobles. This sentence created a vast sensation throughout the kingdom, and was variously received; but all agreed in the opinion, that advantage had been taken of the king's malady to cause it to be passed, seeing that, when in health, it would never have been ratified by him.

In the meantime, the king was advancing towards recovery. Every day some wonderful news was received of the amelioration of his health. One of the things that had more especially contributed to divert his melancholy, was a new invention by a painter, named Jacquemin Gringonneur, who lived in the Rue de la Verrerie.— Odette had remembered this man, whom she had known at her father's house, and had written to him to come and bring his pictures, fantastically coloured, which she had seen him execute. Jacquemin came with a pack of cards.

The king took great pleasure in these pictures, which he at first looked at with the curiosity of a child; but, as his reason returned, he was much more amused when he learned that each of these figures had a meaning, and could perform a character in an allegorical game, the representation of war and government. Jacquemin taught him that the *as* (ace) ought to have the pre-eminence over all the other cards, and even over the kings, because its name was derived from a Latin word that signifies *argent* (money); and every one knows that money is the sinew of war. Observe, therefore, that when the king has not the ace, he may be beaten by the menial who possesses it. He told him that the *trèfle*\* (club), that herb of our meadows, was intended to remind him

\* The herb called trefoil.—TR.

who cut it that a general should never pitch his camp in a situation where forage might fail his army. As for the *piques* (spades), it was not difficult to guess that they represented the halberts borne by the foot soldiers at that period; and the *carreaux* (diamonds), the iron with which they armed the ends of their arrows, that were called *viretons*, and which they shot from the crossbow. The *cœurs* (hearts) were evidently the emblems of the courage of the captains and soldiers. Besides, the four names given to the four kings, David, Alexander, Cæsar, and Charlemagne, proved that, however numerous and brave the troops may be, it is yet necessary, if it is wished to secure victory, to place at their head leaders who are prudent, courageous, and experienced. But, as brave aides-de-camp are necessary to brave generals, they had chosen for their *varlets* (knaves), from among the ancients,\* Lancelot and Ogier, who were peers of Charlemagne; and amongst the moderns, Renaud† and Hector.‡ As this name of *varlet* (or knave) implied nothing but what was honourable, and the highest nobles bore it until they were made knights, the above-named knaves represented the nobles; and under their command were the ten, the nine, the eight, and the seven, who were merely the soldiers and common people.

As for the ladies, Jacquemin had as yet given them no other names than those of their husbands: thus indicating that the woman is nothing by herself, and has no power or splendour but what she derives from her lord and master.§

This amusement restored the king's tranquillity, and the tranquillity of his mind was followed by the return of

\* These *varlets* evidently mean the knaves, but I have no means of ascertaining to which the different names belong.—Tr.

† Renaud, Lord of Coucy.

‡ Hector de Galard.

§ It was not until the following reign that they were named. Argine, queen of clubs, which name is an anagram of *regina*, designated the Queen Maria of Anjou, wife of Charles VII. The fair Rachael, queen of diamonds, was no other than Agnes Sorel. The Maid of Orleans was known as the queen of spades, under the name of the chaste and warlike Pallas; and, finally, Isabel of Bavaria, betraying herself by her title of queen of hearts, was revived under the name of the Empress Judith, wife of Louis the Debonair: which must not be confounded, under pain of committing a serious mistake, with the Jewish prude who cut off the head of Holofernes.

his strength. He soon began to eat and drink with some relish. Those frightful nightmares, the offspring of fever, gradually disappeared. He no longer feared to rest in his bed; and, provided that Odette watched near him, he slept calmly; "One day, Master Guillaume found him sufficiently strong to mount a mule; and on the following day his favourite horse was brought out to him, on which he took a tolerable long ride. At last, a hunting expedition against larks was arranged; and Charles and Odette, with the sparrow-hawk on their wrists, showed themselves in the neighbouring plains, where they were received, the one with cries of joy, the other with exclamations of gratitude.

Nothing was now talked of in the Court of France but the restoration of the king's health, and the wonderful manner in which it had been effected. Many ladies were jealous of the fair stranger, whose conduct, according to their account, was merely a concerted plan. All of them, if they might be believed; would have shown the same devotion; and yet, in the day of his misfortune, not one had offered herself. They feared the influence that this young girl, were she even moderately ambitious, might exercise over the king on his restoration to health. The queen herself began to be disturbed at her own arrangement, and sent for the Superior of the Convent of the Trinity, bestowed rich presents on her community, and commanded her to take her niece back. Consequently, Odette received an order to return to the convent.

"Dear sire," said Odette, "I weep because I must leave you."

"Leave me! You, Odette?" said the astonished king; "and why so, my dear girl?"

"Because you no longer need me."

"And you are afraid of remaining one day too much with the poor madman?" said the king. "Yes, it is true, I have already taken days enough from your bright and joyous life, to obscure them with the shade of mine; I have torn quite flowers enough from your fresh garland, to wither them with my burning hands. You are wearied of the seclusions in which you live, and pleasure invites you; go, then." And he set himself down, letting his brow fall on his hand.

"Sire, it is the superior of the Trinity who sends for me—it is the convent that reclaims me."

"It is not, then, you yourself who wish to leave me, Odette?" said the king, raising his head with great vivacity.

"My life is yours, sire; and I should have been happy to consecrate it to you to the very last hour."

"And who, then, separates you from me?"

"The queen, I believe, in the first place; and then your uncles of Burgundy and Berri."

"The queen—my uncles of Burgundy and Berri? They who abandoned me in the days of my weakness—are they coming to surround me in the days of my strength? Odette, Odette, it is not you who wish to leave me, is it?"

"I have no other will than that of my lord and master. What he shall order, I will do."

"Well, then, I order you to remain," said Charles, quite delighted. "This chateau, then, is not a prison to you, dear child; the attentions you pay me, then, did not proceed alone from pity. Oh! if that were the case, Odette, how happy should I be! Look at me again. Oh! do not thus conceal your face from me."

"Sire, sire, you make me die of shame."

"Odette, do you know," said the king, taking both her hands, and drawing her towards him—"do you know, that I have been accustomed to see you, in the evening when I sleep, in the night when I dream, and in the morning when I open my eyes? Do you know that you are the guardian angel of my reason? That it is you whose magic rod has chased away the demons that howled around me? My days you have made pure, my nights you have made calm. Odette, Odette, do you know that gratitude is a weak sentiment for such benefits as these!—Odette, do you know that I love you?"

Odette uttered an exclamation, disengaging her hands from those of the king, and stood trembling before him.

"Sire, sire!" she exclaimed, "what are you saying?"

"I say to you," continued Charles, "that you are now necessary to my life. I did not send for you, did I? I was ignorant of your existence: it is you—you, angel that you are, who divined that I was suffering here, and who came to me. I owe you everything, since to you I owe my reason; and my reason is my power, my strength, my royalty, my empire. Well, then, go away; and you will leave me as poor and as naked as you found me, for my reason will go with you. Oh! I feel it. At the very

idea of losing you, it already flits about me like a cloud." He put his hand to his forehead. "Oh, my God! my God!" he continued, in great terror, "am I again becoming mad? My God, have pity on me!"

Odette uttered a cry and rushed towards the king.

"Oh, sire, sire," she exclaimed, "do not talk in this manner."

Charles looked at her with haggard eyes.

"Oh, sire, do not look at me thus, my God; it is that insane look that gave me so much pain."

"I am very cold," said the king.

Odette cast herself into the king's arms, pressed him to her bosom to warm him, with all the fervency of innocence.

"Go, go, Odette," said the king.

"No, no," replied Odette, without attending to him: "no, you shall not become mad. No, God shall take my days, and leave you your reason. I will remain near you; I will not leave you for one minute, not for an instant. I will remain—there, there."

"What, thus in my arms?" said the king.

"Yes, thus."

"And you will love me?" said Charles.

"Yes," answered Odette, laying her pale and dishevelled head upon Charles's shoulder.

He pressed his lips to hers, and Odette did not leave him.

## CHAPTER X.

SOME days after the scene we have just described, and whilst Odette was reclined at Charles's feet, looking at him with upturned head, Master Guillaume entered the apartment hastily, announcing the queen.

"Ah!" said Charles, "she no longer fears to be with the poor madman. She has been told that he has recovered his reason, and now ventures to approach the lion's den. Introduce Madame Isabel into the adjoining room.

Master Guillaume left the apartment.

"What is the matter with you?" said the king to Odette.

"Nothing," said the young girl, wiping away a large tear.

"Little fool," said the king, kissing her brow; and, taking her head in both his hands, he laid it on the chair, embraced her again, and left the room.

Odette remained in the same position that she had been left by the king. A moment after, she fancied that she saw a shadow thrown almost to her feet: she turned round.

"His excellence the Duke of Orleans!" she exclaimed, hiding her eyes in her hands.

"Odette!" said the duke; and he looked at her in motionless astonishment.

"Ah!" he said, in an accent of bitterness, after a momentary silence; "ah! it is you, then, madame, who perform such miracles! I knew that you were a powerful enchantress; I knew that you could take away reason: but I did not know that you could restore it."

Odette sighed.

"Now," continued the duke, "I understand that severe and guarded virtue. Some Bohemian woman had foretold to you that you should be Queen of France, and the love of the first prince of the blood was not sufficient for you."

"Your excellence," said Odette rising, and displaying her calm and dignified countenance to the duke, "when I came to the king, our sire, I came as a victim who devotes herself, and not as a courtier who seeks her fortune. Perhaps, if I had then found some prince of the blood near the king, his presence would have supported me; but I only saw here an unhappy man, having no other crown on his brow than the crown of thorns—a being abandoned of God, deprived of his reason and instinct, no longer even possessing what nature has given to the lowest animal, the instinct of preservation. Well, then, this unhappy man, the evening before, had been a young, handsome, and potent monarch: in the space of one night, he had lived thirty years—between two suns, his brow had become furrowed, like that of an old man. Of all his power, there no longer remained even the wish to be powerful, for his mind had lost its memory and reason. Then, on seeing this youth become age, this beauty withered, this power vanished, I was seized with great compassion for such a vast misfortune. Royalty

without a throne, without a sceptre, without a crown,—the ancient, the sacred royalty, crawling on its knees—cried for pity, and no one answered her; she stretched forth her arms, and no one gave her his hand; she poured forth tears, and no one wiped them away. Oh! I then felt that I was chosen, and that God had reserved me for a sublime mission—that there were situations so singularly beyond the ordinary calculations of life that the habitual conventions of society were annihilated before them—that the word virtue was, in this case, a dagger with which the incipient death of a victim was completed—and that it was better to sacrifice a soul and save a life, when this soul was only that of a poor girl, and this life was that of a mighty king.”

The Duke of Orleans regarded her with astonishment. He listened to this eloquence of the heart, that came upon him so unexpectedly, like the flowers that expand themselves in a single night.

“You are a singular girl, Odette,” said the duke; “and you would be an angel of heaven, if what you say were true. But I wish to believe it; pardon me, then, for having offended you—but I love you so much.”

“And I, then, your excellence. Oh! if you had been unhappy!——”

“Oh, Charles, Charles!” exclaimed the Duke of Orleans, striking his brow.

At this moment, the king returned. The two brothers threw themselves into each other’s arms. Master Guillaume came after the king.

“Your excellence the Duke of Orleans,” said he, “thank God, you see the king in a good state of health. I restore and deliver him up to you; but, for the future, take care not to vex or overburden him: for his mind is not yet sufficiently strong. And, more especially,” (looking at Odette,) “do not separate him from his good genius: so long as he has her near him, I answer for everything.”

“Master Guillaume,” said the duke, “you depreciate your own science; and it is sufficiently necessary to the king, for you not to leave him.”

“Oh! your excellence,” said Guillaume, shaking his head, “I am now a poor old man, feeble and impotent, who, cannot bear the arrangements of a court. Permit

me to return to the town of Laon. I have accomplished my destiny and now I may die."

"Master Guillaume," said the duke, "your recompense depends upon the Dukes of Berri and Burgundy, and I hope that they will make it rich and splendid. At all events, should you not be satisfied with them, come to Louis of Orleans, and you shall find that he has not usurped the reputation of the magnificent."

"God has already done for me more than men could do," said Master Guillaume, bowing; "and the little that they will do after him will be always superior to my deserts."

Master Guillaume bowed, and left the room. The next day, in spite of all persuasion, he left the chateau of Creil, and returned to his house near the town of Laon, and never revisited Paris, although they would have given him a thousand crowns of gold, and placed at his disposal, for the journey, four of the king's own horses.

The king, on his part, returned to the hotel St. Paul, near which he gave Odette a small dwelling, and everything reverted nearly to the same state as before his malady.

Charles had hastened his return to the affairs of government, to give his countenance to a great and holy enterprise, of which he had always dreamed. It was a crusade against the Turks.

The ambassadors of Sigismond had arrived at Paris whilst the king was at Creil, and had there recounted the projects of Bajazet, who had just succeeded his father, and who was killed in a great battle fought against Sigismond. He himself had announced his designs, which were no other than to invade Hungary, to traverse the Christian countries, placing them under his dominion, and leaving to each the liberty of following its own law; and then to invade Rome with a mighty force, and make his war-horse eat his provender on the high altar of St. Peter. These were the abominable blasphemies that ought to rouse every one that possessed a Christian heart against this miscreant. Therefore, King Charles had sworn that France, that eldest daughter of Christ, should not permit such a profanation, were he to march in person against the infidels, as the kings Philip Augustus, Louis XI., and Louis XII., his predecessors, had formerly done. The Count d'Eu, who had assumed the sword of constable,

which Clisson had lost, and the Marshal Boucicaut, who had travelled in the country of the infidels, strongly supported the king's resolution, and contended that it was the duty of every knight, who made use of the sign of the cross, to unite against the common enemy.

But he who had this enterprise most at heart was the Duke Philip of Burgundy. He was prompted to it by his son, the Count de Nevres, who hoped to be nominated the leader of this chosen band, and to perform with it great and noble exploits of war. The Duke of Berri, moreover, did not oppose it; and it was therefore promptly agreed to in the council. The ambassadors were dismissed, with the king's promise; messengers were despatched to the Emperor of Germany and the Duke of Austria, to obtain a passage through their states; and letters were written to the grand master of the Teutonic order, and to the Knights of Rhodes, to inform them that John of Burgundy would shortly march to their assistance, accompanied by a thousand knights and squires, chosen from the most valiant men of the realm, to resist the threats and menaces of King Bajazet, called Amurat Baquin.

The Duke of Burgundy was now actively engaged in preparing the military establishment of his eldest son, for he wished it to be worthy of a prince of the fleur-de-lis. The first thing of which he thought was to place him near some knight of vast experience and courage. He therefore wrote to the Lord of Coucy, who had arrived most opportunely from Milan, requesting that he would visit him at the hotel d'Artois, which he inhabited. Sire Enguerrand hastily responded to the invitation; and, as soon as the duke and duchess perceived him approach, they went forward to meet him, saying:

"Sire de Coucy, you must have heard of the crusade which is in preparation, and of which our son is to have the command. You know that this son will be the luminary of the house of Burgundy. Well, then, we entrust him entirely to you, and to your courage: for we know that, of all the knights of France, you are the most skillful in the profession of arms. We, therefore, entreat you to be his companion and counsellor during the hazardous expedition he is about to undertake, and which we pray God may redound to our honour, and to that of Christianity."

“Your excellence, and you, madame,” replied the Sire de Coucy, “Such a request is to me equivalent to a command; and, if it please God, I will take this journey, for two reasons: the first, from devotion, and to defend the faith and Jesus Christ: the second, to endeavour to make myself worthy of the honour you pay me. And yet, dear sire and madame, you ought to relieve me of this responsibility, and entrust it to some one more worthy; for instance, Messire Philip d’Artois, Count of Eu and Constable of France; or even his cousin, the Count de la Marche, both of whom ought to be of this expedition, and are nearer to him in blood and arms.”

“Sire de Coucy,” interrupted the duke, “you have done more, and seen more, than those you mention. You know the country it is necessary to traverse, whilst they have never visited it: they are brave and loyal knights, but you are the chief in royalty and chivalry, and we repeat our entreaty.”

“Your excellence,” replied the Sire de Coucy, “I will obey your commands; and I hope that I shall derive honour from it, with the assistance of Messire Guy de Tremouille, of Messire Guillaume his brother, and the Admiral of France, Messire Jean de Vienne.”

This affair being settled, the duke occupied himself with procuring money sufficient to form a suitable establishment for his son. For this purpose, on the occasion of his son’s knighthood, he levied a tax over all the country, on all the lords of castles, and all the citizens of fortified towns; and this tax amounted to 120,000 crowns of gold. But as this sum was far from sufficient to support the establishment with which they wished him to appear, he commanded all the lords and ladies who held fiefs of him to prepare to depart, having marked them out as comprising a part of his son’s household, yet leaving them at liberty to free themselves from this expedition, on the payment of a reasonable tax. This tax was, for some, two thousand; for others, one thousand; and for others, five hundred crowns, according to the revenue of their estates.

The old ladies and the ancient knights, who, as Froissart says, feared the labour of the body, paid as the duke required. As for the young men, they were told that it was not their money, but their persons that were wanted; therefore, they had to prepare to depart at their own

charges, and to accompany their lord John on this holy expedition. From this second tax the duke procured 60,000 crowns more.

Everything was, therefore, prepared as rapidly as possible—so much so, that about the 15th of May, every one being in war equipment, the Count John gave the signal of departure, by putting himself on march. He was followed by more than a thousand knights and squires, all men of valour and rank, amongst whom nobles were enumerated, such as the Count d'Eu, the Constable of France, Messires Henri and Philip de Bar, the Sire de Coucy, Messire Guy de la Tremouille, Messire Boucicaut, marshal of France, Messire Regnault de Roze, the Lord of St. John and Py, Messire Jean de Vienne. On the 20th of May, the whole army entered Lorraine; then traversing Bar and Burgundy, it passed into Alsace, crossed the country of Aunay and the river Rhine, halted a short time in Wurtemberg, and reached Austria, where those who composed it were received with great honour and good cheer by its duke, who was expecting them. There every one separated, each taking his own route, for the greater facility of march, after having appointed a rendezvous at the town of Bude, in Hungary.

In the meantime, great and important events were complicating in Paris. Ambassadors from England had arrived demanding Madame Isabel of France in marriage for King Richard, although she was yet but a child. This union, except on the score of age, was very suitable on all points, England being a kingdom, and Richard a king, that might very properly be allied to the realm and King of France. Moreover, this alliance would terminate for ever that war of extermination which had, during four reigns, desolated two nations born on the same earth, branches of the same stem, which, feeble when separated, would, when mutually supporting each other, resist every storm. The marriage was therefore settled without opposition, and Madame Isabel betrothed to Richard of England, who was to come to receive her at Calais,\* on the following year, from the hands of Charles of France.

During these transactions, the instructions that had been left by Master Guillaume, concerning the care of the king's health, were punctually followed, particularly

\* The marriage was, in fact, celebrated in the church of St. Nicholas, at Calais, on the 4th of November, 1395.

with respect to the amusements that he should take. Every day there were excursions on horseback, dinners at the Louvre or at the palace, and, every evening, dances at the Hotel de St. Paul. Every one, to pay his court to the king and his relatives, racked his imagination to invent some new contrivances; and the more foolish they were, the better were they received. As for Odette, she would have mingled but little in these entertainments, from which her simple and serious character was far removed, if, indeed, a more holy cause had not prohibited her. She was about to become a mother.

The king, on his part, loved her with that profound and grateful affection peculiar to elevated minds. No day passed that he did not find an hour to bestow on his gentle nurse; and when, in the evening, he recapitulated the entertainments of the day, and, in the morning, the pleasures of the night, the hour passed with her was always the brightest of his life.

About this time, a young knight of Vermandois, who belonged to the king's suite, was married to a young lady of the queen's household. The august patrons of the young couple determined that the marriage should be celebrated at the Hotel de St. Paul, and every one sought for some new invention, that this entertainment might be the gayest and most agreeable that had been given for a long time. As the ball was masked, the king endeavoured to persuade Odette to be present; but she constantly refused, alleging the danger of her present situation and the extreme weakness of her health.

The evening of the marriage arrived. Every one had secretly made his preparations, in order to produce more effect by the surprise he would cause. The ball opened with the ordinary quadrilles; but, at about eleven o'clock cries were heard of "Make room, make room!" and a knave of spades and a knave of diamonds placed themselves on each side of the door, with halberts in hand, and clothed in habiliments characteristic of their employment. This was almost immediately succeeded by a complete game of piquet. The kings arrived, according to their antiquity; David marched the first; after him came Alexander; then Cæsar; and, lastly, Charlemagne. Each gave his hand to the lady of his colour, whose train was borne by a slave. The first of these slaves represented tennis, the second billiards, the third chess, the

fourth dice. In their train followed, as composing a part of their household, ten ace, dressed as captains of the guards, and each in command of nine cards. And, lastly, the procession was closed by the knaves of clubs and hearts, who shut the door, to indicate that there was no other person to follow. Then the music gave the signal for a dance : immediately, the kings, the queens, and the knaves formed the *tierces* and the *quatorze*, to the great amusement of the company ; and, at last, the red being ranged on one side, the ballet was determined by a general country-dance, where all the colours were mingled without distinction of age, rank or sex.

They were yet laughing at this curious contrivance, which had been considered very pleasing, when a voice issuing from an adjoining room, demanded, in barbarous French, the opening of the door. As it was presumed that this demand was made for the introduction of a fresh masquerade, they hastened to comply with it. In fact, he who demanded admission to the ball was a savage chief, leading, with a rope, five of his subjects bound to each other, and sewn up in coats of linen, on which, by means of resinous pitch, they had fastened some very thin flax, which had been stained so as to give it the appearance of hair. These six men, therefore, appeared as if they were naked, and covered with hair like satyrs. On seeing them, the ladies screamed and drew back ; so much so, that a vast circle was formed in the middle of the room, in the centre of which the new-comers executed some most grotesque dances. In a minute or two, the fear subsided, and all the ladies had drawn near, with the exception of the Duchess de Berri, who persisted in remaining in her corner. When the chief of the savages saw this, he approached her, thinking that he should frighten her. At the same moment, loud cries were heard. The Duke of Orleans had imprudently held a torch close to one of the masks ; and, at the same instant, the five savages, who were fastened together, found themselves in flames. One of them instantly rushed out of the room ; whilst another, forgetting his own danger and his own pain, to the astonishment of all, uttered these terrible words :

“Save the king ! in the name of heaven, save the king !”

Then the Duchess de Berri, not doubting but that he

who came to her was the king, threw her arms round him; (for he wished to return to his companions, although he could not render them any assistance, and incurred the danger of being burnt with them;) and clinging to him, she kept him back, calling for assistance; whilst the same cries of pain were heard, and the same voice, exclaiming, in a tone of anguish, "Save the king! save the king!"

It was a most fearful spectacle to behold these four men on fire, whilst no one dared to approach them, for the melted and burning pitch was trickling from their bodies on the floor, and the fragments of these cursed garments, as they pulled them off, tore with them the living flesh, like the shirt of Nessus; so much so, says Froissart, that at midnight, it was hideous and pitiable to hear, and see that room of St. Paul for, of the four who were burning, two were already dead and destroyed on the spot. One was the Count de Joigny, and the other Sire Emery de Poitiers. As for the two others, they carried them, half burnt, to their hotels: they were Messire Henry de Guisay, and the Bastard of Foix, who still continued to repeat, in a dying voice, and without thinking of his own martyrdom—"Save the king! save the king!"

The fifth who had left the room enveloped in flames, was the Sire de Nantouillet. He remembered that, on coming in, he had passed the battery, and that he had there seen some large vessels full of water, in which they washed the glasses and goblets: he therefore flew in that direction, and threw himself into one of them; and this presence of mind saved him.

As for the king, he had told his aunt De Berri who he was; and she, showing him Madame Isabel insensible in the arms of her women, had persuaded him to run to his apartments to change his dress. The fear that they had experienced concerning him was, therefore, quickly allayed; for, in a few minutes, he returned unmasked, and in his ordinary dress. Madame Isabel did not recover her senses until she heard his voice; and, even then, for some time she doubted whether it was really him, and that he had escaped uninjured.

The Duke of Orleans was in utter despair. But his grief was of no service, except to show that this accident had arisen from his youth and imprudence. To any

one who would listen to him, he declared that all should fall on him, whether punishment or repentance; and that, conscious of the misery that had been produced by his folly, he would give his life to redeem that of the unhappy men whom he had destroyed. The king pardoned him; for it was evident that there had been no bad intention on his part.

The news of this accident quickly spread throughout Paris; but as it was not generally known that the king was saved, on the following morning there was a vast concourse of people in all the streets murmuring loudly against the young, thoughtless beings who had led the king into such follies. They talked of avenging his death on those who had caused it; and already vague suspicions were circulated concerning the Duke of Orleans, to whom the crown of France would fall on the king's death. The Dukes de Berri and Burgundy, who had just arrived, the one from the hotel de Nesle, the other from the hotel d'Artois, met in the morning at the hotel de Paul. They had passed through these streams of people, and had heard the ill suppressed growlings of the lion, whose rage they well knew and dreaded. They went, therefore, to the king, and advised him to mount his horse, and ride through the streets of Paris. The king having consented, the Duke of Burgundy caused a window to be opened, and entering the balcony, he cried out with a loud voice, "The king is not dead, my good people, and you will see him directly."

A moment after, the king went forth accompanied by his uncles; and, after having ridden through the whole of Paris, to appease the people, he returned to Notre Dame, where he heard mass, and made his offerings. After having performed this duty, he proceeded towards the hotel de St. Paul, when, on passing by the Rue des Jardins, he heard a cry, which seemed to issue so completely from the heart, that he started and raised his head. She who uttered it was a young girl, who was reeling in the arms of her nurse. Scarcely had the king perceived her, when he sprung from his horse, told his uncles to return to the hotel without him, ran towards the house where this female was, hastily mounted the stairs, and rushed into a room, exclaiming in great trepidation,

"What is the matter with you, my dear girl, that you are so pale and trembling?"

"Oh," replied Odette, "I thought you were dead; and I am myself dying."

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## CHAPTER XI.

ODETTE, in fact, actually thought that she was dying when she uttered these words, for she fainted away. Charles took her in his arms, and carried her to the bed that she had just left. Johanna sprinkled a few drops of water on her face, and she opened her eyes.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, throwing her arms round her lover's neck, "ah! Charles, my king, my lord, you are not dead!" And the entire existence of this angelic being was concentrated in her eyes.

"My much-loved girl," said the king, "I yet live to love you"

"To love me?"

"Oh, yes!"

"It is a good thing to be beloved: it assists one to die," said Odette, in a melancholy tone.

"Die!" repeated the king with terror—"die! You have twice used that expression. But are you ill, then? Are you in pain? Why are you so pale?"

"And do you ask me that, sire?" replied Odette. "Are you not, then, aware that a deadly report ran through the whole city; that it penetrated here, as everywhere else; that a great cry arose, in the middle of the night, that was heard from one end of Paris to the other—the king is dead!" Imagine to yourself, sire, what I felt when I heard these words, which pierced my heart like a dagger. I felt that some spring of life was broken within me. Then I was happy, for I was sure I should not survive you; and I blessed God. Now, behold you live, and it is I only who am dying; and, God be thanked again! His goodness is great, his mercy is infinite."

"What are you saying, Odette? But, you are mad! Die! You die! and what for? and how are you dying?"

"Why, I have told you; how, I am ignorant. I only know that my soul was ready to leave my body; and that, when I heard that you were still living, I only prayed for one thing, which was to see you again, for I felt that it was useless to pray to live any longer. I

have seen you again, and I am happy: I can now die. Oh, my God! my God! pardon me, if all my thoughts are of him. Charles, how I suffer! Oh, take me in your arms!" And she fainted away a second time.

The king thought that she was dead, and pressed her in his arms with sobs and exclamations. But suddenly starting-up, he cried out:

"Johannah, run for my own physician, and bring him here: tell him, if necessary, that I myself am dying; but that he must come this minute—in an instant. She is not dead, and may possibly be saved."

Johannah rushed out of the room, and ran, as fast as her age permitted her, to the address given her by the king. In ten minutes, she returned with the physician.

Odette had recovered her senses, but was so weak that she could not speak. Charles, with his eyes fixed on hers, motionless, his brow covered with perspiration, was looking eagerly at her: from time to time, Odette uttered a gentle cry.

"Oh, come, come, sir," exclaimed Charles, on perceiving the doctor; "come and save her for me. Then you will have saved more than my crown, more than my realm, more than my life. You will have saved her who restored me to reason when I was mad—her who watched over me during long days and tedious nights, devoted and patient as an angel. Then, when you have saved her, ask of me what you will, and you shall have it, provided that what you ask be in the power of the most potent monarch in Christendom."

Odette looked at the king with an indescribable expression of gratitude.

The physician went up to her and felt her pulse. "This young female will soon be confined," said he to the king; "and yet her time is not completed. She must have had some violent fright, some sudden shock."

"Yes, that is it," said the king. "Well, then, sir, since you so perfectly understand the cause of her illness, you can save her—can you not?"

"Your majesty, you ought to return to your Hotel de St. Paul, and you shall be sent for when all is over."

Odette made a motion to retain the king; then, opening her arms, and letting them fall on the bed, "Your majesty," she said, "the doctor is right; but you will return, will you not?"

The king took the physician aside, and looking earnestly at him :

"Doctor," said he to him, "is it to get rid of me? Is it that I may not see her die? If so, nothing shall induce me to leave the room. Do not deprive me of her for a minute, not for an instant, unless you can restore her to me alive."

The physician went up to Odette, again took her hand, looked earnestly at her, and then, turning towards the king :

"You may leave the room, sire," said he to him: "this young lady may live till to-morrow."

"Then it is true that she is doomed!" he mourned, in a hollow voice. She must die, then! "I must lose her! Oh, then, I will not leave her! Nothing shall induce me to leave this room—nothing in the world!"

"But you will depart, sire; and one word will determine you. The emotion caused by your presence will render more painful and more dangerous the crisis that must arrive; and everything depends on this crisis; if there be any hope, it is there."

"I go—I go, then—I leave her," said the king. Then, turning to Odette, he pressed her in his arms. "Odette," he said to her, "be patient, be courageous. I would rather not leave you, but I am told that it is necessary. Preserve yourself for me: I return—I return."

"Farewell, your majesty," said Odette, in a melancholy tone.

"No—not farewell—but to our next meeting."

"May God permit it," murmured the young girl, closing her eyes, and letting her head fall back upon her pillow.

The king returned to the hotel de St. Paul, weeping, and in utter despair. He shut himself up in his chamber, and for two hours, that appeared ages to him, he vainly endeavoured to dismiss from his mind the sole thought by which it was constantly beset. He felt sharp pains darting through his head; flames passed before his eyes; he pressed his burning brow with his hands, as if to retain his reason, which returned but yesterday, as it were; he feared would again escape him. At length, after the lapse of a considerable time, he found that he could no longer restrain himself, and rushing from his room, he ran

out of the hotel de St. Paul, took the road to the Rue des Jardins, saw the house, and then suddenly stopped short, his whole frame violently agitated. After a moment's pause, he again went forward, but as slowly as if he were following a funeral procession. At last he reached the house, hesitating whether he should pass the threshold, and almost tempted to return to the hotel de St. Paul, and wait until he was sent for, as they had promised. But he mechanically mounted the stairs, reached the door, and, placing his ear to it, heard some cries.

At the expiration of some minutes, the cries ceased. Johanna hastily opened the door, behind which she discovered that the king was kneeling.

"Well," said he, in great anguish—"Odette, Odette!"

"She is delivered—she expects you."

The king rushed into the room, laughing and crying at the same time.

Then he suddenly stopped before the bed where Odette was laid, having her daughter\* in her arms: she was so pale, that she looked like a marble Madonna.

And yet, in spite of this paleness, there was a smile, soft and full of hope, on the lips of the young mother—a smile such as a mother has for her child—one of those smiles composed of love, of prayer, and of faith.

Seeing Charles's hesitation, she rallied all her strength, took her child, and presented it to the king.

"Your majesty," she said, "here is what will remain of me."

"Oh! the mother and child will both live!" said Charles, embracing them both. "God will leave the rose and the bud on the same stems. What have we done that he should separate us?"

"Sire," said the physician, "it would be advisable for this poor sufferer to take some repose."

"Oh, let him be with me," said Odette: "my rest will be more sweet and more calm when I know that he is here. Forget not that, should he leave me, I may not see him again; and that I have only lived so long, because nature has performed a miracle in favour of the child that I have just brought into life."

At these words, she let her head fall on Charles's

\* This daughter, who was called Margaret of Valois, was married to the Sire de Harpedanne, and received as her dowry the estate of Belleville, in Poitou.

shoulder. Johanna took the infant, the physician left the room, and Charles and Odette were left alone.

"And now, my dear child," said the king, "it is my turn to watch near your pillow, as you watched so long near mine. God has performed a miracle in your favour. I am less worthy of his goodness than you are, but my hope lies in his mercy. Sleep, I beseech you."

Odette gave a melancholy smile, pressed the king's hand almost imperceptibly, and closed her eyes. In a few minutes afterwards, her respiration, and the gentle heaving of her bosom, announced that she slept.

Charles, motionless and scarcely daring to breathe, gazed upon that countenance, so pale that it might have been imagined, even now, to belong to the tomb, if the lips, tinted with a brilliant colour, and the quick beating of the arteries, had not indicated that a fragile life still circulated through the veins. From time to time, nervous contractions pervaded this feeble frame, and were immediately succeeded by drops of perspiration, that trickled down her forehead. At length these motions became more frequent, stifled sighs issued from her breast, and feeble and gentle cries announced that she was struggling under the oppression of a dream. Charles saw that her sleep was become painful, and awoke her.

Odette opened her eyes, which, already dimmed, for an instant remained vague and uncertain, wandering over all the surrounding objects. At last they rested on the king, she recognized him, and uttered a cry of joy.

"Oh! you are there, then, sire! It was only a dream, and I have not yet left you!"

Charles pressed her to his heart.

"Imagine, then," said she to him, "that scarcely was I asleep, when an angel descended to the foot of my bed. A golden glory surrounded his brow, white wings were on his shoulders, and a palm-branch in his hand. He looked gently at me, and said, 'I am come for you; God calls you.' I showed him that you held me in your arms, and I told him that I could not leave you. He then touched me with his palm-branch, and I perceived that I had wings. I know not how it happened, but now it was I who was watching, and you who slept. Then the angel rose up, and I followed him, carrying you in my arms, and we began to mount together towards heaven. At first I was very happy. I felt myself strong

and light, and breathed freely; but gradually I felt that you were heavy in my arms. Nevertheless, I continued mounting, but my respiration became painful and difficult. I wished to wake you, and could not, for you were in a deep sleep. I endeavoured to cry out, hoping that you would hear my voice; but my voice died upon my lips. I turned towards the angel, to ask him to assist me: he he was waiting for me at the gate of heaven, and made me a sign to join him there. I wished to tell him, that I could no longer move—that I was being stifled—that you weighed like a world upon my arms; but not a sound, not a word, issued from my mouth. My arms were benumbed: I felt that you would escape me. I had only to wave my wings to reach the angel: I almost touched him: I stretched out my hand, to seize the folds of his robe: it was my last effort! I found nothing but a vapour, without obstruction, without force. The arm that bore you fell as if it were dead, and I saw you—you—rolling, falling headlong. I uttered a cry; and it was then that you awoke me. "Thank you, thank you!" She pressed her lips against Charles's cheek: and, sinking under the emotions produced by this dream, she again closed her eyes.

The king saw her re-~~pose~~ into sleep. During some minutes, he again watched over her slumbers, lest another dream might disturb her. Then it seemed to him as if a giddiness invaded his own brow, and the objects that were before him appeared to turn round. The chair on which he sat rocked to and fro. He would have wished to rise and open the window, to drive away this species of delirium; but he feared to awaken Odette;—Odette, who was sleeping so calmly in his arms, whose lips were become rather pale than red, whose blood was stilled.—Odette, to whom two hours of repose might restore strength. He had not the courage to do it. To escape from this delirium, he laid his head near that of Odette, and closed his eyes: he continued for some time yet to see strange and impalpable objects floating in the air, and passing without touching the sun; a sort of mist, in which sparks glittered, came and covered all this; then the sparks were extinguished, and everything became motionless; the night and silence succeeded, and he slept.

At the expiration of an hour, an icy sensation awoke

him: Odette's head had fallen on his cheek, and it was there that he experienced the cold. He felt himself completely benumbed by the weight of the young girl. He wished to replace her on the bed. She was paler than ever; all colour had fled from her lips. He put his mouth to hers, and felt no breath; he threw himself upon her, covering her with kisses, and then suddenly uttered a loud cry.

Johanna and the doctor entered, and hastened to the bed. Odette was no longer there. They looked round, and saw Charles seated in a corner, holding the young girl in his arms, wrapped up in her sheets. Odette's eyes were closed: those of Charles were fixed and open. Odette was dead—Charles was mad.

They took the king back to St. Paul. He had lost all consciousness and all memory, allowing himself to be treated like a child. The report of his misfortune ran rapidly through the palace, and every one attributed it to the alarm of the previous night. The queen heard the intelligence on her return from the Rue Barbette, where she had furnished a little private retreat. She immediately hastened to the king's apartment; he was still in the same state; but scarcely had he perceived the fleurs-de-lis with which Madame Isabel's dress was spotted, before his former hatred of this emblem revived. Uttering a cry, resembling the roar of a lion, he seized a sword which had been imprudently left near his chair, drew it from the scabbard, and rushed towards his wife, to strike her with it. The queen, thus menaced, seized with both hands that portion of the sword, near the handle, that was not sharp; but Charles, drawing the weapon violently towards him, in order to disengage it, made the whole length of the blade glide through Madame Isabel's hands.

The blood gushed forth; Madame Isabel rushed toward the door, screaming loudly; and there, meeting the Duke of Orleans, she showed him her wounds.

"What is the matter?" exclaimed the duke, turning pale: "who has treated you in this manner?"

"The matter is," exclaimed Madame Isabel, "that the king is more mad and more furious than ever; and that now he wishes to kill me, as he before wished to kill you. Oh! Charles, Charles!" she continued turning towards

the king, and shaking her hands dripping with blood, "here is blood that will fall back on your own head! Wo, wo, to you!"

## CHAPTER XII.

IN the meantime, the crusaders had passed the Danube, and entered Turkey. They had performed marvellous exploits, had taken towns and fortresses at discretion, and, no one had successfully opposed them. They had arrived before Nicopolis; and, having laid seige to it, pressed it vigorously, the assaults followed each other in rapid succession. Having received no intelligence of Bajazet, the King of Hungary said to the French nobles, and to the barons and knights of Burgundy:—

"Fair lords! God be thanked, the campaign has been a successful one; for we have performed great feats of arms, and annihilated the power of Turkey, of which this town is the last rampart. That being once taken, for I doubt not that we shall take it, my advice is, that we should not advance any further this year. We will retire, if it be your pleasure, into my kingdom of Hungary, where I have numerous fortresses, towns, and castles, ready to receive you, and the winter shall be employed in making every preparation for the succeeding summer. We will write to the King of France, to inform him in what situation our affairs are: and, in the ensuing spring, he will send us fresh troops. Perhaps, when he shall have learnt where we are, he will even come in person, for he is young, of great bravery, and, as you know, is very fond of arms. But, whether he should come or not, the next summer, if it please God, we will drive the infidels from the kingdom of Armenia, pass over the arm of St. George,\* and go into Syria, to deliver the harbours of Jaffa and Berout, and to conquer Jerusalem and all the Holy Land. Should the sultan come to meet us, he shall not depart without a battle."

Such projects as these were very congenial to the courage and character of the French knights. Therefore they all received them with enthusiasm, and their days were spent in that brave and careless gaiety which is less the

\* The Straits of the Dardanelles.

effect of personal pride amongst our soldiers than of the pure and simple confidence with which they repose on the rank and courage of their chiefs. But matters were to happen far differently from what they anticipated.

Bajazet, of whom nothing was heard and whose apparent inertness encouraged the confidence of the knights, had passed the summer in collecting his army. It was composed of soldiers drawn from every country; and he had promised them such advantages, that some had come to him, even from the extremities of Persia. Scarcely had he seen himself in such force, before he began his march, had traversed the Straits of the Dardanelles, had halted at Adrianople sufficient time to refresh his army, and had arrived within a few leagues of the city which the Christians were besieging. Then he charged Urnus Bek, one of his bravest and most faithful officers, to reconnoitre the country, and, if possible, to hold a conference with Dogan Bek, the governor of Nicopolis; but he whom he sent as a scout returned with intelligence that an innumerable army of Christians closed all the issues, and had prevented him from having any communication with the besieged.

Bajazet smiled contemptuously; and, when the night was come, he ordered his swiftest horse to be brought forth, threw himself on his back, and passing through the sleeping camp of the Christians, light and silent as a spirit of the air, he reached the top of a hill that commanded Nicopolis; there he stopped, and cried out, in a voice of thunder, "Dogan Bek!"

This man, whom his good fortune had led to the rampart, instantly recognized the voice, and answered it. Then the sultan questioned him, in the Turkish language, concerning the state of the town, the provisions, and ammunition. Dogan, after having wished long life and felicity to the sultan, replied, "By the favour of Mohamet, the gates and walls of the city are strong and well defended; the soldiers, as you perceive with your sacred eyes, watch day and night; and they have sufficient provisions and ammunition."

Bajazet, having ascertained all that he wanted to know, now descended the hill; for the Sire de Helly, who commanded a night patrol, having heard the voice that was interrogating, had just given the alarm, and was marching towards the hill. Suddenly he saw a kind

of phantom on horseback pass before him, light as the wind, and which, like it, rapidly coursed along the earth. He rushed forward in pursuit with his troop; but, although he was one of the best mounted knights in the army, he could not even catch the dust that the royal steed dashed up in its flight.

In this manner Bajazet traversed eight leagues in an hour; and, having rejoined his army, he uttered a vast shout, that aroused the men and made the horses neigh.

Being desirous to take advantage of the remaining portion of the night, to get as near the Christian army as he could, he instantly commenced his march; and, at the break of day, made his arrangements for battle. As a man of great experience, and who well knew the courage of the crusaders, he threw forward an advanced guard of 8000 Turks, which was followed, at the distance of a league, by the remainder of his army, to which he gave the form of a V, placing himself at the base, and ordering the two wings to enclose the enemy's army, when the pretended flight of the advanced guard should have drawn it into the open space that would be left by this manœuvre. This body of troops, with the two wings, formed a total of about 180,000 men.

Whilst this army was advancing, numerous as the sands of the sea, destructive as the simoom, the Christian knights were spending their time in entertainments and orgies. The camp had become a complete town, where all the delicacies of life had been collected. The tents, even those of simple knights, were composed of stuffs interwoven with gold. Some followed the customs of France; others invented new ones, and when their fancy failed them, they added to the old ones. It was thus that they had so completely caricatured the points of their long upturned shoes, that the circle which they formed in beading back prevented the foot from entering into the stirrup: and some even went so far as to fasten the end to the knee by a chain of gold.—This licentiousness and luxury caused great astonishment amongst the foreigners. They could not understand how nobles, who defended the cross for the sake of religion, should give such cause for scandal among the infidels; how knights so brave in battle, should be so frivolous when unarmed; or how the same men could, at the same time, wear dresses so light and arms so heavy.

It was now the 28th of September, the eve of the Feast of the Archangel Michael; it was ten o'clock in the morning, and all the French nobility were collected under the tent of the Count de Nevres, who gave a grand entertainment. They had just been profusely drinking the wines of Hungary and the Archipelago, and all those boasting and giddy youths were anticipating the future, which they embellished with golden prospects. Messire Jacques de Helly alone was sad and gloomy, and was rallied for his taciturnity. For some time, he allowed all these foolish youths to have their humour: but at last raising his forehead, embrowned by the oriental sun.

"My lords," said he, "rally and laugh; it is all very well: you were sleeping whilst I watched, and you neither saw nor heard what I saw and heard. This night, whilst I was guarding the camp, I saw a celestial portent; I heard a human voice: and I much fear that heaven and earth presage us no good."

The knights began to laugh, satirising Amurath-Baraquin for his absence; some even said that they were certain that a dog of an infidel like him would not dare to attack Christian knights.

"King Basaac\* is an infidel, it is true," replied Sire de Helly; "but he is a prince who is sincere and serious in his false belief; observing as faithfully the instructions of his false prophet as we ourselves follow with but slight zeal the commandments of the true God. As for his courage, he who, like me, had seen him in the day of battle, will never doubt it whilst he lives.—You call for him loudly. Make yourselves perfectly easy: he will arrive, if he be not already come,"

"Messire Jacques," said the Count de Nevres, rising up, and leaning on the shoulder of Marshal Boucicaut, partly from friendship, and partly from the necessity of preserving his equilibrium, "that you are no longer young, is a misfortune; that you would wish to make us sad, is a crime. Nevertheless, you are a knight of great experience and great courage: tell us what you have seen and heard. I am the leader of the crusade: therefore make your report to me." Then, taking a glass and turning towards the butlers, "Pour out some Cyprus wine," said he: "should it be the last let it be good."

\* The name by which Bajazet is distinguished in the Chronicles.

Then raising his goblet, "My lords," added he, "To the great glory of God, and the health of King Charles!"

Every one arose, emptied his glass, and sat down again. Messire Jacques de Helly alone remained standing.

"We are attentive," said the Count de Nevres, placing his elbows on the table, and resting his chin between his closed hands.

"My lords, I was, as I have told you, engaged in my night-watch, when I heard some superhuman cries in the heaven, towards the east, I turned to that quarter, and I beheld, and it was seen by all my troop, a large star assailed by five small stars. The cries came from that part of the heavens where this singular combat was taking place, and they were borne to our ears by a marvellous wind that appeared to die away at the borders of the camp; as if, a messenger of deadly presages, God had charged it to carry it to us alone, and having fulfilled its mission, it had no need of proceeding any further. Before this star, shadows were passing backwards and forwards, having the semblance of armed men, and which kept continually increasing in density, until it finally disappeared, extinguishing two of its five enemies along with it. Then the three that remained assumed the form of a triangle, and might be seen till the break of day, shining in that symbolical figure. We were marching on, still wholly occupied with this singular prodigy, and vainly endeavouring to account for it, when, on passing a sort of ravine, excavated between the mountain and the walls, we heard a voice: but this time it was certainly the voice of a man, which came from the hill, passed over our heads, and was lost in the town. Immediately another voice answered it from the ramparts; and they conversed in this manner for some time, whilst, with eyes fixed on the hill, we endeavoured to distinguish through the obscurity who it was who thus spoke a strange language in the middle of our camp. At last, we perceived a shadow that appeared to glide like a cloud along the hill. We went towards it; and then a real genuine body passed at some steps from us. Our soldiers, on seeing it clothed in white, took it for a phantom, covered with a winding-sheet; but I myself recognised an Arabian horseman, enveloped in his bornous, and pursued him. All of you, gentlemen, know my horse Tadmor: he

is of that Arab race which only yields to the descendants of Al Borak. Well, in a few bounds, the horse of the unknown had left Tadmor as far behind him as Tadmor would have left your horses. I say, then, that as King Basaac alone possesses such horses, this horseman was one of his generals, to whom he had lent this precious steed; or rather, my lords, it was the exterminating angel—it was the Antichrist—it was Basaac himself!”

Sire Jacques sat down, and a deep silence followed; for he had spoken with such an expression of truth, that conviction had penetrated every heart. The youngest knights had still a smile on their lips; but the most experienced amongst them, such as the Constable, the Sire de Coucy, the Marshal Boucicaut, and Messire Jean de Vienne, showed by the contraction of their brows, that they thought, like Messire Jacques de Helly, that some great calamity menaced the army.

At that moment, the curtains of the tent were drawn aside, and a courier, covered with dust, cried out at the opening, “Quick, my lords! prepare yourselves; arm, that you may not be surprised; for here are eight or ten thousand Turks riding rapidly along.” Then he vanished, to carry the intelligence to the other chiefs of the army.

The knights had all risen at this news, and were regarding each other with astonishment, when the Count de Nevres, hastening to the opening of his tent, called out with a voice sufficiently powerful to be heard by every one—“To arms, my lords! to arms! the enemy is at hand!” And in the next instant, this cry was heard resounding through the whole camp.

The pages hastened to saddle the horses; the knights called for their squires; and all, heated as they were from their debauch, ran to their armour. As the young men would have found some difficulty in putting their feet in the stirrups, on account of their long upturned shoes, the Count de Nevres set the example of cutting off the curved end of his own with his sword. In a few minutes, these men of velvet were covered with iron. Every one leaped upon his war-horse, and ranged himself under his banner. The banner of Notre-Dame was unfolded, and given to the wind; and Messire Jean de Vienne, Admiral of France, received it from the hands of the Count de Nevres.

At this moment, a knight bearing a flag on his arms, which was of silver, with a black cross anchored, arrived

at full speed; and, stopping before the banner of Notre-Dame, around which the greatest part of the French barons were already ranged, he said in a loud voice:—

‘I, Henry d’Eslen Lemhalle, Marshal of the King of Hungary, am sent to you by his majesty, who warns and commands you not to give battle before you receive further intelligence; for he fears lest our scouts may have erred, and that the enemy’s army may be much more considerable than they have said. He has, therefore, sent out horsemen, who will penetrate further than the others did. Therefore, my lords, do what I have said: for it is the command of the king and his council.’

And with these words, he departed as rapidly as he had come.

Then the Count de Nevres asked the Lord de Coucy what course they ought to pursue?

‘The advice of the King of Hungary is good,’ replied the Sire Enguerraud, ‘and it appears to me that we had better follow it.’

But the Count d’En, much irritated that the opinion of the Sire de Coucy had been asked before his own, said,

‘The fact is, your excellence, that the King of Hungary wishes to have the honour and glory of the day. We have the advance guard, of which he has come to deprive us. Let those obey who choose. I will not be one of the number.’

And, drawing his constable’s sword from its scabbard, covered with fleurs-de-lis, ‘Forward, my banner!’ he exclaimed, to the knight who bore it: ‘in the name of God and St. George, forward! It is the cry of every good knight.’

When the Sire de Coucy perceived the course that matters were taking, he turned to Messire Jean de Vienne, who wore the banner of Notre-Dame, to which all the others were subject.

‘What are we now to do?’ said he to him, ‘for you see what is now going on.’

‘What are we to do?’ said the Sire de la Tremouille, repeating this question: ‘why, the old knights have nothing to do but remain in the rear, and allow the young ones to go forward!’

‘Messire de la Tremouille,’ replied the Lord de Coucy with great tranquillity, ‘we shall soon see, when the time comes, who will go forward, and who will remain

in the rear: only make an effort that the head of your horse may follow the tail of mine. But it was not to you that I addressed myself: it was to Messire Jean de Vienne; and I ask him a second time, what he thinks should be done?"

"Why, my dear Enguerrand," replied Messire Jean de Vienne, "where reason is dumb, rashness must reign. Yes, without the slightest doubt, we ought to wait for the King of Hungary, or, at all events, for our own three hundred men, whom we have sent out as a foraging party. But, since the Count d'Eu wishes to march us against the enemy, we must follow him, and fight as well as we can. Moreover, behold! should we desire to retreat, it would now be too late."

In fact, to the right and left of the knights, a cloud of dust was arising, in the midst of which the bright armour distinctly gleamed at intervals. It was the two wings of Bajazet's army, which, having passed the position held by the Christians, were drawing closer, in order to overwhelm them between them. Those who had any experience in war now perceived that the day was lost; but, far from attempting to retreat, Messire Jean de Vienne instantly cried out, "Forward!" and put his horse to the gallop. Immediately all the nobles, repeating this cry, followed the banner of Notre-Dame; and the strange spectacle was seen, of seven hundred knights attacking a hundred and eighty thousand men.

They rushed upon the advanced guard of the Turks, at a great speed, and with their lances in rest. This body of troops recoiled, unmasking a rank of sharp stakes, planted in a sloping position, against which the horses of the knights drove their poitrails. An entrenchment of this nature ought to have been carried by infantry, but this portion of the army was entirely under the command of the King of Hungary. Some knights, therefore, sprang from their horses, and, in spite of the arrows that flew thickly around them, began to level the palisade with their pikes. In a short time, a breach was made, so as to admit the passage of twenty men abreast. This opening was sufficiently wide for the attack, and the entire army of the crusaders rushed through it, without for an instant reflecting whether it were large enough for retreat. By this means they came upon the Turkish infantry, pene-

trated entirely through it, and then, wheeling around, re-turned upon it, and trampled it under the feet of their horses. They now heard on all sides, a vast noise of trumpets and cymbals: it was the two wings of the Turkish army that were approaching each other; whilst the body of cavalry, composed of eight thousand men, and which, as we have said, formed Bajazet's advanced guard, advanced against them in front. When they beheld this chosen band, all sparkling with gold, the Christians believed that the emperor was marching in its ranks; and, re-forming themselves in order of battle, they thundered upon them with the same violence that had characterised their attack upon the infantry. This troop did not offer a more effectual resistance to the French impetuosity than the first; and, notwithstanding its superiority of numbers, it dispersed, flying on all sides, like a flock of sheep in the midst of which a band of wolves had suddenly appeared.

The French, in pursuing them, came upon the real front of Bajazet's army, and then the resistance commenced, for there the emperor commanded. Nevertheless our knights, protected by their excellent armour, penetrated into the thick masses like a wedge of iron into the trunk of an oak; but, like the wedge, they soon found themselves caught and squeezed between the wings. Then every one clearly saw the error that had been committed, in not waiting for the King of Hungary and his sixty thousand men: for the Christian army was scarcely perceptible in the midst of this multitude of infidels, that appeared as if it had only to close in to crush between them this handful of men who had so rashly involved themselves.

It was then that the constable strove to repair by bravery the error of which he had been guilty. Surrounded on all sides, he faced them all: he had first broken his lance, then his constable's sword, then he had detached from his saddle-bow one of those enormous double-handed swords which, to us of the present day, appear as if they had been forged for a race of giants; and, flourishing it round his head in the fashion called *moulinet*, he felled everything that came within the reach of this terrible weapon. The Marshal Boucicaut, on his part, rushed into the thickest ranks of the enemy, and cut passages for himself like a mower in a meadow, troubling himself but

little whether they closed in upon him behind, pressing still forward, and making a horrible massacre on each side of his path. The Sire de Coucy had dashed into the midst of a body of the infidels armed with clubs, the blows from which fell upon him like those of a woodman on an oak; but these were deadened by his armour, whilst he, returning blow for blow, hewed frightful wounds in exchange for the bruises he received. The two Sires de la Tremouille combatted side by side—the son wading off the blows aimed at his father—the father paying no attention to any but what were aimed at his son. The horse of the latter was killed; the other covered him with his buckler, whilst he freed himself from the stirrups, then, turning round him like a lioness round its cub, he struck down every arm that was thrust forward to seize him; whilst the son, who had recovered his feet, striking the horses with the point of his sword, overthrew them with their riders, whom his father dispatched before they could rise. Messire Jacques de Helly traversed the whole army through a path of blood, and found himself on the other side of the wings. There he might have trusted his life to the swift Tadmor; he might fly, and place the Danube between himself and his enemies; but, when, on turning his head, he beheld his companions thinly scattered amongst the infidels, and towering above them, from their lofty saddles, like some ears of rye in the midst of a field of corn, he threw himself back into the battle, and used his sword in such a marvellous way, that he soon found himself near the Count de Nevres, whose horse had just been killed, and who was bravely performing his office of leader of the army, surrounded by a rampart of dead enemies. He saw the knight close to him, and instead of requiring his succour,

“Messire de Helly,” he exclaimed, “what has become of the banner of France? It is honourably rearing its head, I hope?”

“Yes, it is erect, and floating in the wind,” replied Jacques, “and your excellence shall see it yourself.”

Then leaping from Tadmor, he presented him to the count, who refused to take the horse; but the Sire de Helly said to him,

“Your excellence, you are our commander: if you die, the army is lost. In the name of the army, therefore, I charge you to mount my horse.”

The Count de Nevres yielded. Scarcely was he in the saddle before he saw Messire Jean de Vienne, who was on that day enacting more than any one man could have been deemed capable of performing. The Count de Nevres and the Sire de Helly hastened to his assistance, and found him supported by only ten men, his armour hacked to pieces, and his blood flowing from many fearful wounds. It was the fifth time that he had changed his horse. Five times he had been supposed to be slain, from seeing the banner disappear; five times he had been remounted by the aid of the knights who surrounded him; and each time loud shouts had greeted the rallying banner so often lowered, and so often raised again.

"Your excellence," said he, on perceiving the Count de Nevres, "our last day is come: we must die; but it is better to die as a martyr than to live as a recreant coward. May God preserve you! Forward, for St. Jean and Notre-Dame!"

And, at these words, he again rushed forward into the midst of the infidels, and fell a sixth time, never to rise again.

This was the battle lost, and thus did the French knights die. As for the Hungarians, who had fled without striking a blow, their pusillanimity did not save them. The Turks, being better mounted than they were, soon overtook them, and made a horrible carnage amongst them. Of the sixty thousand men whom he commanded, the king only saved a seventh part, and had the good fortune to gain the Venetian flotilla, with Philibert de Naillac, the grand master of Rhodes. This flotilla was commanded by Thomas Mounigo, who received them on board, and conveyed Philibert de Naillac to Rhodes, and Sigismond to Dalmatia.

The battle lasted three hours, and it required 180,000 men to conquer 700. When it was finished, Bajazet traversed the Christian camp; and choosing for himself the tent of the King of Hungary, in which was displayed all the gold and silver plate that had been used in the repast of him who had just lost it, he abandoned the others to his officers and soldiers. Then, causing himself to be disarmed, to refresh himself, for he had fought like the meanest of his soldiers, he sat at the opening of the tent, with his legs crossed upon a carpet, and ordered his generals and friends to repair thither, that he might con-

verse with them concerning the victory that he had just gained. They assembled at his command; and, as he was satisfied with the event, he laughed and jested with them; telling them, that in a short time, they would go and conquer Hungary; and after that, all the other countries and kingdoms of Christendom, as it was his intention to reign like his ancestor, Alexander of Macedon, who, for twelve years, held the world in subjection. Every one bowed before Bajazet, approving of his projects, and congratulating him on his present success. He then gave three orders. The first was, that all the prisoners who had been taken should be brought before him the next day; the second, that the dead should be examined, and that all those who appeared to be the most noble and powerful should be collected as a hecatomb, for he meant to go and sup before their bodies; the third, that strict inquiry should be made, whether the King of Hungary had escaped, was dead, or was a prisoner.

When Bajazet had refreshed himself, he mounted another horse, for he was told that the slaughter had been most severe amongst his own troops, and he wished to visit the field. Moreover, he could not believe what they told him respecting the carnage that had been produced by such a handful of men. But, on reaching the scene of conflict, he found that they had even concealed from him the full extent of his loss, and that, for every Christian that lay dead, at least thirty infidels had been slain. This spectacle greatly enraged him, and he said haughtily,

“There has been a cruel slaughter of our people, and these Christians have defended themselves like lions; but, be assured that I will make the survivors pay for the dead. Come, let us go forward.”

And he passed on: and, the further he went, the more he marvelled at the exploits of his enemies. Around the spot where Messire de la Tremouille and his son had fallen, the one over the other, the dead were piled in heaps. He followed the route that had been taken by Jean de Vienne, and found it strewed right and left with the slain. At last he reached the spot where the brave knight had fallen, and discovered him laid on the banner of Notre-Dame, which he held so firmly clasped in his stiffened hands, that it was found necessary to cut them off with an axe, to tear it from him.

After Bajazet had employed two hours in this inspection, he retired to his tent, and passed the night in cursing these infidels, a victory over whom was more costly than a defeat from others. In the morning, when the curtains of his tent were drawn aside, he found the chiefs of his army before it, who were waiting to know what was to be done with the prisoners; for the report was spread abroad that no mercy was to be shown toward them, and that every one was to have his head cut off. But Bajazet, having reflected on the ransom that he might extract from such noble personages, had sent for his interpreters, and demanded which were the most wealthy and powerful of those who had survived the battle. They replied that six of them had declared their names, as being the most distinguished of the nobility: that they were, first, John of Burgundy, the Count de Nevres, and the leader of all the others; secondly, Philip of Artois, Count d'Eu; thirdly, the Sire Enguerrand de Coucy; fourthly, the Count de la Marche; fifthly, Messire Henri de Bar; and sixthly, Messire Guy de la Tremouille.

Bajazet wished to see them, and they were brought before him. Then they were conjured by their faith and law to declare who they were, and they made oath that the names they had given were really their own. At this answer, Bajazet made a sign to the Count de Nevres to advance, and said to him through his interpreter—"If you are really the person you profess to be, that is to say, John of Burgundy, your life shall be spared; not on account of your name and your ransom, but because a necromancer has foretold me that you alone shall spill more Christian blood than all the Turks together."

"Basaac," answered the Count de Nevres, "No favour for me, I beseech you; for it is my duty to share the lot of all those whom I have led against you. If they are subject to ransom, I will redeem my life; if they are condemned to death, I will die with them."

"My pleasure, and not yours, will be followed," replied the emperor; and he ordered him to be taken back to his companions, with whom they led him to the tent which served them as a prison.

Now it happened that, whilst the emperor was very anxious to learn whether these nobles were really the persons whose names they had assumed, a knight was brought before him who had served in the army of his

brother Amurat, and who spoke the Turkish language. It was the Sire de Helly. Bajazet remembered that he had formerly seen him, and asked him if he knew the knights who were in the prisoners' tent. The Sire de Helly replied that if they were of the slightest note in the chivalry of France, he could tell the sultan who they were. Bajazet therefore caused him to be conducted to their presence, after they had been forbidden to exchange a single word, for fear of connivance and trickery. The Sieur de Helly had only to see them at once to recognise them. He therefore returned to Bajazet, who asked him what were the names of those he had seen; to which the knight replied, that the captives were his excellence the Count de Nevres, Messire Philippe d'Artois, Messire Enguerrand de Coucy, the Count de la Marche, Messire Henri de Bar, and Messire Guy de la Tremouille; that all were the most wealthy and powerful in the French noblesse, and some even were the kinsmen of the king.

"It is well," replied the emperor; "the lives of these men shall be spared. Let them be conducted to one side of my tent, and the rest of the captives to the other."

Bajazet's order was immediately executed: the six knights were placed on the emperor's right hand. In the next moment, they saw advancing, stripped to their waists, three hundred of their companions, prisoners like themselves; but these were doomed to death. They were led, one after the other, before Bajazet, who regarded them with a listless curiosity, and then made a sign that they should be taken away. Those whom he thus dismissed next passed between two ranks of the infidel soldiers, who were waiting for them with their naked swords, and, in an instant, were cut in pieces, before the eyes of the Count de Nevres and his six companions.

Amongst these condemned men was the Marshal Boucicaut. Like the others he was led before Bajazet, who was just going to dismiss him to death with his companions, when John of Burgundy perceived him. Leaving his companions, and approaching the emperor, he put his knee to the ground, praying and supplicating that Boucicaut might be spared, saying that he was connected with the King of France, and indicating by his gestures that he could pay a princely ransom. Bajazet bowed in token of acquiescence; Boucicaut and John of Burgundy threw themselves in each other's arms; whilst Bajazet

made a sign that it was necessary for the massacre to proceed: it lasted three hours.

When the last Christian had fallen, and when all were dead, without having uttered any other cry than these words—"Lord Jesus Christ, have pity on us!"—Bajazet intimated that he wished to send intelligence of his victory to the King of France; and, causing the Sire de Helly and two other nobles, whom he had reserved for that purpose, to be led before the Count de Nevres, he asked him which of these three knights he would choose to go and treat of his own ransom and that of his companions. The Count de Nevres pointed to the Sire de Helly, and the other two knights were instantaneously put to death.

John of Burgundy and the five nobles immediately prepared letters to be conveyed by Messire Jaques de Helly—the Count de Nevres, for the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy; the Sire de Coucy for his wife; and the others for their relations and treasurers. When these were ready, Bajazet himself traced the route his messenger was to take, ordered him to pass through Milan, to give information of his victory to the duke of that city, and made him swear, by the faith of a knight, to return and deliver himself up into his hands, after having delivered his message. On the same evening, Messire Jacques de Helly commenced his journey.

Let us precede him into France, and cast a glance upon the positions assumed by the different parties since we left it.

No one knew the real cause of the king's madness. Odette had constantly avoided all display. Her influence over the king had only been manifested by the good that she had accomplished, and she had taken as much care to withdraw herself from all observation as other favourites generally do to reflect the rays of the sun. She therefore disappeared without observation; and no one but Charles himself was aware that one of the purest stars of his regal horizon had fallen to the ground.

As for the Duke of Orleans, although his amour with the queen still continued, it no longer, as during the king's first madness, occupied such a place in his breast as to extinguish all ambitious desires. Whether it was from political motives, or some recollection of the heart, he had taken advantage of the king's interval of reason

to obtain the liberation of Messire Jean Lemercier, and of the Lord de la Riviere; the Sire de Montaignu had also been recalled to the management of the king's finances, through his repeated importunities. The Duke of Bourbon, to whom he owed his elevation incessantly exalted his good qualities, and palliated his defects. The Duke de Berri, who could always be gained over by money, had received considerable sums from his nephews, and had, in exchange, promised him his support, should any opportunity arise for its exercise; and the council, won by his affable manners, seduced by his talent, and carried away by his eloquence, had allowed him to form a party even in its own bosom, to counterbalance the power of the Duke of Burgundy.

The misunderstanding between the princes became, therefore, gradually more violent, and each employed all his credit to ruin that of his adversary. Charles, feeble in body and mind, had no longer even the wish to interpose his authority to quell these disturbances. Every one, therefore, was anticipating some fatal discord, when a frightful report began to circulate in France, that concentrated the minds of all upon one common sorrow.

The three hundred knights and squires who, as we have said, had set out on a foraging expedition just before the battle commenced, had gained the open country at full speed: there dispersing, and each taking what he considered the shortest course, they at last reached Wallachia. But here began a series of misfortunes and fatigues under which many sank. The Wallachians, already aware of the result of the battle, and believing that they had nothing to fear from the unhappy fugitives, allowed them to enter their towns, in the hope of there receiving a frank and generous hospitality. On the day after their arrival, however, they were deprived of their arms and their horses, and happy were those whom they dismissed with provisions and money for their journey. Even to obtain these, it was necessary that they should be known as nobles of consequence; those whom they recognized as varlets, and squires of low degree, being turned out quite naked, and beaten without mercy. They had, therefore, great difficulty in traversing Wallachia and Hungary; begging their food, obtaining, by means of prayer, a lodging in the stables, and covered

only by shreds of clothes which the poor had shared with them. In this plight they reached Vienna, where the charitable received them more kindly, and gave them clothes and money to continue their journey. They soon entered Bohemia, and there found the slight assistance they so much needed; and it was very fortunate for them; for if the Germans had been as pitiless as the Wallachians and Hungarians, all these unhappy men would have died of hunger and wretchedness by the sides of the roads. They therefore marched on towards France, recounting everywhere these melancholy tidings. At last they passed the frontier, and some had even reached Paris.

There, however, no one was willing to believe them; for the tales they told were too melancholy to gain immediate credit. There were some who thought that these persons were mere adventurers, who were endeavouring to excite the public pity; and these loudly declared, in the public places, that this rabble, that went about disseminating such falsehoods, ought to be hanged or drowned. But, in spite of these threats, every day fresh fugitives arrived, and gave more consistency to the first recitals; until at last, this news, from being noised about amongst the people, reached the ears of the great men. The king, still under the influence of his malady, heard it talked of in his Hotel de St. Paul; and thus were fresh clouds spread over his horizon, already sufficiently gloomy. Orders were therefore issued to suppress these reports, at least until some certain intelligence was received: and instructions were given that the first knight of any consideration who should arrive from the crusade should be conducted to the king's presence.

During the night of the Nativity, and whilst the queen and the Duke of Orleans, the Dukes of Bourbon, Berry, and Burgundy, the Count de St. Paul, and a great assemblage of lords and ladies, surrounded the king in his palace, and feasted with him on this solemnity of Christmas, a nobleman who had come direct from Nicopolis was announced, bringing certain intelligence from the Count de Nevres and the army. At the same moment, the knight, booted as he was, and covered with dust, was introduced to this splendid assembly: it was Messire Jacques de Helly, who delivered to the king and to the Duke of Burgundy the letters with which he was

charged, and related the circumstances we have already detailed.

### CHAPTER XIII.

THE consternation excited in this noble assembly by such a communication may well be imagined. There was not a single nobleman who had not some one who was dear to him amongst the dead or prisoners. One had lost a brother, another a son, another a husband: the King of France had lost his splendid and wealthy chivalry.

Nevertheless, whilst they mourned for the dead, they thought about the delivery of the captives. They wished to send a present to Bajazet, that might dispose him favourably towards the negotiations that they were going to enter into with him, and they made inquiries from all quarters as to what would be most agreeable to him. It was known that he took great pleasure in hawking; and, that, every year, his good friend, the Lord Galeas, of Milan, sent him some white falcons. Twelve beautiful trained gerfalcons were therefore purchased at a great price, for this species is very rare and valuable. The Sire de Helly, who had remarked Bajazet's taste for tapestry, also advised them to add to this present some beautiful pictured tapestry, of the description that could only be procured at Arras. The Duke of Burgundy, therefore, went himself to that city, and purchased a magnificent set of tapestry, representing the entire history of Alexander the Great of Macedon, from whom Bajazet pretended that he was descended. Some ornaments of gold manufactured by the best workmen, were also added; some cloth of Rheims, some Brussels scarlet, twelve large greyhounds, and ten beautiful horses, caparisoned with velvet trappings, resplendent with gold and ivory.

When the Sire de Helly had finished his mission, he went to take leave of the king and the Duke of Burgundy, in order that he might return to redeem his pledge, and faithfully deliver himself up to Bajazet. Duke Philip, supposing that the emperor would receive them with greater pleasure from the hands of him whom he had chosen for his messenger, requested De Helly to

take charge of the presents he was sending to Bajazet ; but, when this brave knight remarked that he was ignorant of the fate reserved for him by his conqueror, and that it was possible he might never return to France, the duke united with him, in order to convey the intelligence of the approaching embassy, the Sire de Vergy, governor of the country of Burgundy ; the Sire de Chateaumorand, who had formerly so fortunately concluded the truce with England ; and the Sire de Leuringhen, governor of the county of Flanders. The Lady of Coucy, on her part, sent her husband and two brothers a knight of Cambresis, named Robert Desne, and gave orders for a suite of five varlets and squires to accompany him. This double embassy was to pass through Milan, and, at the request of Madame Valentine, was to take letters from Duke Galeus for the Emperor Bajazet. It was in recompense for this service that the King of France allowed that potentate to place the fleur-de-lis in his escutcheons.

When the messengers had departed, the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy occupied themselves in collecting the money necessary for the redemption of the captives. They accordingly left Paris, and retired to Dijon, to watch over the taxes which were to be levied on their estates. The Duke of Orleans now remained alone in office ; and taking advantage of the opportunity, he succeeded in consolidating his power with so much skill and rapidity, that the king bestowed on him the entire and absolute government of the kingdom, with the right of administering in every particular when he should himself be incapable of acting.

About this time, also, a revolution broke out in England, which was destined to have a vast influence on the fortunes of France.

The Earl of Derby, whom we have seen, at the commencement of this history, coming to joust against the Duke of Orleans at the entertainments given upon Madame Isabel's entrance, was, as we have said, the son of the Duke of Lancaster, and had a powerful party in England. His father had just died ; and King Richard, fearing that the rich inheritance that the Earl of Derby would receive would procure him a fresh accession of followers, had, in contravention of his right, refused to deliver it up to him. The Earl of Derby was, at this time, in France ; no longer, as at first, a messenger of the

crown, but as a state exile—a private quarrel with the Earl of Nottingham having furnished the King with a pretext for removing from England him whom he began to regard as his rival.

This act of injustice towards the Earl of Derby produced an effect contrary to what King Richard had expected. All the nobility and ecclesiastical dignitaries were ranged on the side of the exile. The people, overwhelmed by imposts, and crushed by the depredations of the military, who were without pay, and who lived by pillaging the labourers and robbing the merchants, murmured greatly at these oppressions, to which they were not accustomed, and appeared only to watch for an opportunity of making common cause with the nobles against the king. The Earl of Derby, with his eyes fixed on England, only waited till affairs came to a crisis. They quickly reached it; and, whilst Richard was absent on an expedition to Ireland, the Earl of Derby received advice, that if his heart was sufficiently firm to stake his head against a crown, it was time for him to pass the Straits. The earl did not hesitate an instant: taking leave of the Duke of Brittany, his cousin, to whom he had retired, he embarked at Havre; and, after a passage of two days and two nights, landed at Ravenspur, in Yorkshire, between Hull and Bridlington.

His march to London was an uninterrupted triumph, so much was the old king hated. The citizens of the towns threw open their gates, and presented the keys on their knees; the minstrels followed him, celebrating his praises; and the women strewed flowers in his path. When Richard heard this, he returned with an army against the capital; but, abandoned by his soldiers, without having been able to persuade them to fight, he was compelled to surrender himself a prisoner. He was conducted to the Tower of London; his trial was commenced; the parliament deposed him; and the Earl of Derby, proclaimed king under the name of Henry the IV., received the sceptre and the crown from the hands of him whom he had dethroned.

The news was brought to France by the Lady de Coucy, who had been in England with the youthful Madame Isabel. That poor child, who had only known the miseries of love, returned to France the widow of a husband who was still living, but already condemned.

Every one plainly foresaw that such an insult to the crown of France could not remain unpunished; and yet, at the same time, the impossibility of making war was fully understood, so much was the kingdom drained of men and money. The Duke of Orleans was so much enraged at this insult, and so much chagrined at this impotence, that he sent a defiance to the King of England, by Orleans, his herald, and Champagne, his king-at-arms, proposing a deadly combat with him, in whatever place he should wish to appoint, and with whatever weapons he should choose. Henry IV. refused the combat.

In the meantime, the Duke of Orleans governed, says Juvenal, the severe historian of the period, like a man who had himself need of a governor. To supply his own extravagances, and that of the queen, the taxes succeeded each other with such rapidity, that a new one was proclaimed before the old one had been paid. At last, when the people were exhausted, the duke decreed a tax upon the clergy. It is true, that, to disguise the extortion, it was exacted under the title of a loan. This produced great disputes amongst the prelates: for some resisted the tax, and allowed the fourth part of their produce to be taken by force from their barns and granaries; whilst others, on the contrary, pious flatterers of the Duke of Orleans, excommunicated all those who did not obey the edict. The regent, far from being enlightened by such a scandal, responded to the schism by the promulgation of a general tax, alike affecting the nobility, the clergy and the people. The act declared that the proceeding had been resolved upon in the presence and with the concurrence of the Dukes of Burgundy, Bourbon, and Berri. The two last, however, declared that they had nothing to do with this impost; and the Duke of Burgundy, having arranged the ransom of his son, and having received intelligence that the Count de Nevres was on his way home, determined to return to Paris, himself to give the lie to his nephew.

As soon as the Duke of Orleans knew that he was coming, he foresaw that he could not maintain himself in the position that he had assumed. He therefore hastened to declare publicly that the king, by the persuasion of himself and Madame Isabel, had withdrawn the last tax, and that, consequently, it would not be levied.

This did not arrest the Duke of Burgundy ; on the contrary, he saw, in this retreating step, a confession of his adversary's weakness, of which he resolved to take advantage. Therefore, scarcely had he reached Paris, before he had a conference with the Dukes of Bourbon and Berri, whose names had been compromised at the same time with his own ; and, making respectful remonstrance to the king, they obtained leave to assemble the council, to determine into the hands of which of the two princes the power should fall ; stipulating, moreover, in order that entire liberty might be left for the discussion, that they would not be present at the meeting, provided his nephew would also agree not to attend it. The Duke of Orleans acceded to this proposition, although his presumption was strong that the decision would be unfavourable to him ; for although he was allowed to possess all the qualifications of a good and gentle knight, it was generally denied that he had any of the virtues of a statesman. He was, consequently, more angry than surprised when he was informed that the party of the Duke of Burgundy had carried the point against him, and that he had obtained the government of affairs in his place.

The two rivals, therefore, found themselves opposed to each other with one more motive of hatred : and yet they had so many old ones at the bottom of their hearts, that they could not themselves have believed that any addition could be made to them. The Duke of Orleans appeared to console himself for this check, by paying an open and assiduous court to Madame the Countess de Nevres, the duke's daughter-in-law. This was his manner of revenging himself: we shall soon learn what was that of the Count de Nevres.

Everything had been arranged with Bajazet, as we have said, for the ransom of the five captives — for they were now only five: the Sire de Coucy having died in captivity, to the great grief of his companions. The emperor had liberated Messire Jacques de Helly, and given him great praise for his courage and loyalty. The knights, therefore, attended an audience of leave which had been accorded them by the emperor. At this interview the Count de Nevres undertook, in his own name and on behalf of his friends, to thank him for the courtesy with which they had been treated. Bajazet requested

him to draw near, and, as he prepared to put his knee to the ground, he took his hand, and said to him in the Turkish language, which his interpreters repeated in Latin:

“John, I know that you are a great nobleman in your own country, and son of a noble father, whose ancestors were of royal blood. You are young, and, on your return to your own country, may possibly be blamed and derided for what has befallen you in your first chivalrous expedition; and, in the hope of retrieving your honour, you may assemble a large body of troops to make as you term it, another crusade. Did I fear you, I should make you and your companions swear, by your faith and your honour, never again to bear arms against me. But so far from that, when once you have reached your western country, do what you think proper: assemble the largest army you can collect; lead it against me, and you will always find me armed and ready for battle. And I say this, not only to you, but for all to whom you may choose to repeat it; for I am born for warlike enterprises and the conquest of cities.”

After these words, which were indelibly impressed upon the memories of all who heard them, the prisoners were delivered into the hands of the lords of Metelin and Abydos, who had undertaken the negociation, and brought it to a favourable conclusion. The emperor's people conducted them to the galleys, and did not leave them until they weighed anchor. The fleet set sail for Metelin, where they arrived without accident.

The knights were there impatiently expected, and were received with great attention by the lady of Metelin, who had been lady of honour to the empress at Constantinople, and who at that time had heard extraordinary accounts of France. She was therefore much gratified at receiving some of its noblest sons. She caused the most magnificent apartments in the palace to be prepared for them; and, in those apartments, they found, to replace their worn and tarnished vestments, dresses of Grecian form, made of the richest stuffs of Asia. They had just finished dressing, when they heard of the arrival of Messire Jacques de Braquemont, the marshal of Rhodes, who came to conduct the knights to that isle, where they were expected by the grand prior with great impatience. They therefore took leave of the lord and lady of Metelin, who had so courteously received them, and put to sea. After

passage of a few days, they reached the harbour, where they were honourably received by the principal noblemen of Rhodes, all excellent judges in matters of religion and chivalry, who wore a white cross on their dresses in memory of the Passion, and who were constantly engaged in warfare against the infidels.

The grand master, and after him the most noble of the knights, shared the honour of entertaining the Count de Nevres and his companions. They even offered them money, of which they stood greatly in need; and John of Burgundy accepted thirty thousand francs for himself and his companions, making himself personally responsible to the grand prior for that sum, although more than one-third of it was given to his companions.

Whilst they were in the town of St. John, awaiting the galleys which were to convey them to Venice, Messire Guy de la Tremouille, lord of Sully, fell ill, and died. It appeared as if death was unwilling to permit the escape of these men, who had seen themselves so near the tomb, that their descent into it would have been a less difficult task than to avoid it. The Lord of Coucy had already succumbed; and here again the Sire de la Tremouille had closed his eyes, never again to open them. The knights thought that some malediction rested upon them, and that not one of their number was doomed to revisit his native soil. They sorrowfully paid the last funeral rites to the friend whose death reduced their number to four; and, having laid him in the church of St. John at Rhodes, they embarked in the Venetian vessels, which had entered the port whilst they were performing their last duty.

On their departure, the pilot was commanded to touch at each separate island, in order to lessen the fatigue, and also that the count might visit the countries between Rhodes and Venice. In this manner the travellers landed successively at Modon, Corfu, Leucadia, and Cephalonia: at the latter place they remained some days, for the women of that island appeared to them so beautiful, that they took them for nymphs or fairies; and the Count de Nevres and his companions here spent, in presents to these enchantresses, the greater part of the gold that had been lent them doubtless for a different purpose, by the good prior of the Rhodian knights.

They tore themselves from this paradise with great difficulty; but they were absolutely obliged to determine

on quitting it, for they had many countries to visit before reaching Venice. They therefore again embarked, and made their way, sometimes by sailing, sometimes by the oar, until they came to Ragusa, Zara, and Parenzo; where they embarked in lighter vessels in order to reach Venice, the sea by which it is surrounded not being sufficiently deep to admit the larger galleys.

On arriving at Venice, the Count de Nevres found a part of his people whom the Duke and Duchess of Burgundy had sent forward to meet him. Soon afterwards, the Sires de Haugier and de Helly arrived, with the remainder of his establishment, and bringing with them covered waggons, loaded with gold and silver plate, magnificent dresses, and linen of every description. John of Burgundy therefore set out with that state which suited a nobleman of his rank, and entered France more as a conqueror than as one who had been vanquished.

Some time after his return, Philip the Bold died at his chateau of Halle, at the age of seventy-three, and, by this death, the regency reverted to the Duke of Orleans.

But the Count de Nevres became Duke of Burgundy.

Eleven months afterwards, the duchess died: and John Duke of Burgundy became Count of Flanders and Artois, Lord of Salins, Palatine of Malines, of Alost, and of Talmant; that is to say, one of the most powerful princes of Christendom.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

THIS event was destined speedily to revive, with increased bitterness, the dissensions that had long divided the two families. Hitherto, the respect that the age of Duke Philip commanded, and the prudence resulting from this age itself, had cast over these princely discords a politic varnish which was soon to be effaced. Private hatred—the hatred arising from personal ambition—the hatred bred of love and wounded selfishness—in fine, animated and deadly hatred, were about to rear up their unblushing fronts, and to seize each other by the body, like exasperated wrestlers. Every one perceived that the future was big with misfortune; that something ter-

rible was brooding; and that, when the storm broke, it would bring with it a deluge of blood.

As yet, however, neither of the princes had given any public indication of hatred. The Duke of Burgundy, detained in his states to receive the homage of his good citizens, and entirely occupied by these cares, only directed towards Paris an occasional glance, replete with threatened vengeance.

As for the Duke of Orleans, naturally careless as he was, he troubled himself but little about the proceedings of the Duke of Burgundy. He had again yielded to the attractions of Madame Isabel; and, in the moments of leisure that she left him, he amused himself with sagely disputing with the doctors and lawyers; and then he meditated on new methods of raising taxes. This was, in fact, almost the only manner in which he interfered with the government.

For this reason, the affairs of the realm became every day worse. The truce with England was but a nominal expression; and, in default of an open and general declaration of war, private enterprises, sanctioned by the two governments, incarnadined, sometimes a spot on English ground, sometimes a French province. A body of young gentlemen of Normandy, having at their head the Sires of Martel, of la Roche Guyon, and of Acqueville, without demanding leave, either of the king or the Duke of Orleans, embarked, to the number of two hundred and fifty, landed at the Isle of Portland, and pillaged it. But the inhabitants, having recovered from their first terror, and seeing the small number of the assailants, returned upon them, slew a part, and took the remainder prisoners.

The Bretons, on their part, but under the authority of the king's council, made another attempt, which was not more fortunate. It was conducted by the Sire Guillaume Duchâtel, and the lords of La Jaille and Chateaubriant. In this attack, Duchâtel was killed.

Then Tanneguy, his brother, at the head of four hundred gentlemen, landed near Dartmouth, and ravaged everything with fire and sword. Guillaume was avenged with a hecatomb and funeral pile.

But the war was soon about to burst forth, and to be prosecuted on a larger scale. A young English exile had come to demand an asylum, at the French court. He

was named Owen Glendower, descended from the ancient Princes of Wales, and was the son of Ivan of Wales, who, connected by fraternity of arms with the French knights, had perished in the service of King Charles. He demanded aid against Henry of Lancaster; and this claim upon the deep-seated hatred of France against England found too many echoes in the kingdom not to be heard. It was, therefore, determined that a powerful fleet should be equipped in the harbour of Brest, and that the command of an expedition, composed of eight thousand men, should be given to the young Count de la Marche, whom we have seen fighting at Nicopolis under John of Burgundy.

The English, seeing these preparations, resolved to destroy them before they were completed. They therefore landed near Guerrande, which they hoped to take by surprise. But Clisson was upon the watch; although he no longer wielded the constable's sword, he still retained his own, and his arm was not disabled. At the cry of alarm that he gave, Tanneuy Duchatel hastened up with five hundred lances; and having, by a blow of his battle-axe, slain the Earl of Beaumont, who commanded the enterprise, he compelled the English to re-embark, after having taken or destroyed half their number.

In the meantime, the fleet was ready to sail; the knights were assembled; they only waited for the leader of the expedition. And they vainly expected him in this manner, for eight months. The Count de la Marche had forgotten, in the midst of balls, of cards, and of dice, that he was to put on his battle-armor.

This abortive expedition was attended with great expense, and its only result was to furnish the Duke of Orleans with an excuse for levying a new tax throughout the whole realm.

But the Duke of Burgundy, who, they thought, was slumbering, now aroused himself, and ordered his subjects to refuse to pay it.

The Duke of Orleans, who had no means of enforcing it in the States of the Duke of Burgundy, revenged himself on him, by marrying Mademoiselle d'Harcourt, the king's cousin, to the Duke of Gueldres, the mortal enemy of the Duke of Burgundy. This blow was quickly returned; for, on the very day of her marriage, a herald entered the room where the marriage-feast was being

celebrated, and, in the presence of all the guests, defied the Duke of Gueldres, in the name of Count Antoine of Burgundy, who was heir to the Duchy of Limberg. The Duke of Gueldres arose, threw off his marriage-garment, gave it to the herald as mark of honour, and accepted the defiance.

War, therefore, was kindled in this quarter also.

The presages of heaven began to mingle with all these terrestrial signs. One day, when the queen was riding in her litter, and the duke on horseback, in the forest of St. Germain, a terrible storm broke forth. The queen opened her carriage, and admitted her lover; but, scarcely had he taken his place, when the horse from which he had just dismounted was struck by the lightning and killed. At the same moment, the horses attached to the carriage took fright, and darting off towards the Seine, were about to precipitate themselves and the equipage into it, when the traces broke, as if by a miracle, and the horses rushed into the river, as if impelled by some demon.

Men of piety saw a warning of Providence in this accident: and, excited by them, the duke's confessor expostulated with him forcibly and sincerely, condemning the dissolute and irreligious life that he was leading. The duke acknowledged that he was a great sinner, promised to amend, and, as a proof of his repentance, caused it to be proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, that he was going to pay his debts; for which purpose he fixed a day upon which his creditors were to present themselves at his palace.

According to the Monk of St. Denis, eight hundred presented themselves on the day appointed, prepared with their accounts. But seven days had intervened since the accident at St. Germain; the sky was now of an azure blue, and its last cloud had carried away with it the duke's remorse: consequently, his strong-box was hermetically closed. The creditors uttered loud clamours, declaring that they would not depart without payment. But they were informed that assemblages of the people were prohibited, and that, unless they promptly retired, the police would be called, who would quickly disperse them.

In the meantime, the same persons who had remonstrated with the duke took advantage of an interval of

reason to do the same with the king. They convinced him that the gold of individuals, as well as of the state, was melting away in the hands of the duke and the queen, as in a crucible. They told him to listen; and he heard the cries of the people. They asked him to open his eyes; and he saw that the public misery had penetrated even into the palace. He immediately made inquiries, and learnt unheard-of things. He sent for the governess of his children; and she confessed that the young princes often wanted the necessaries of life, and that she had frequently been unable to procure wherewithal to feed and clothe them. He sent for the Duke of Aquitaine, and the child came to him in a state of nudity, and complained of hunger. Then the king heaved a deep sigh, looked for some money to give the governess, and, finding none, he ordered her to sell a gold cup from which he had just drank.

With this gleam of reason, a momentary energy also returned to the poor lunatic. Having commanded a general council to be assembled, in order to consult on the most prompt method of remedying the evils of the state, without apprising any one, he wrote to the Duke of Burgundy, to invite him to assist at this deliberation. This was exactly what the duke had been waiting for; and on the following day he left Arras with eight hundred men, and marched towards Paris.

On reaching Louvres, he received letters, announcing that the Duke of Orleans and the queen, hearing of his approach, had left Paris to go to Melun, and from thence to Chartres, leaving orders for the prince of Louis of Bavaria to bring the Duke of Aquitaine, dauphin of Vienna, to that city. Notwithstanding the importance of this intelligence, the duke was so fatigued that he stopped to sleep a few hours. The next morning, at daybreak, he set off for Paris; but he arrived too late—the dauphin had already left it, with his attendants.

Then the Duke of Burgundy, without unsaddling or baiting, put his horse to the gallop, and commanded his men to follow. He traversed the whole length of Paris in this manner, followed the road to Fontainebleau, and overtook the dauphin between Villejuif and Corbeil. This young prince was accompanied by his uncle, Louis of Bavaria, the Marquis de Pont, the Count de Dammarin, Montaignu, the grand master of the household, and

many other noblemen. In his carriage, and by his side, were seated his sister Jane, and the Lady de Preaux, the wife of his excellence of Bourbon. The Duke of Burgundy went up to the carriage, bowed to the dauphin, and entreated him to return to Paris, telling him that he wished to converse with him respecting certain things which nearly concerned him. Prince Louis, seeing that the Duke of Aquitaine wished to return with John of Burgundy, came forward, and said,

“Sire duke, permit his excellence of Aquitaine my nephew, to go to the queen his mother, and to his excellence of Orleans his uncle; for he is going there with the consent of the king his father.”

Having thus spoken, Duke Louis forbade any one to turn his horse's head, and commanded the coachman to continue his journey. He was, therefore, about to proceed, when the Duke of Burgundy himself seized the reins of the horses, turned their heads towards Paris, and, drawing his sword,

“Go on,” he said to the coachman, “and that quickly, too, on peril of your life.”

The coachman, trembling, put his horses to the gallop; the duke's troops surrounded the equipage; and, whilst the Duke of Aquitaine returned to the capital, accompanied by his uncle, Louis of Bavaria, who did not wish to leave him, the Duke de Bar, the Count de Dammartin, and the Marquis de Pont, proceeded to Corbeil, and related what had taken place to the Duke of Orleans and the queen.

This action afforded a specimen of the Duke of Burgundy's boldness. Therefore, the duke and the queen, who had just placed themselves at table, countermanded their dinner, and mounting their carriage, departed in great haste for Melun. As for the Duke of Burgundy, at the gates of Paris he found the King of Navarre, the Duke de Berri, the Duke of Bourbon, the Count de la Marche, with many other noblemen, and a crowd of citizens who had come to meet him, much commending this enterprise, and quite delighted at again seeing the young duke their dauphin. The Duke of Burgundy, who was at the door of the carriage, with his two brothers, then ordered them to proceed at a slow pace, so great was the multitude; and in this manner they arrived at the Chateau of the Louvre where the dauphin

was lodged. The Duke of Burgundy remained there near him, that he might keep a good and secure guard over the young prince.

This vigilance was the more easy for the Duke of Burgundy, because, by his own, and his brother's command, men-at-arms had arrived from every quarter of their dominions. At the expiration of a few days, he found himself at the head of about six thousand combatants, all devoted to him, and commanded by the Count de Cleves, and the Bishop of Liege, who was called *Jean sans Pitie*.

The Duke of Orleans, on his part, had lost no time: he had sent messengers into all his duchies and counties, ordering his captains to levy as many men as possible, and to use the greatest diligence in leading them to him. He, therefore, quickly saw the Sire de Harpedanne advancing with the people of the Boulonnais; the Duke of Lorraine, with those of Chartres and Dreux; and, finally, the Count of Alencon, with the knights and commons of Orleans.

All these movements of troops were very burdensome to the poor people in the neighbourhood of Paris. The men-at-arms of both parties overran La Brie and the Isle of France, pillaging and plundering everything. Those of the Duke of Orleans had taken for their banner the knotted club which the prince had made his device at the tournament, with the same words—"I offer the challenge;" whilst the Burgundians, on their part, had rallied under the Duke John's device of the carpenter's plane, and had taken for their motto—"I accept it."

The two forces, therefore, found themselves in each other's presence; and, although there had been no open declaration of war between the two princes, every man of sense saw that a private quarrel between two soldiers was quite sufficient to produce an encounter between the two armies, and a civil war throughout France.

This state of affairs had continued for some time, when the Duke of Orleans determined to put an end to it by a decisive measure: he therefore issued commands for his army to march upon Paris. The Duke of Burgundy was at the Hotel d'Artois, when he was told that his enemy was advancing, with his whole force. He caused himself to be quickly armed, leaped upon his war horse, hastened to the Hotel d'Anjou, where he found the King of Sicily,

the Duke of Berri and Bourbon, and many other princes and lords of the king's council; and having called them to witness that it was not he who commenced hostilities, he put himself at the head of his troops, and went to draw them up in order of battle before Montfaucon.

When the citizens saw the duke and his soldiers passing full gallop through the streets of Paris, they were greatly excited. The Duke of Orleans had imprinted such a stamp of avarice on his government by his exactions, that a report was rife that he was returned to Paris to pillage it. By an universal impulse, the entire community of the city rose in a mass, and marched to the gates. The scholars came down armed from the university: they pulled down several houses of the faubourgs, and carried the stones into the middle of the road to form barricades. In short every precaution was taken to second the Duke of Burgundy, and to oppose the Duke of Orleans.

At this moment, the King of Sicily, and the Dukes of Berri and Bourbon, passed the labourers, on their way to the Duke of Orleans, to inform him of the feelings of the citizens of Paris towards him, and to entreat him to avoid all effusion of blood. The duke replied, that it was not him, but his cousin John, who had commenced hostilities, by carrying off the young Duke of Aquitaine from his mother; that, moreover, he was ready to listen to any reasonable proposition; and, as a proof of it he would command his troops to halt. In fact, he quartered his men at Corbeil, and round the bridge of Charenton; then conducted the queen to Vincennes, and retired himself to his chateau of Beauty.

Conferences were immediately held, which lasted eight days; at the expiration of which, they began to come to some kind of an agreement. The two dukes undertook mutually to dismiss their troops, and to refer their demands to the king's council. An oath was taken on the gospel by each of them, and the dismissal of their troops betokened the commencement of the execution of the treaty.

As soon as Paris was freed from the troops of both parties, the queen determined to make her entrance into it. This proof of confidence in her subjects, which Madame Isabel gave by thus putting herself into their hands, was a source of great delight to the capital.

The whole population joyfully flocked to meet her. The queen was in the first suspended chariot that had ever been constructed, and which had been presented to her by the Duke of Orleans. The ladies followed in litters; the two reconciled dukes came after them on horseback, holding each other by the hand, and each bearing his adversary's device.

After having conducted Madame Isabel to the king's hotel, both of them went to Notre-Dame, communicated with the same host divided into two parts, embraced at the foot of the altar; and, for the greater proof of reconciliation and confidence, the Duke of Burgundy demanded hospitality for that night of the Duke of Orleans. The Duke of Orleans then offered him the half of his own bed: John of Burgundy accepted it. The people, always the dupes of appearances, followed them back even to the Duke of Orleans's new hotel, behind St. Paul, crying, "Christmas."

These two men, who, a week before, had marched against each other under antagonistic banners, and clothed in their armour of battle, returned to the hotel, leaning on each other's arms, like two friends who had met after a long absence.

They there found the Dukes of Berri and Bourbon, who could neither believe their eyes nor their ears. The Duke of Burgundy again affirmed the sincerity of his reconciliation; and the Duke of Orleans told them that no day had ever appeared to him so brilliant as that which was just about to close.

The two friends, being left alone, continued to walk about, conversing. Spiced wine was brought to them, which they drank, exchanging cups. The Duke of Burgundy more especially yielding himself up completely to the expansion of the heart. He highly praised the arrangement of the bedchamber, attentively examined its tapestries and curtains, and, pointing with his finger to a little key which opened a secret door, he laughingly inquired if it were not the entrance to Madame Valentine's apartments.

▶ The Duke of Orleans passed hastily between John of Burgundy and the tapestry, and, putting his hand to the key, "Not exactly, my fair cousin," said he to him; "on the contrary, she is expressly forbidden to enter there.

That door leads to an oratory, where I pay my secret devotions."

Then, still laughing, and as if inadvertently, he drew the key from the lock, played with it in his hand for some time, as if he did not know what he held; and at last put it into one of the pockets of his doublet, with an air of carelessness that was perfectly natural.

"Shall we go to bed, my cousin?" said he.

John of Burgundy only replied by removing the golden band that sustained his poignard and purse, and by placing these things on a chair. The Duke of Orleans, on his part, began to undress; and, as he was sooner ready than his cousin, he got into bed first, leaving the outer side, that is, the place of honour, for the Duke of Burgundy, who was not long before he took it.

The two princes conversed yet some time on love and war. At last, however, the Duke of Burgundy appeared to yield to the demands of sleep; the Duke of Orleans left off talking, looked yet some moments at his cousin, who had so quickly fallen asleep, with an expression of great kindness; then, making the sign of the cross, he murmured some prayers, and closed his eyes.

After an hour of perfect quietude, those of the Duke of Burgundy again opened, and he softly turned his head towards his cousin: he was sleeping as if all the angels of heaven were watching over him.

When he was quite sure that his sleep was genuine, he slowly raised himself on his elbow, thrust out one leg, then the other, felt for the floor with the point of his foot, and, having reached it, gently slipped the rest of his body out of bed; he then went towards the chair on which the Duke of Orleans had laid his dress, and drawing from his doublet the little key which his cousin had there secreted, he took the lamp from the table on which the valet had placed it, and going softly towards the secret door, holding his breath, he carefully insinuated the key into the lock; the door opened, and the duke entered the mysterious closet.

A minute after, he came out again, pale, and with contracted brow; he paused for some time, as if to reflect on what he should do, and then stretched his hand to seize the dagger which was laid on the chair: but, changing his purpose, he placed the lamp on the table. At the

noise that he made by this last movement, the Duke of Orleans awoke.

"Do you want anything, my fair cousin?" said he to John of Burgundy.

"Nothing, your excellence," he replied: "but this lamp prevented me from sleeping, and I have risen to extinguish it."

And as he thus spoke, he put it out; and going towards the bed, he again laid down.

## CHAPTER XV.

SOME months had elapsed since this night of reconciliation, when, on the evening of the 23d of November, 1407, two men on horseback stopped in the Rue Barbette, opposite the house of the image of Notre-Dame: they looked around them, that they might be quite certain where they were: and then one of them said to the other—"It is here."

Having dismounted from their horses, they led them into an obscure spot produced by a shed, fastened their bridles to the posts that supported it, and walked silently under its roof. A minute after, two more men arrived, appeared to look about in the same manner, dismounting from their horses like the first, seeing the steel armour glancing in the shade, went and joined those who bore it. Ten minutes had not elapsed, before the noise was heard of fresh comers; and at the expiration of half an hour, the little troop, that had been thus successively augmented, amounted to eighteen persons.

It had been completed about a quarter of an hour, when the gallop of a single horse was heard at the end of the street. At the moment that the horseman it bore was passing the house of the image, a voice issued from the shed, and said,

"Is it you, De Courtehouse?"

"It is," replied the horseman, pulling up his horse abruptly: "who calls me—friend or foe?"

"Friend," said he who appeared to be the leader of the troop, emerging on foot from the obscurity in which he was concealed, and approaching Sir Thomas de Cour-

tehouse. "Well then, are we ready?" And he laid his hand on the horse's neck.

"Ah! is it you, Raoullet d'Octouville?" replied the horseman: "very good. Are all your men assembled?"

"Yes, and we have been waiting for a good half hour."

"There has been a delay in the order. I believe that, at the moment of action, his courage failed him."

"How is that? Would he renounce his design?"

"No."

"And he does well: for I would take it up on my own account. I have not forgotten that the duke, whom may God curse, has deprived me, during his government, of the office of a chief manager of the finances, which the king had bestowed on me at the request of the late Duke Philip of Burgundy. I am a Norman, Sir Thomas; and I am revengeful. He may, therefore, calculate on two good strokes of the dagger, I promise you: the first, for the engagement I have made with the duke; the second, for the oath that I have made to myself."

"Keep yourself in this good disposition, my brave hunter, for the game is turned, and, in a quarter of an hour, I will bring it to you,"

"Go, then," said Raoullet, striking the loins of the horse with the palm of his hand; it set off at a gallop, and he himself returned to the shed.

Let us leave the horseman to continue his course, and ourselves enter the queen's little retreat.

It was a pretty mansion that she had bought of the Sire de Montaignu, and where she had retired when the king, in a paroxysm of madness, had cut her hands with his sword. From that time, she had never entered the Hotel de St. Paul except on solemn occasions, and had remained there only just time enough to keep up appearances: this also gave her more freedom in her amours with the duke.

The evening of this same day, therefore, the queen was, as usual, in this retreat, but confined to her bed, not having been well. The Duke of Orleans was seated at her pillow, and supper had just been served, which the queen's convalescence had made very gay; when Isabel, looking at her lover, said,—

"My fair duke, when I am entirely recovered, you

must give me a supper some evening in your hotel, as I have just given you one in mine; and, after it, I will demand a favour of you."

"Say that you will give me an order, my noble Isabel," replied the duke; "and add, that I must execute it on my knees."

"That is not so certain, Orleans," continued the queen, looking at him with a doubtful air; "and I greatly fear, that when you know the object of my request, you will refuse it me directly."

"You cannot ask any thing of me that is dearer to me than my life, and you know very well that my life is at your disposal."

"At mine! and at that of France; each has a right to claim its part: it is what the ladies of my court do not fail to do."

The Duke of Orleans smiled. "A little jealousy!" said he.

"Oh, no! Mere curiosity—nothing more. Now, as I am mighty curious, I should like to enter a certain cabinet adjoining the bed-chamber of his excellence the Duke of Orleans, where it is reported that he has deposited portraits of all his mistresses."

"And you would like to know—"

"If I am in good company—that is all."

"In that case, my Isabel, you would see yourself alone, as you are in my heart, and on my heart." And with these words, he drew from his bosom the portrait that the queen had given him.

"Oh! here is a proof that I did not expect. What! have you still this miniature?"

"It shall never leave me until my death."

"Do not speak of dying, your excellence: a strange shudder runs through my veins at that word—a singular mist passes before my eyes. Oh! who is entering? who is coming? what do they want?"

"It is Sir Thomas de Courteheuse, the king's valet-de-chambre, who inquires for his excellence the duke," replied the page who had opened the door.

"Will you allow him to come in, my fair queen?" said the Duke of Orleans.

"Yes, certainly: but what does he want? I am trembling all over."

Messire Thomas entered.

"Your excellence," he said, bowing, "the king requests that you will come to him without delay, for he wishes to speak with you immediately, on affairs that much concern him and yourself."

"Tell the king that I am following you, Messire," replied the duke.

Thomas remounted his horse, set off at a gallop, and, on repassing the house of Notre-Dame, uttered these words:

"Be on the watch, Raoulet! the game's afoot!" And then he disappeared.

At the same moment there was a confused movement in the shed; the clash of steel against steel was heard, for every one was mounting his horse. Then the noise ceased, and every thing again became silent.

At the expiration of some minutes, this silence was broken by the sound of a soft voice, coming from the Rue du Temple, which was singing one of Froissart's little poems. A moment after, the singer might be seen, for he was preceded by two valets, bearing torches; before them went two squires, mounted on the same horse; and behind him followed two pages, and four armed men. He was dressed in a large cloak of black damask, was mounted on a mule that went at a foot-pace, and was amusing himself by throwing a glove into the air, and catching it as it fell. When they came nearly opposite the shed, the horse of the two squires neighed, and another neigh was heard from the shed, answering it like an echo.

"Is there any one there?" demanded the squires. Nobody answered.

They pressed their horse with their knees, and he started: they touched him with the spur, and he gave a bound, carrying them off at a gallop, as if he had been crossing a stream of fire.

"Hold fast, Simon," cried the singer, laughing at the adventure, "and tell the king I am coming; for, if you go at that pace, you will get there a good quarter of an hour before me."

"It is he!" said a voice from the shed; and about twenty horsemen rushed into the street. One of them went straight up to the duke, and crying out, "Kill him! kill him!" he struck him a blow with a battle-axe that cut off his hand.

The duke uttered a loud scream, exclaiming, "What does this mean? what is the matter? I am the Duke of Orleans!"

"That is just what we want," replied the man who had already struck him; and, hitting him another blow with the axe, he sheared away all the right side of his face, from the top of his forehead to the bottom of his cheek. The Duke of Orleans emitted a groan, and fell.

Nevertheless, he again raised himself on his knees; but then all of them attacked him, each striking him with a different weapon, some with their swords, some with clubs, and others with their daggers. A German page, who wished to defend the duke, fell beside him mortally wounded, and the blows were divided between the boy and his master. The other page, being slightly wounded by a sword, fled, calling for assistance, into a shop in the Rue des Rosiers. A shoemaker's wife opened her window, and, seeing twenty men striking two, she cried out "Murder."

"Hold your tongue!" said one of the assassins to her; and as she still continued, he took an arrow from his quiver, and adjusted it: the arrow sped forth, and buried itself in the shutter that she held partly open.

Amongst the murderers was a man whose head was covered by a red hood, that concealed his face. This man did not strike, but he looked on whilst the others were striking. When he saw the duke was motionless, he picked up a torch, and, holding it to his face—"That is right," said he; "he is dead;" and, at the same time, he threw the torch on a heap of straw which was lying opposite the house of the image of Notre-Dame. The flame rapidly communicated itself to it: then he leaped upon his horse, crying out, "Fire!" and went off at full gallop, taking the street leading to the gardens of the Hotel d'Artois. His companions followed him, crying out, as he did, "Fire! fire!" and, throwing caltrops behind them, to prevent pursuit.

In the meantime, the horse of the two squires had been quieted, and the riders had managed to turn it towards the spot where it had been so much frightened. On their way they saw the Duke of Orleans's mule running away, without its master. They imagined that it had thrown him; and, taking it by the bridle, led it back opposite the shed. There, by the light of the fire,

they beheld the duke extended on the ground; near him was his dissevered hand, and in the gutter a portion of his brains.

They hastened to the queen's little retreat, and, uttering loud cries, entered the house, pale, and tearing their hair. One was immediately conducted to Madame Isabel's apartment, who demanded what was the matter.

"A dreadful misfortune," he replied. "The Duke of Orleans has just been assassinated in the Rue Barbette, opposite the house of Marshal de Rieux."

Isabel turned frightfully pale: then, with one hand taking a purse full of gold from beneath her pillow, and with the other seizing the man's arm, "You see this purse?" she said to him; "well! it is yours, if you choose."

"What must I do?" said the squire.

"You must run to your master before the body is removed: do you understand?"

"Yes, and then?"

"And then you will take from him my picture, which he wears in his bosom."

## CHAPTER XVI.

If the reader wishes to follow us, he must pass over, with us, an interval of ten years, which have revolved since the assassination of the Duke of Orleans and the period when we resume this chronicle. Ten years, which comprise so large a portion of a man's life, are only a step in the march of Time, we hope, therefore, that, by reflecting on the difficulty of recording everything in the space we have allotted to ourselves, this chasm will be pardoned, which, after all, we will fill up some day in the great work which we propose to write on our history, provided, however, that the public should encourage us in our undertaking.

It was towards the end of the month of May, 1417, that, about seven o'clock in the morning, the portcullis of the gate of St. Antoine was raised, allowing to issue forth from the good city of Paris, a small troop of horsemen, who immediately took the road to Vincennes. Two men rode at the head of this cavalcade, and the others,

who appeared rather to belong to their suite than their company, kept themselves at some paces in the rear, regulating, with unequivocal marks of respect, their march by that of the two persons of whom we shall now endeavour to give the reader some idea.

He who was on the right hand was mounted on a mule, trained to an amble, and which appeared to be aware of its master's weakness, so gentle and regular was its pace. In fact, the rider, although in reality he was only forty-nine years of age, appeared to be old, and more particularly in great suffering. His confidence in his steed appeared to be so great, that, from time to time, he abandoned the bridle altogether, to press his head convulsively between both his hands. Although the air of the morning was yet cold, and a slight mist was falling on the plain, his hood was hung to his right saddle-bow, and nothing defended his forehead from the dew that was seen quivering on the thin locks of white hair that fell from his temples on his thin pale and melancholy face. Far from appearing to be incommoded by the freshness of this dew, it was plainly perceptible that he received it with pleasure on his bald head; and it might be easily imagined that these icy drops gave some relief to the pain that, from time to time, compelled him to renew that action which we have indicated as having become habitual to him. As for his dress, nothing distinguished it from that of the nobles of the period. It was a kind of cloak of dark velvet, open in front, and trimmed with white fur with black spots, whose large sleeves, slashed and falling, displayed through their openings the tight sleeves of a doublet of gold brocade, the richness and elegance of which was much diminished by the long service which it appeared to have rendered to its owner. At the bottom of this cloak, and freed from the restraint of stirrups, depended the feet of the rider, in a kind of furred and pointed boots, which, by their continued swinging motion, might have well destroyed the patience of the quiet animal in which he so completely trusted, if the precaution had not been taken of removing the gilded and sharp spurs that, at this period, were the distinctive marks of nobles, and knights. Our readers would therefore have difficulty in recognizing by this description, (so different from that which we gave of the same person at the commencement of our work,) King Charles VI., pro-

ceeding to Vincennes to visit Queen Isabel; if, as we have said, ten years did not comprise such a large portion of a man's life, and if, during those ten years, everything had not retrograded in the realm of France.

On his left, and almost in the same line with him, paced forward on his war-horse, whose ardour he with difficulty restrained, a knight of colossal stature, covered with steel, as if he was going to the battle field. His armour, more solid than elegant, yet attested, by the flexibility with which it yielded to the motions of the arms, the address and skill of the Milanese workman by whom it had been fabricated. From the bows of his war-saddle depended, on the right side, a mace weighty and jagged, which appeared to have been richly inlaid with gold; but which, by its frequent rude contacts with the helmets of its owner's enemies, had lost somewhat of its ornamental decoration, although it had not thus been deprived of any of its solidity. On the opposite side, and as if to balance it, was suspended a weapon, not less formidable in every respect. It was a sword, with a blade that was broad at the hilt, and gradually diminished to its point like a dagger, and which, by the fleurs-de-lis scattered over the scabbard, betokened that it was that of the constable. If its master had drawn it from the rich sheath in which it at present slumbered, doubtless the steel of its large blade would also, by its indentations, have borne testimony to the blows it had struck; but, on the present occasion, these two weapons appeared to be rather precautionary than necessary. They were only there like faithful servants, who are not permitted to absent themselves by night or day, so that the hand need only to be stretched forth to find them in the moment of danger.

But, as we have said, no peril appeared at hand; and if the countenance of the horseman we have been describing seemed gloomy, it was evident that it was the continuity of one idea that had produced in him this habitual expression, rather than any momentary anxiety. The shadow of his vizor, that extended over his dark eyes, also probably contributed to augment their harshness. Moreover, as all that could be seen of his features was an aquiline nose, strongly defined, with a complexion embrowned by the Milanese wars, and disfigured by a scar that had cut through his cheek, and of which the

one extremity was lost in the arch of a large black eyebrow, the other in the skirts of a thick and grizzly beard, it might be discerned, at the first glance, that the soul that dwelt in this iron case was as firm and inflexible as itself.

If the portrait that we have traced is not sufficient to enable our readers to recognize Bernard, the seventh count of Armagnac, of Rouergue, and Fezenzac, constable of France, governor-general of the city of Paris, and commander of all the places in the kingdom, they have only to cast their eyes back on the little troop that follows, and they will distinguish, in the midst of it, an esquire, who, by his green jacket and white cross, bearing his master's buckler, and, in the centre of that buckler, the four lions of Armagnac,\* surmounted by an earl's coronet, would determine their doubts, did they but know ever so little of heraldry, a science with which all were in some measure conversant at that period, although it would appear to have been so generally forgotten in the present age.

The two horsemen had proceeded in silence from the gate of the Bastille to where the road branched off in two directions, one of which led to the convent of St. Antoine, the other to the Croix Faubin. Here the king's mule, left, as we have said, to its own sagacity, stopped in the middle of the road. Accustomed as she was to go sometimes to Vincennes, where the king was now proceeding, and sometimes to the convent of St. Antoine, where he often paid his devotions, she was waiting for some direction from her rider, that might inform her which of the two roads she was to take. But the king was in one of his moments of imbecile abstraction, which disabled him from guessing what his steed required. He therefore remained motionless on his mule, at the spot where it had stopped, without evincing, by any outward sign, that he had even observed this sudden transition from motion to complete repose. The Count Bernard endeavoured to recal the king to himself, by addressing him; but the attempt was fruitless. He then pushed his horse on before the mule, hoping that the obstinate brute

\* As the translator has not taken a degree in the Herald's College, he must be excused for giving the following note in its original purity.

"Ecartele au premier et au quatrieme d'argent, au lion de gueule, au deux ime de gueule, et au troisieme de gueule au lion leopardé d'or.

would follow him: but she merely raised her head, looked at him as he went his way, shook the little bells which were suspended from her neck, and resumed her previous quietude.

The Count Bernard, irritated by this delay, leaped from his horse, threw the bridle over the arm of a squire, and went towards the king, (for so great was then the respect for royalty, that it was only on foot that he dared, powerful as he was, to touch the rein,) in order, to guide the mule of the poor lunatic Charles. But this respect, and this good intention, were far from being crowned with success; for, scarcely had the king seen a man seize the bridle of his steed, before he uttered a piercing scream, felt for a weapon in the place where his sword or dagger ought to hang, and, not finding it, he began to cry out, in a voice hoarse and tremulous from terror—"Help! help! my brother of Orleans! Help! it is the phantom!"

"Your majesty," said Bernard d'Armagnac, softening as much as he could his rough voice, "would to God, and Monsieur St. Jacques, that your brother of Orleans was yet alive!—not to come to your assistance, for I am no phantom, and you incur no danger—but to aid us, with his good sword, and his good advice, against the English and Burgundians."

"My brother, my brother," said the king, whose terror, however, appeared to diminish, but whose haggard eyes and bristling hair attested that the irritation of his nerves was far from being calmed—"My brother Louis!"

"Does your majesty no longer remember, that ten years will have shortly elapsed since your much-loved brother was traitorously assassinated, in the Rue Bar-bette, by Duke John of Burgundy, who, at this very time, is advancing, like a disloyal subject as he is, against his king; and I am your devoted defender, as I will prove in proper time and place, with the help of St. Bernard, and my own sword."

The vague look of the king slowly fixed itself on Bernard; and as if, of all that he had said to him he had heard but one thing, he replied, with some remnant of emotion in his voice,

'You said, then, my cousin, that the English had

landed on the shores of France!" And he made his mule resume her progress, taking the road to Vincennes.

"Yes, sire," replied Bernard, again mounting his horse, and taking his former place by the king's side.

"Where?"

"At Touques, in Normandy; and I should also add, that the Duke of Burgundy has taken possession of Abbeville, of Amiens, of Montdidier, and of Beauvais."

The king heaved a sigh. "I am very unhappy, my cousin!" he said, pressing his head between both his hands.

Bernard left him a moment for reflection, hoping that his faculties would return, and would enable him to continue, with some degree of connection, a conversation so important to the safety of the monarchy.

"Yes, very unhappy," the king repeated, letting his hands fall down in despair, and hang loose by his sides, whilst his head reclined upon his bosom. "And what do you propose to do, my cousin, to repulse, at the same time, these two enemies? I say you; because, as regards myself, I am too weak to assist you."

"Sire, I have already taken my measures, and you have signified your approval of them; the Dauphin Charles has been named by you lieutenant-general of the kingdom."

"It is true; but I have already reminded you, my cousin, that he is very young. He can be scarcely fifteen years old. Why did you not rather recommend to me for this charge his elder brother John?"

The constable looked at the king with astonishment. A sigh issued from his broad chest, and he shook his head with a melancholy air. The king repeated the question.

"Sire," he at last said, "is it possible that there can be human sufferings so severe, that the father should forget the death of his son?"

The king started, again pressed his head between his hands; and, when he removed them from his face, the constable might have seen two large tears rolling down his withered cheeks. "Yes, yes; I remember," he said; "he is dead in our city of Compeigne." Then he added, in a lower voice "and Isabel told me that he was poisoned—but, hush!—that must not be repeated. My cousin, think you that this is true?"

"The enemies of the Duke of Anjou accused him of it;

and the ground of this accusation was, that his death brought his son-in-law Charles nearer the throne. But the King of Sicily was incapable of committing the crime; and, if he did commit it, God did not permit him to reap the fruits, since he himself died at Angers, six months after him whom they accused him of murdering."

"Yes! dead—dead! That is what echo replies to me when I call around me my sons and my kinsmen. The wind that breathes round thrones is deadly, my cousin; and of all this rich family of princes, there only remains the young tree and the old trunk. Therefore, my much-loved Charles—"

"Shares with me the command of the troops; and, if we had money to levy fresh ones—"

"Money, my cousin! Have we not the funds reserved for the necessities of the state?"

"They have been withdrawn, sire."

"And by whom?"

"Respect arrests the accusation on my lips."

"My cousin, no one but myself had a right to dispose of these funds; and nobody could appropriate them without an order, signed by our royal hand, and sealed with our seal."

"Sire, the person who has taken them did, in fact, make use of the royal seal, although she considered your signature unnecessary."

"Yes, yes; they regard me as already dead. The Englishman and Burgundian share my kingdom, and my wife and son my property. It is one or the other, is it not, my cousin, who has committed this robbery—for it is a robbery of the state, since the state wanted the money."

"Sire, the Dauphin Charles has too much respect, not to wait for the commands of his lord and father, under all circumstances."

"Therefore, count, it is the queen?" He sighed profoundly. "The queen! Well, then, we are going to see her; and I will demand this money of her again: she will understand that she must restore it to me."

"Sire, it has been expended in purchasing furniture and trinkets."

"What must we do, then, my poor Bernard? We will lay a fresh tax on the people."

"They are already ruined."

“Have we not, then, some diamonds remaining?”

“Those of your crown, and that is all. Sire, you are very weak towards the queen. She is destroying the kingdom; and in the sight of God, sire, it is you who are responsible for it. See if the public misery has diminished her luxury; on the contrary, it appears to increase with the general poverty. The ladies and damsels of her court pursue their usual course, making a sumptuous display, and wearing such splendid apparel, that they astonish the whole world. Those young nobles who surround her, expend, in embroidery on their doublets, a year’s pay for the troops. On pretence of the dangers she incurs from the disorders incident to the war, she has demanded a guard, useless to the state, but which the state pays. The Sires de Granville and de Giac, who command this troop, constantly obtain money and jewels. It is a profusion that causes sensible men to murmur, sire.”

“Constable,” said the king, in the tone of a man who feels the moment ill chosen to announce some fresh information, but who, nevertheless, can no longer delay giving it: “constable, I yesterday promised to name the Chevalier de Bourdon as captain of the chateau of Vincennes; you will bring up his nomination for my signature.”

“You have done that, sire!” and the constable’s eyes sparkled.

“Yes,” murmured the king almost inaudible, like a child who has committed a fault, and who fears to be reprimanded.

They had, at this moment, reached the summit of the Croix-l’Aubin, and the road, that ceased to be winding, allowed them to perceive, but yet at some distance, a young horseman, dressed in all the foppery of the time, coming towards the little troop which we have been accompanying. His blue hood (it was the queen’s colour) flowing elegantly over his shoulder, and forming a scarf, fell into his right hand, and served him as a plaything. At his side hung his only weapon, a sword of embrowned steel, so light that it appeared to be more for ornament than defence. He wore a short loose vest of red velvet, whilst, underneath it, a tight-fitting jacket of blue velvet, displaying his elegant figure, glittered with embroidery, and was fastened round his waist by a gold cord. Tight

stuff pantaloons, of the colour of ox's blood, and shoes of dark velvet, so pointed and curved that they were with difficulty thrust into the stirrups, completed this costume, which might have been taken for a model by the richest and most elegant nobles of the land. Add to that, fair curling hair, a lively and careless countenance, hands like those of a woman, and you have the exact portrait of the Chevalier Bourdon, the favourite, and some affirmed, the lover of the queen.

The moment he saw him, the constable recognised him. Bernard hated Isabel, who opposed his influence over the king. He knew that Charles was jealous, and resolved to take advantage of the opportunity that presented itself, to accomplish a great political project—the queen's banishment. But no change in his countenance indicated that he recognised the horseman who was approaching.

"I desire that you will make it known to this young man, that I ratify his nomination," added the king; "must it not be so, my cousin?"

"It is probable that he knows it already, sire."

"Who can have informed him of it?"

"She who requested it with so much earnestness."

"The queen?"

"She has so much confidence in the courage of this chevalier, that, in order to entrust him with the guardianship of the chateau, she may not have had the patience to wait until she had received his commission of captain."

"How is that?"

"Look before you, sire."

"The Chevalier de Bourdon!" The king turned pale—a suspicion wrung his heart.

"He must have passed the night at the chateau: it is impossible that he can have left Paris, and be returning from Vincennes so early in the morning."

"You are right, count. What do they say at my court about this young man?"

"That he is very successful among the ladies: they pretend that no one has resisted him."

"Do they except no one, count?"

"No one, sire."

The king turned so pale, that the count stretched out his hand, thinking he was going to fall. Charles gently repulsed him. "Could it be for that," he said in a hollow

voice, "that she wished the guard of the chateau to be entrusted to him? Insolent young man! Bernard, Bernard, does he not wear a blue hood?"

"It is the queen's colour."

At this moment, the Chevalier de Bourdon found himself so near them, that they could hear the words of the song he was singing: it was a roundelay of Alain Chartier to the queen. The sight of the king and the count did not seem to be a motive sufficiently powerful to interrupt his melodious occupation, for he contented himself with graciously drawing his horse aside; and when he was near the king, he saluted him by a slight inclination of the head.

Anger restored to the old man all the energy of his youth. He stopped his mule short, and exclaimed in a loud voice—"Your foot to the ground, boy! It is not thus that one salutes, when royalty passes. Your foot to the ground; and bow!"

The Chevalier de Bourdon, instead of obeying this command, spurred his horse sharply, and, in a few bounds, found himself at some distance from the king. Then he continued his course at his previous pace, and resumed his song at the very note where the sharp address of Charles had interrupted it.

The king said some words to Count Bernard, and he turned towards his little troop. "Tanneguy," said he, addressing the Provost of Paris, who had two of his guards near him, completely armed, "order this young man to be arrested; the king commands it."

Tanneguy gave a sign and the two guards rushed forward in pursuit of the Chevalier de Bourdon.

These hostile preparations had not escaped his notice although he did not seem to disturb himself concerning them in any other way than by occasionally turning his head. Nevertheless, when he saw the two guards of the provost approaching him, he had no doubt of their intentions: he therefore stopped his horse, and faced them. They were not more than ten paces from him.

"Halloo, my masters," he cried out to them, "not one step further, if it is against me that you are coming; at least, if you have not this morning commended your souls to God."

The two guards continued to advance, without making any reply.

"Aha! gentlemen of the provostship," continued De Bourdon, "it would seem that the king delights in tournaments on the high road."

The two guards were now so near the chevalier, that they were already stretching out their hands to seize him.

"All fair, gentlemen," said he, making his faithful companion bound backward—"all fair! Let me take my ground, and I am your man."

At these words, he put his horse to such a rapid gallop, that for a moment, it might have been thought that he trusted to him for the safety of his life. The two guards so perfectly understood that all pursuit would be useless, that they remained in the same place, quite stupified, following with their eyes, and not even thinking of commanding him to stop. But their astonishment redoubled when, at the expiration of a few seconds, they saw him wheel round, and return towards them.

One minute had sufficed the Chevalier de Bourdon to make his preparations for the combat. They were as simple as they were brief; and, when he turned round, the floating scarf, that we had described as falling from the hood, was wound round his left arm, as a species of buckler. In his right hand he held his short sword, on which were seen the little gilded channels formed to let the blood run off; and his horse, with its rein fastened to the pommel of the saddle, and, like a being gifted with intelligence, obeying the pressure of the legs, left to both arms of the rider that liberty of which it was evident he would stand greatly in need.

The guards hesitated an instant, whether they should accept the combat. They had been ordered to arrest the Chevalier de Bourdon, but not to kill him; and the preparations for defence that he had made clearly indicated that he was not disposed to fall alive into their hands. He saw their indecision, and it augmented his temerity.

"Come, my masters," he cried, "come on, come on, poignard in hand; and, with God's aid and that of St. Michael, we shall soon have blood, red and warm, upon the pavement."

The two guards drew their swords, and rushed upon the chevalier, leaving a slight space between them, that they might attack on both sides at once. By a rapid glance, he saw that he could pass between his two ene-

mies; he buried his spurs in the flanks of his steed, which carried him along like the wind; then when he saw the two swords but a few feet from him, he laid himself flat on his horse's neck, as if he wished to pick something up, without losing his stirrups, so that his body described nearly a horizontal line, holding himself on by the mane with his right hand, whilst with the left he seized hold of the leg of one of his enemies, lifted him up with great violence, and threw him over the side of his horse. The swords of the guards only struck the air.

When he who had given this proof of his skill turned round, he perceived that the guard whom he had overthrown had not been able to disengage his foot from the stirrup, where it was held by the spur, and that his horse, which was dragging him along, frightened by the noise of his armour rebounding against the pavement, was carrying him away with increasing rapidity; whilst the cries of the unhappy man contributed in no slight measure to augment its fright. All the spectators of this combat followed him with their eyes, with hearts oppressed, scarcely breathing, starting at each fresh concussion that the noise of the steel sent back to them, and extending their arms as if they could thus stop him. The horse still sped on, faster and faster, raising clouds of dust, whilst the armour struck fire at every flint. Wherever he passed, and from place to place on the road, pieces of his cuirass that had been torn off, could be distinguished, glittering in the sun. Soon this frightful clattering became less distinct, either from the distance, or because it was no longer anything but flesh and bones that were dragged along the pavement. Then, at the turn of the road, of which we have before spoken, horse and horseman suddenly disappeared like a vision. The bosoms respired, and the voice of Bernard d'Armagnac was heard, for the second time, uttering these words: "Tanneguy Duchâtel, arrest that man: the king commands it."

The provost's second guard on hearing this fresh order, turned again towards the chevalier, with a rage greatly augmented by the frightful death of his companion. As for De Bourdon, he appeared to be completely absorbed by the spectacle that we have endeavoured to describe. His eyes were fixed on the spot where the horse and his rider had disappeared; and it seemed evident that he was not at first convinced of the seriousness of the

combat in which he had found himself engaged. He did not recover himself till he saw something like lightning flash above his head. It was the sword which his second enemy held in both his hands; and which was revolving before it fell. There were not more than two feet between this sword and his brow; there was barely one second between the blow and death. One forward bound placed the chevalier side by side with the soldier, who, standing in his stirrups, with his hands behind his head, was just preparing to strike. With his left arm he seized him, at the same time burying his arms and head under his own shoulder: with a strength of which he might have been supposed incapable, he overthrew him by the first shock, bent him back upon his horse's crupper, and with a rapid glance, sought some opening for death on this man so completely barbed with iron. The bent position in which he had placed him raised the gorget of his helmet; and, in the narrow space between the two steel plates, only a sword so fine as that of the chevalier could penetrate. It did pass twice; twice it came forth ensanguined; and when he let the arms and head of his adversary fall from his left arm, whilst he shook his sword with the right, a stifled sigh in the soldier's helmet announced that he had ceased to exist.

Bourdon remained in the middle of the road; he had turned his horse's head towards the king's troop, and, elevated by his double triumph, he there railed at and defied them. Duchatel hesitated to repeat his order of arrest to the men who accompanied him, and was deliberating whether it would not be better that he should perform the commission himself, when the Count d'Armagnac, tired of these delays, made a sign. The little troop drew on one side, to let him pass. The giant went slowly towards the chevalier, and halted at about ten paces from him.

"Chevalier de Bourdon," said he to him, in a tone in which it was impossible to distinguish the slightest trace of emotion—"Chevalier de Bourdon, in the king's name your sword! If you have refused to deliver it up to two obscure soldiers, perhaps it will appear less humiliating to you to surrender it to the Constable of France."

"I will not deliver it up," haughtily replied Bourdon, "except to him who will dare to come and take it."

"Madman!" murmured Bernard.

At the same instant, and with a motion as quick as thought, he unhooked from his saddle-bow the heavy mace, of which we have spoken: the ponderous weapon revolved like a sling above his head, and darting from his hand with the whizzing noise and the rapidity of a stone thrown from an instrument of war, bent like a reed on the horse's head. The animal, mortally wounded, reared bleeding on its hind legs, and remained a moment erect and vacillating; in the next the horse and rider fell back, and lay stretched upon the pavement.

"Go and pick up that boy," said Bernard. And he returned quietly to resume his place near the king.

"Is he killed?" demanded the king.

"No, sire; I think that he is only insensible."

Tanneguy confirmed what the constable said. He brought him the papers found upon the Chevalier de Bourdon: amongst them was a letter, of which the address was written by the hand of Isabel of Bavaria; the king seized it with a convulsive motion. The two noblemen immediately retired a few paces, but continued to observe the increasing alteration in the king's countenance. Many times, whilst he read it, he wiped off the perspiration that was trickling down his forehead; then, when he had finished, and crushed the letter between his hands—when he had thrown its thousand pieces to the winds,—he said, in a voice so hollow that it seemed to come from a dead body:—

"The chevalier to the prison of the Grand Châtelet; the queen to Tours, and I—I to the abbey of St. Antoine. I do not feel that I have strength to return to Paris."

In fact, he was so pale, and trembled so violently, that it might have been imagined he was dying.

A minute after, according to these orders, the king's suite separated into three troops, forming a triangle. Dupny, Bernard's understrapper, and two captains, went towards Vincennes, to inform the queen of her banishment; Tanneguy Duchâtel, returning towards Paris with his prisoner, still insensible: and the king, remaining alone with the constable d'Armagnac, and, supported by him, going across the plain, to demand from the monks of the abbey of St. Antoine an asylum, repose, and their prayers.

## CHAPTER XVII.

WHILST the gate of the Abbey of St. Antoine is opening for the king, and that of the prison of the Chatelet for the Chevalier de Bourdon; whilst Dupuy is halting at a quarter of a league from Vincennes, awaiting a reinforcement of three companies of guards, which Tanneguy Duchatel is to send him from the provostry, we will transport the reader to the chateau which Isabel of Bavaria inhabits.

In these troublesome days, when swords were drawn in a ball-room, and blood flowed in the midst of an entertainment, Vincennes was, at the same time, a fortified chateau and a summer residence. If we make the tour of its outer walls, its large trenches, its bastions at each corner of the wall, its drawbridges, which are raised every evening, grating on their ponderous chains, and its sentinels, stuck up on the ramparts, will offer to us the harsh aspect of a fortress, for the defence and security of which nothing has been spared. If we visit the interior, the spectacle will change. We shall still, it is true, perceive the sentinels upon its lofty walls; but the carelessness with which we shall see them perform their duty, their assiduity in observing the various amusements of their comrades in the interior of the court, filled with soldiers, instead of examining whether in the distant plain some part of the enemy might be advancing, will prove their impatience to change their bow and arrows for a box and dice, and will leave no doubt that the duty imposed on them is rather a matter of general discipline than of temporary importance. If we pass from this first court to the second, this military display will entirely disappear. There, nothing is seen but falconers whistling to their falcons, pages training dogs, or squires leading horses. Then, in the midst of these cries, laughs, and whistlings, are young girls passing, light and coquettish, exchanging a joke with the falconers, a smile with the pages, a promise with the squires, to disappear like visions, under a low arched door, opposite that of the first court, and forming the entrance to the apartments. If they bow, on passing under the door, with a coquet-

try somewhat more respectful, it is not because of the two images that adorn the entrance; it is, because, on each side, near these images, with their backs against the wall, and one leg crossed over the other, enveloped in elegant robes of damask velvet, two young and handsome noblemen, the Sires de Graville and De Giac, are conversing of love and the chase. Most assuredly, he who had thus seen them, would have had some difficulty in discovering, on their gay and lively features, that fatal mark which it is said the finger of Fate impresses on the brow of those who are to die young. An astrologer, by studying the lines of their plump white hands, would have presaged to them long and joyous years; and yet, five years afterwards, the lance of an Englishman was to transpierce the bosom of the one, and eight years would not elapse before the waters of the Loire close over the dead body of the other.

If we penetrate beyond this entrance, and should mount to the left, by those stairs hewn out of the rock, and should gently open that round arched door of the first floor, to traverse, without stopping, that first room, which, in the modern arrangement of our apartments, we should call an ante-chamber; and if, going on tiptoe, and holding our breath, we should gently raise the tapestry, with flowers of gold, that separates this room from the second, we shall see a spectacle which, in the midst of the long description we have given, merits particular observation.

In a chamber, which was square, like the tower of which it formed the first story, illumined by a light, that with difficulty, penetrated through the stuff curtains, flowered with gold, that hung down before the narrow windows of painted glass, on one of those large Gothic beds, with fluted columns, a woman is reclined, asleep, who was yet beautiful, although she had passed the first days of youth. Besides the twilight that reigns in the apartment, appears to be rather the result of coquettish calculation, than the effect of chance. Assuredly, those demi-tints take something from that roundness of form which they soften, whilst they wonderfully assist the polish of that arm hanging out of the bed, the freshness of that head laid upon the uncovered shoulder, and the fineness of that hair, of which a portion is spread loosely over the pillow, whilst the rest accompanies the pendant

arm, reaching beyond the extremities of the fingers, until it falls even to the ground.

Must we place a name beneath that portrait, and have not our readers, by this description, recognised Queen Isabel, on whose countenance years of pleasure have left lighter traces of their passage than years of pain have fixed upon the brow of her husband?

At the expiration of a minute, the lips of the fair sleeper separated, her large dark eyes opened with a languor that for a time prevailed over their usual coldness of expression, and which resulted at this moment, perhaps, from a dream, or, shall I say, rather from some recollection of voluptuousness. The light, feeble as it was, appeared to be even now too brilliant for her wearied eyes: she closed them for an instant, raised herself by leaning on her elbow, felt with her other hand under her pillow for a little mirror of polished steel, in which she looked at herself with a smile of complacency; then, laying it on a table, within reach of her hand, she took a silver whistle, and sounded it twice; then, as if exhausted by the effort, she fell back upon her bed, emitting a sigh, in which there was more of fatigue than of sadness.

Scarcely had the sound of the whistle ceased, before the tapestry that fell over the door of entrance was raised, and gave admission to a young girl of nineteen or twenty years of age.

"Does Madame the Queen want me?" she said, in a soft and timid voice.

"Yes, Charlotte; come here."

She came forward, stepping so softly on the thick mats, so finely woven, which served for carpets, that it was evident she had made it her study when, during the sleep of her beautiful and imperious mistress, her duties called her into the apartment.

"Truly, you are very careful, Charlotte," said the queen, with a smile.

"It is my duty, madame."

"Come here—nearer still."

"Does madame wish to rise?"

"No—to talk a little."

Charlotte coloured with pleasure, for she had a favour to ask of the queen: and she saw plainly that her noble mistress was in one of those moments of good humour, when the potent here below grant all they can confer.

“What is all that noise that I hear in the court?” continued the queen.

“The pages and squires who are laughing,”

“But I hear other voices.”

“Those of the Sires de Giac and de Graville.”

“Is not the Chevalier de Bourdon with them?”

“No, madame: he has not yet made his appearance.”

“And has nothing fresh disturbed the tranquillity of the chateau during the night?”

“Nothing: only, just before daybreak, the sentinel, saw a shadow gliding along the walls. He cried out, ‘Who goes there?’ The man, for it was a man, jumped over the trench, in spite of its height and width; then the sentinel fired at him with his cross-bow.”

“Well?” said the queen. And the colour entirely disappeared from her cheeks.

“Oh! Raymond is an awkward fellow! He missed his aim; and, this morning, saw his arrow sticking in one of the trees that grow on the edge of the trench.”

“Ah!” said Isabel. And her bosom breathed more freely.

“The madman!” she continued, speaking to herself.

“Certainly, it must have been either a madman or a spy; for nine out of ten would have been killed. The most astonishing thing is, that this is the third time that it has happened. It is vexatious for those who inhabit the chateau—is it not—madame?”

“Yes, child: but when the Chevalier de Bourdon is governor, it will not happen any more.”

And an imperceptible smile glided across the queen’s lips; whilst the colour, that had for a minute left her cheeks, returned so slowly, as to prove that the feeling by which it had been driven away was deep and painful.

“Oh!” continued Charlotte, “the Sire de Bourdon is such a brave chevalier.”

The queen smiled.—“Ah! you love him?”

“With all my heart,” said the young girl, with the utmost simplicity.

“I will tell him of it, Charlotte; and he will be quite proud.”

“Oh, madame, do not say so to him; I have something to ask him, and I shall never dare.”

“You?”

“Yes.”

- “What is it, then?”
- “Oh! madame—”
- “Come, let us hear: tell it to me?”
- “I wish—oh! I dare not.”
- “Speak, then.”
- “I wish to ask of him the situation of a squire.”
- “For yourself?” said the queen, laughing.
- “Oh!” said Charlotte; and she coloured, and cast down her eyes
- “Why, your enthusiasm for him might make me believe it; for whom, then?”
- “For a young man;” and Charlotte murmured these words in such a low voice that they could scarcely be heard.
- “Ah! and who is he?”
- “Surely, madame—but you never can have deigned—”
- “Well, after all, who is he?” repeated Isabel, with some impatience.
- “My betrothed,” hastily replied Charlotte; and two tears trembled on her long dark eye-lashes.
- “You love, then, my child?” said the queen, in a tone so soft that she might have been taken for a mother questioning her daughter.
- “Yes, yes, for my life.”
- “For your life! Well, then, Charlotte, I undertake your commission; I will ask Bourdon for this place for your betrothed. By this means he will constantly remain near you. Yes, I understand; it is delightful not to be separate one minute from the person you love.”
- Charlotte threw herself on her knees, kissing the queen’s hands, whose countenance, habitually so haughty, had at this moment an expression of angelic softness.
- “Oh! how good you are!” she said: “how grateful I am to you! May God and St. Charles stretch forth their hands over your head! Thank you! thank you! How happy he will be! Allow me to carry him this good news.”
- “Is he here, then?”
- “Yes,” said she with a slight motion of the head; “yes, I told him, yesterday, that the chevalier would most probably be appointed governor of Vincennes; and, during the night, he thought of what I had just told you, so that, this morning, he hastened here to tell me of his project.”

“And where is he?”

“At the door in the ante-room.”

“And you have dared—”

Isabel's dark eyes flashed. Poor Charlotte, on her knees, with her hands crossed, threw herself back.

“Oh, pardon, pardon!” she murmured.

Isabel reflected.

“Would this man be sincerely attached to our interests?”

“After what you have promised, madame, he would pass over burning coals for you.”

The queen smiled.

“Introduce him here, Charlotte: I wish to see him.”

“Here?” said the poor girl, passing from terror to astonishment.

“Here: I wish to speak to him.”

Charlotte pressed her head between her hands, to convince herself that she was not dreaming; then she arose slowly, looked at the queen in mute astonishment, and, at the last sign that she made, left the apartment.

The queen drew the curtains of her bed closer together—put her head within them, and fastened them together under her chin with both her hands, well knowing that her beauty would lose nothing by the rosy tint which they would cast on her cheeks.

Scarcely had she taken this precaution before Charlotte entered, followed by her lover.

He was a handsome young man, from twenty to twenty-two years of age, with a broad open brow, eyes blue and quick, with chestnut hair and pale complexion. He was dressed in a tight-fitting green jacket, open at the elbow, to let the shirt sleeve appear; pantaloons of the same colour, developed the strong muscles of his legs; a belt of yellow leather sustained a long steel poignard with a large blade, the handle of which was polished by the continual contact of its master's hand; whilst, in the other, he carried a beaver hat, like our hunting-caps.

He stopped at two paces from the door. The queen cast a rapid glance at him; doubtless she would have prolonged the examination she made of his person, had she known that she had before her one of those men to whom Fate has given one hour of their life, during which they are to change the face of the nations. But, as we

have said, nothing in his appearance indicated this strange destiny; and he was, at that moment, only a handsome young man, pale, timid, and in love.

"Your name?" said the queen.

"Perrinet Leclerc."

"Whose son are you?"

"The bailiff Leclerc's, keeper of the keys of the gate of St. Germain."

"And what are you yourself?"

"I am a dealer in iron, at Petit-Pont."

"Would you leave your occupation to enter into the service of the Chevalier Bourdon?"

"I would leave everything to see Charlotte."

"And would you not be awkward in your service?"

"Of all the weapons that I have in my house as a dealer in iron, from the mace to the poignard, from the cross-bow to the lance, there are few that I cannot handle as well as the most expert knight."

"And should I procure this situation for you, will you be devoted to me, Leclerc?"

The young man raised his eyes, fixed them on those of the queen, and said, with confidence:—

"Yes, madame, in all that man may accord with my duty to God and his Majesty King Charles."

The queen frowned slightly.

"It is well," she said; "you may consider the thing as done."

The two lovers exchanged a glance of inexpressible happiness.

At this moment a violent tumult was heard.

"What is that?" said the queen.

Charlotte and Leclerc rushed at the same instant to the window, and looked out into the court.

"Oh, my God!" exclaimed the young girl, in the astonishment of terror.

"What is the matter?" demanded the queen, a second time.

"Oh, madame, the court is full of men-at-arms, who have disarmed the garrison. The Sires de Giac and de Gravelle are prisoners.

"Can it be a surprise of the Burgundians?" demanded the queen.

"No," said Leclerc; "they are followers of Armagnac; for they bear the white cross."

"Oh!" said Charlotte, "there is their leader; it is M. Dupuy. He has two captains with him. They are inquiring for the queen's apartment; for they are pointing it out to them. There—now they are coming—they are coming in—they are mounting the stairs."

"Shall I stop them?" said Leclerc, half-drawing his poignard from its scabbard.

"No, no," quickly responded the queen; "conceal yourself in that closet, young man: perhaps you may be useful to me, should they not know that you are here; whilst, on the contrary supposition, you can only destroy yourself."

Charlotte pushed Leclerc into a kind of little dark chamber, which was near the head of Isabel's bed. The queen arose quickly, put on a brocaded dressing-gown, trimmed with fur, and wrapped herself up in it, without having time to gird it round her figure in any other way than with her hands. Her hair, as we have said, was falling over her shoulders, and descended below her waist. At that moment, Dupuy, followed by two captains, raised the door-covering, and without removing his hat, said, turning towards Isabel:—

"Madame, the Queen, you are my prisoner."

Isabel gave a scream, in which there was as much of rage as astonishment: then, feeling her limbs fail her, she fell back, sitting on her bed, looked at him who had just addressed her in such disrespectful terms, and said to him, with a bitter laugh:—

"You are mad, Master Dupuy."

"It is the king, our sire, who is unfortunately mad," he replied; "otherwise, madame, I should long since have said to you what I have only just said for the first time."

"I may be your prisoner, but I am still queen; and were I not a queen, I should still be a woman. Speak, therefore, with your hat off, messire, as you would speak to your master, the constable; for, I presume it is he who has sent you."

"You are not mistaken; I come by his command," said Dupuy, slowly removing his hood, like a man who follows his own inclination much more than the order he has received.

"It is all very well," said the queen; "but, as I am

expecting the king, we will see who is the master here—he or the constable.”

“The king will not come.”

“I tell you that he ought to be here by this time.”

“He met the Chevalier Bourdon half-way here.”

The queen started. Dupuy observed it, and smiled.

“Well, and then?” said the queen.

“Well, then, this meeting changed his intentions; and, doubtless also those of the chevalier; for he expected to return to Paris alone, and about this time he is entering it under a good escort. He thought that he should go back to his apartment in the Hotel de St. Paul, whilst we have prepared one for him at the chatelet.”

“The chevalier in prison! And wherefore?”

Dupuy smiled. “You ought to know better than we do, madame.”

“His life is in no danger, I hope?”

“The Chatelet is very near the Gréve,” said Dupuy, laughing.

“They dared not assassinate him.”

“Madame the Queen,” said Dupuy, looking at her with a proud, pitiless eye, “do you remember his excellence the Duke of Orleans? He was the finest man in the realm after our Sire the King. The evening that he last passed through the Rue Barbette, on returning from supping with you, he had four running footmen carrying torches, two squires bearing the lance, and two pages carrying swords around him. There is a mighty difference, madame, between so noble a lord and such a petty insignificant cavalier; but, as both have committed the same crime, why should not both suffer the same punishment?”

The queen rose with an expression of the most violent anger, the blood mounting so rapidly to her face that it might have been thought it would break forth from every vein. Advancing a single step, she pointed towards the door, and, in a harsh voice, pronounced the words—  
“Leave the room.”

Dupuy, intimidated, recoiled a step. “It is well, madame,” he replied; “but, before leaving the room, I must inform you, that it is the express desire of the king and the constable, that you should depart for the city of Tours without delay.”

“Doubtless, in your company?”

"Yes, madame."

"So, it is you whom they have chosen for my jailor? It is an honourable office, and suits you admirably."

"He is of some consequence in the state, madame, to whom the safe custody of a Queen of France is entrusted."

"And think you," replied Isabel, "that they would ennoble the executioner who beheaded me?"

She turned away, as if she had said enough, and was unwilling to answer more.

Dupuy ground his teeth as he asked, "When will you be prepared, madame?"

"I will let you know."

"Remember, madame, that I have told you there is need of haste."

"Remember, messire, that I am queen, and have commanded you to leave the room."

Dupuy muttered some words; but, as the great influence that Queen Isabel exercised over the old monarch was well known, he feared she might recover, whilst she remained so near him, that power which had so lately escaped her. He, therefore, bowed with more respect than he had as yet shown her, and left the room, as the queen had commanded him.

Scarcely was the door curtain dropped behind him and the two men who accompanied him, than the queen fell into, rather than took her seat upon an arm chair; then Charlotte's sobs burst forth, and Perrinet Leclerc rushed from the closet. He was even paler than usual, but it was evidently more from anger than fear. "Shall I kill that man?" he asked of the queen, his teeth closed, and his hand on his dagger.

The queen smiled bitterly; and Charlotte threw herself, weeping at her feet.

The blow that had struck the queen had reached these two young people.

"Kill him!" said the queen; "think you, young man, that I should want your arm or poignard for that? Kill him! and for what purpose? Look at that court, filled with soldiers. Kill him! and would that save Bourdon?"

Charlotte wept more bitterly: a personal grief, not less poignant was mingled with the sorrow she felt for her mistress. The queen had lost the happiness of love;

but Charlotte had lost the hope of it. She was the most to be pitied.

The queen continued:—

“You weep, Charlotte. You weep! And he whom you love is left to you! for you—you will only be separated for a time! You weep! and yet would I change my lot as a queen with yours. You weep! but you know not that I, who cannot weep, love Bourbon as you love this young man! Yet they will kill him, for they never pardon. He whom I love as dearly as you love this youth, must die, and I can do nothing to prevent his assassination: I must be ignorant of the moment when the steel will penetrate his bosom; and every minute of my life will be to me that of his death. At every moment my fears shall tell me that then, perhaps, he is calling me, naming me, struggling in his blood, and writhing in his agony; and I—I am here—I can do nothing—I, a queen—queen of France—Oh! torture! and I do not weep—I cannot weep?”

The queen wrung her hands and beat her face. The two young people wept, no longer for their own misfortune, but for that of the queen.

“Oh! what may we do?” said Charlotte.

“Command,” cried Leclerc.

“Nothing, nothing. Oh, ah, h—ll is in that word! To be ready to give my blood, my life, to save him whom I love, and with power to do nothing! Oh! if I had but these men, who have twice sported with the tortures of my heart! But powerless against them—powerless for him; and yet I have had some power. In a moment of the king’s madness, I might have caused him to sign the constable’s death-warrant, and, oh! fool that I was! I did not do it. D’Armagnac would now have been with death before him, rotting in prison, instead of him!—he, so beautiful and so young! he, who has never injured them! Ah! they will kill him, as they killed Louis of Orleans, who also never did them wrong! And the king—the king, who looks on all these murders coolly, and walks along in blood, assisted in his slippery path by the support of assassins! The insane, senseless king! O! God! O! God! have pity on me! Save me! avenge me!”

“Mercy!” cried Charlotte.

“D——n!” muttered Leclerc.

"I depart! They wish me to depart! No, no. Depart, before I know his fate? They shall tear me hence piecemeal. We will see if they dare to lay their hands upon their queen. I will cling to this spot while I have breath or strength. Oh! they *shall* tell me what is become of him; or, rather, when the night darkens, I will go myself to the prison." Taking a casket and opening it, she pursued: "I have gold—look there! gold enough for the ransom of a man's body and soul; but if that be not sufficient, here are jewels and pearls enough to purchase a principality. All these will I give—all, to the gaoler; and I will say, 'restore him to me living! give him back to me unscathed, and all these are yours! Yours! who have given me more than gold or jewels—yours, to whom I am still indebted, to whom I will still give more.'"

"Madame," exclaimed Leclerc, "say! shall I go to Paris? I have friends there, and will collect them; we can then attack the Châtelet."

"Ay!" said the queen, with bitterness, "to hasten his death—is it not so? Should you succeed in forcing the prison, you will find, on entering his dungeon, his dead body, yet warm and bleeding; for in less time can one poignard be buried in his heart than it will take all your friends to break through ten iron doors! No; nothing by force; that would only hasten his death. Go, depart; remain day and night before the Châtelet. If they remove him alive to another prison, follow him. If they murder him, accompany his body to the tomb; and, in either case, return and inform me, that, whether living or dead, I may know where he is."

Leclerc turned to leave the room. The queen stopped him.

"This way," she said, laying her finger on her lip.

She opened the door of the closet, and pressed a spring, when the woodwork slipped aside, and discovered the steps of a staircase cut in the wall.

"Follow me, Leclerc," said the queen.

And the imperious Isabel again became a timid woman, took the hand of the humble iron-merchant, now her only dependence, and led him forward. She preceded him, to guard against the frequent angles; sounding with her feet the floor of the narrow, dark passage, along which they were proceeding. After a few windings, Leclerc

discovered a gleam of light through the chinks of a door, which, on reaching, the queen partially opened. It led to a remote and isolated garden, at the bottom of which was the rampart. She followed the young man with her eyes, as he mounted the wall, where giving her a final salutation of mingled hope and respect, he disappeared into the trench below.

The confusion was so great that no one saw him.

Whilst the queen returns to her chamber, let us follow Leclerc, who, crossing the plain, towards the Bastille, descended the Rue St. Antoine without stopping, passed by the Grève, casting an anxious look at the gibbet stretching its lank arm towards the river. He stopped a moment to breathe on the bridge of Notre-Dame, and finally reached the corner of the building of the Grande Boucherie, where, perceiving that, from thence, nothing could either enter or leave the Châtelet without his perceiving it, he mingled with a group of citizens, who were talking of the cavalier's arrest.

"I assure you, Master Bourdichon," said an old woman to a citizen, whom she had secured by the button of his doublet—"I assure you that he has recovered. I have it from La Cochette, the gaoler's daughter at the Châtelet. She says that he has only got a bruise on the back of his head; nothing more."

"I do not contradict you, Dame Johanna," replied the citizen; "but all that does not account for his arrest."

"Oh! it is easy enough to guess that he was in communication with the English and Burgundians, to deliver up Paris to them, putting all in it to fire and sword; to coin money out of the church plate, and what not. And, what is more, they say that he was instigated to all this by Queen Isabel, who has not yet forgiven the Parisians for the assassination of the Duke of Orleans; indeed it is said that she will not rest satisfied till she has caused the Rue Barbette to be razed to the ground, and the house of the image of Notre-Dame burnt down.

"Give way, give way," cried a butcher; "here comes the torturer."

A man, clothed in red, traversed the crowd, who made way for his passage. As he approached the door of the Châtelet it opened, as if spontaneously, for his entrance, and closed behind him.

Every eye followed him. A momentary silence ensued : after which the conversation that had been interrupted was renewed.

"Oh! that is lucky," cried the old woman, letting go the doublet of Bourdichon. "I know the gaoler's daughter; and perhaps I may be permitted to see him put to the torture."

And she ran off as fast as her age and legs, which were not exactly of the same length, permitted her.

Having knocked at the door, a little wicket opened, and a fair young girl put out her gay, pleasant face. A little dialogue ensued; but it had not, it seemed, the result that Dame Johanna had expected, for the door remained closed; but the girl, putting her arm through the grated wicket, pointed to the air-hole of a dungeon, and disappeared. The old woman beckoned the crowd to approach, and some of them having joined her, she placed herself on her knees before the air-hole, and addressing those who surrounded her, said, "Come here, children, this is the air-hole of the prison; we shall not see him, but we shall hear him screaming, which is, at any rate, better than nothing."

Everybody, therefore, eagerly pressed towards this opening, which might have been taken for the mouth of hell; for ten minutes had not elapsed ere there issued from it a clanking of chains, cries of rage, and flashes of fire.

"Oh! I see the chafing-dish," cried the old woman; "look, the torturer has put his iron pincers into it. There, now he is blowing it."

At each breath of the bellows, the brazier sent forth such a vivid flash, that it might have been taken for subterranean lightning.

"There, now he is taking the pincers," she continued; "they are so red, that the end burns his fingers; he goes to the end of the dungeon; I can now see but his legs. Hush! hold your tongues; we shall hear."

A piercing scream arose. Every head was thrust towards the air-hole.

"Ah! there is the judge, who is interrogating him now," continued the old cicerone, who, as she was the first comer, had her head completely thrust between the two bars of the air-hole. "He does not answer!

Answer, then, you traitor! answer, you assassin!" she screamed; "confess your crimes!"

"Silence!" cried a number of voices.

The woman withdrew her head, but seized hold of a bar with each hand, that she might again resume her place after she had spoken. She then observed, with the calm conviction of one experienced in these things:

"You must know, that, if he confesses nothing, they cannot hang him."

Another scream recalled her face to the opening.

"Ah! it is changed," she cried; "for there are the pincers lying by the side of the brazier. 'Od rot him! he is already weary, that torturer."

The blows of a mallet were heard.

"No, no," resumed the woman, joyfully, "they are putting the *clavettes* on him."

*Clavettes* were boards, which were fastened with cords round the legs of the sufferer; a large iron wedge was then thrust between them, which, being forcibly driven in, flattens the flesh and crushes the bones.

It appeared that the cavalier confessed nothing, for the blows of the mallet succeeded each other with increasing force and rapidity. The torturer seemed to lose patience.

For some time no cries had been heard: a few dull groans had succeeded them, and then these also were heard no more. The noise of the mallet suddenly ceased.

Dame Johanna instantly rose. "It is all over for to-day," said she shaking the dust from her knees, and adjusting her bonnet. "He fainted without confessing anything." And she left the loop-hole, satisfied that a longer attendance was useless.

The perfect knowledge she appeared to possess of the manner in which these things were done, drew all the spectators after her, with the exception of one young man, who was leaning against the wall; it was Perrinet Leclerc.

A moment afterwards, as Dame Johanna had foreseen, the torturer came forth.

In the evening a priest entered the prison.

When the night was quite closed in, sentinels were placed, one of whom obliged Leclerc to remove himself: he went and sat down on a post, at the corner of the Pont-aux-Meuniers.

Two hours passed by. Although the night was dark, his eyes had become so accustomed to the gloom, that he could distinguish the place on the gray walls where the gates of the Châtelet was situated. He had not removed his hand from his poignard, and had not even thought of either eating or drinking.

It struck eleven o'clock. The last stroke was still vibrating, when the door of the Châtelet opened; two soldiers, each holding a sword in one hand and a torch in the other, appeared at the threshold; then came two men carrying a burden, followed by another whose face was concealed under a red hood: they went silently towards the Pont-aux-Meuniers.

When they arrived opposite Perrinet, he perceived that what they carried was a large leathern sack. He listened: a groan reached him. He no longer had any doubt.

In one moment his dagger was cut of its sheath, the two porters stretched on the ground, and the sack ripped entirely up. A man got out of it.

"Save yourself, cavalier," cried Leclerc; and, taking advantage of the utter stupefaction that his attack had caused to the little troop, to place himself beyond pursuit he glided under the sloping banks of the river, and quickly disappeared.

He whom he had attempted to rescue with so much courage, endeavoured to fly. He raised himself on his feet: but his legs, bruised and broken with the torture, bent under him, and he fell senseless, uttering a cry of agony and despair.

The man with the red hood gave a sign to the two porters who were not wounded. They took him on their shoulders and carried him to the middle of the bridge, where they stopped, and the red hood said, "'Tis well; throw him in here."

The order was executed as soon as given: a shapeless object revolved one instant in the air between the bridge and the river, and the splash of a heavy body was heard from the water.

At the same moment, a boat, manned by two men, drew towards the spot where the body had disappeared, following for an instant the current of the stream. Some seconds afterwards, whilst one of them was rowing, the other hooked up an object, that rose to the surface of the

water, and was about to deposit it in the boat, when the man with a red hood, who had mounted the parapet of the bridge, sent forth on the wind these solemn words, in a loud voice :

“ Let the justice of the king have its course.”

The boatman started ; and, in spite of his comrade's entreaties, he threw the body of the Chevalier de Bourbon back into the river.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

ABOUT six months had elapsed since the scene that we have endeavoured to portray in the preceding chapter. The night was closing on the great city ; and, from the summit of the gate of St. Germain, the belfries and towers with which Paris bristled in 1417 were seen, slowly, one by one, and in turn, to be enveloped in the fog, according as they were more or less distant. The pointed steeples of the Temple and of St. Martin, to the north, were the first that were concealed in the obscurity, which came rapid and thick as a tide. It soon reached and hid the sharp and ridgy pinnacles of St. Giles and St. Luc, which, in the gloom, looked at a distance like two giants prepared for combat ; it gained St. Jacques la Boucherie, which could still be seen in the increasing darkness, only because it there presented a vertical line of greater breadth ; it then joined the mist that arose from the Seine, which a heavy and moist wind raised in immense flakes. The eye could still distinguish, for a moment, athwart a vapoury veil, the old Louvre and its colonnade of towers, the metropolitan Notre-Dame, and the slender steeple of the St. Chapelle ; the mist, then, with the speed of a race-horse, gained the University, enveloped St. Genevieve, and reached the Sorbonne, wheeling around the house-tops. Then falling upon the streets, it passed the rampart, spread itself over the plain, and, extending itself, at last effaced the roseate line that the sun had left on the horizon as a last adieu to the earth, and in which, a few minutes before, the dark profile of the three steeples of St. Germain des Pres was delineated. Nevertheless, on the line of the ramparts that encircles the sleeping colossus like a girdle, the sentinels entrusted

with its safety were to be distinguished, at intervals of a hundred paces. The measured and monotonous sound of their footsteps resembles, to continue the comparison, the pulsation that shews life is still there, although for a moment it assumes the appearance of death. From time to time, the cry of "*Sentinel, watch!*" is heard, running, like an echo, from post to post, until, having made the circuit of the line, it dies away at the point from which it first arose.

Under the shadow of the St. Germain gate, whose square mass rises far above the ramparts, one of these sentinels is walking, sadder and more melancholy than the others. By his half-military, half-citizen costume, it is easy to conjecture that, although he who wears it for the time performs the duty of a soldier, he belongs to that corporation of artisans which, by order of the constable d'Armagnac, has furnished five hundred men for the city guard. Stopping from time to time, and resting upon the halberd which he carries, he directs his look vaguely in a certain direction, and then, with a sigh, resumes the circumscribed march of a nocturnal sentinel.

His attention was suddenly attracted by the voice of a man, who, from the road bordering the external trenches, requested the opening of the gate of St. Germain. This the benighted traveller seemed to expect from the kindness of the keeper, who had no authority to allow an entrance after nine o'clock in the evening, except on his own responsibility. It must be supposed that he did not overrate his influence; for the young sentinel had hardly heard his voice, before he descended the interior slope of the rampart, and tapping at a little window, rendered visible by the light of a lamp inside, called out sufficiently loud to be heard within, "Father! get up quickly, and open the gate for Messire Juvéna! des Ursins."

A movement of the lamp showed these words had been heard: an old man issued from the house, bearing a lantern in one hand and a bunch of keys in the other, and, accompanied by the young man who had called him, advanced under the archway of the massive gate.

Nevertheless, before he put the key into the lock, and as if not altogether satisfied by the assurance of his son, he addressed the persons whose impatient steps they could hear on the other side of the portcullis.

"Who are you?" he demanded.

"Open, Master Leclerc," was the reply: "I am John Juvenal des Ursins, a parliamentary counsellor of our lord the king. I have tarried late at the house of the prior of the abbey of St. Germain des Prés, and, as we are old acquaintances, I reckoned upon you."

"Ay, truly!" muttered Leclerc: "as old acquaintances as an old man and a boy can be. Your father, young man, might truly have said so; for we were born in the town of Troyes in the year 1340, and an acquaintance of sixty-eight years would deserve better than ours the title that you give it."

So saying, the keeper turned the key twice in the lock; fixed in an upright position the horizontal bar that secured the gate, and, pulling with one hand and pushing with the other, he succeeded in half opening the ponderous folds, that immediately gave entrance to a young man of from twenty-six to twenty-eight years of age.

"Thanks, Master Leclerc," he said, clapping the old man on the shoulder, with a gesture in which affection and respect were mingled. "Thanks, and reckon upon me, when an opportunity occurs, as I have depended upon you."

"Messire Juvenal," cried the young sentinel, "may I claim a share in that promise, as I have contributed to the service my father has rendered you? for had I not called him, you would have run great danger of passing the night outside the walls."

"Ah! it is you, Perrinet? And what do you in this uniform, at this hour of the night?"

"I am on guard, by order of monsieur the constable; and, as I had the privilege of selecting my post, I chose it near my aged father."

"And I was happy to see him," added the old man; "for he is a worthy boy, who fears God, honours the king, and loves his parents."

Old Leclerc held out a shrivelled and tremulous hand to his son, who pressed it between his own; Juvenal took the other.

"I thank you a second time, my old friend," said the latter: "do not remain any longer in the night air. I hope that no other troublesome fellow may come to prove your kindness further."

"He may as well not, Messire des Ursins; for were it

our lord the dauphin Charles, whom may God preserve, I think that I should not do for him what I have done for you. Keeping the keys of a city is a heavy responsibility, during these disturbed times. Therefore they never leave my girdle while I wake, nor my pillow while I sleep."

After having thus eulogized his own vigilance, the old man again shook the hands he held, picked up the lantern that he had placed on the ground, and re-entered the house, leaving the two young men alone.

"What wish you of me, Perrinet?" asked Juvenal, leaning on the arm of the young iron-seller whom we introduced in the preceding chapter, and whom we again meet here.

"News, Messire," replied Leclerc. "You who are a master of requests, and a councillor, must know all that occurs: and I am in much anxiety, as it is reported that things of great consequence have happened near Tours, where the queen is."

"Truly," observed Juvenal, "you could not apply at a better quarter: you shall hear the very latest."

"Let us remount the ramparts, then, if you please," said the young sentinel; "the constable will probably soon make his nightly round: and should he not find me at my post, my old father might lose his situation, and I might gain a few blows of a sword-belt."

Juvenal familiarly took hold of Perrinet's arm, and the two young men soon appeared on the momentarily deserted rampart.

"Listen, now," began Juvenal, "how things have happened."

The other exhibited the most earnest attention.

"You know that the queen was a prisoner at Tours, under the guard of Dupuy, the most suspicious and the least amiable of gaolers. In spite of his vigilance, however, the queen managed to write to the Duke of Burgundy, claiming his assistance. The duke quickly comprehended what a powerful ally Isabel of Bavaria would be to him, since, in the minds of many, his rebellion against the king would thenceforth become a chivalrous protection accorded to a woman.

"As Madame and the Duchess of Bavaria were not strictly watched as the queen, the latter, through them, received intelligence of the duke's proceedings; and, when she learned that he had laid siege to Corbeil, and

that his troops had penetrated even to Chartres, she did not despair of escaping.

“To effect her purpose, she feigned a profound devotion at the abbey of Marmoutiers, and induced Madame to request permission of Dupuy that the princesses and their women might go there to mass. Dupuy, brutal as he was, dared not to refuse the daughter of his king a favour that appeared to him to be of so little consequence. The queen soon insensibly accustomed her gaolor to her devotional visits to Marmoutiers. She seemed no longer to observe the insolence of the man, and spoke more gently to him. Dupuy, pleased at seeing a queen’s pride bend beneath his will, became more courteous. He permitted her to visit the abbey whenever she wished, taking the precaution always to accompany her, and to place guards at intervals on the road, although, as the enemy were fifty leagues distant, he thought these precautions superfluous.

“The queen remarked too that these soldiers, as if confident also of the uselessness of this caution, performed their duty with extreme negligence, and that they might be easily discomfited, if they were suddenly attacked. She, therefore, formed the project of getting herself carried off by the Duke of Burgundy. She imparted to him these particulars by one of her followers. He saw they were favourable; and the queen, by another message, informed him of the very day on which the project was to be accomplished.

“The enterprise was hazardous. It became necessary to traverse fifty leagues of country without discovery. If the duke attempted this undertaking with a small party, Dupuy had guards enough to resist; if he went with a large body, it appeared certain that he would be forewarned of it, when he might remove the queen to Maine, Berri, or Anjou. But the Duke of Burgundy was not discouraged. He well understood that the only means of accomplishing his design was to use the authority of Isabel’s name; and he took his measures so well, that he succeeded without detection, and in the following manner.”

The attention of Perrinet redoubled.

“He selected from his army, ten thousand of his bravest and best mounted horsemen: and, after men and horses had abundantly eaten and drank, on the night of the

eighth day of the siege of Corbeil, he placed himself at their head, and took the road to Tours. They continued their march during the night in the most profound silence, halting only one hour, before daylight, to feed their horses. They then resumed their journey with greater speed than during the night, and, after a march of fifteen successive hours, and as the day closed, they again halted at a distance of only six leagues from Tours. The appearance of this army caused great astonishment in every place through which it passed. Its silence and rapidity of movement much surprised the inhabitants. Nevertheless, on the morning of the second day, the Duke of Burgundy, fearing that, in spite of all his precautions, the queen's guards might be forewarned, pushed on to Marmoutiers, which he reached at eight o'clock in the morning, and, surrounding the church, commanded the Sire Hector de Saveuse to force his way into it with sixty men. When Dupuy perceived this troop, which he recognized as Burgundian by the red cross they bore, he commanded the queen to follow him, designing to convey her through a little side-door, where her carriage awaited her; but she formally refused to do so. He then made a sign to two of his guards to carry her off forcibly; but she clasped the grating of the choir, near which she was kneeling, passing her arm through the bars, and swearing by her Saviour that they should rather kill her than tear her from that spot. The ladies and princesses who accompanied her, ran here and there imploring succour and assistance, insomuch, that the Sire de Saveuse, seeing no use in further hesitation, and crossing himself, that God might pardon him for what he was about to do in that holy house, drew his sword, his guards followed his example.

“On this, Dupuy, well aware that it was all over with him, escaped by the side-door, threw himself upon his horse, and galloped quickly to Tours, where he gave the alarm, and where they immediately prepared to defend themselves.

“As soon as he left the church, the Sire de Saveuse advanced towards the queen, and saluted her respectfully, in the name of the Duke of Burgundy.

“‘Where is he?’ demanded Isabel.

“‘Before the entrance of the church, where he awaits you.’

“The queen and the princesses immediately proceeded towards the principal entrance, through a line of men-at-arms, who vociferated, ‘Long live the queen, and his excellence the dauphin!’ The Duke of Burgundy, on perceiving her, dismounted, and put his knee on the ground.

“‘My dear cousin,’ she said, graciously approaching, and raising him, ‘I ought to love you more than any other man in the kingdom. You have abandoned everything to obey my commands, and deliver me from my prison. Rest assured, that I will never forget these things. I see well that you have always loved our sire the king, his family, the realm, and the public good.’

“As she spoke, she gave him her hand to kiss.

“The duke answered with a few words of respect and devotedness, and leaving with her the Sire de Saveuse and a thousand horse, he advanced rapidly towards Tours with the rest of his army, and reached that city before it had recovered from its astonishment. No resistance was offered him; and, whilst the greater part of his troops made their way into the town, over the lower part of the walls, the duke himself entered by the gates, which Dupuy’s soldiers had abandoned. That wretched man himself was among the prisoners, and served as an example to posterity that no one ought ever to fail in respect towards royalty, to whatever extremity it may be reduced.”

“What then, was his fate?” demanded Perrinet.

“He was hanged at mid-day,” replied Juvenal.

“And the queen?”

“She returned to Chartres, whence she had departed for Troyes, in Champagne, where she holds her court. The states-general of Chartres, who are devoted to her, have proclaimed her regent; and she now uses a seal, on one side of which appear the quartered arms of France and Bavaria, and on the other her profile, with these words—*Isabel, by the grace of God, Queen Regent of France.*”

These political details appeared to interest Perrinet Leclerc very slightly; whilst, on the contrary, he seemed to desire something else, which he hesitated to demand. At last, after a moment’s silence, and when he saw that Messire Juvenal was preparing to take leave of him, he asked him, in a tone that he endeavoured to render as indifferent as possible.

“ And is it reported that any accident happened to the ladies that accompanied the queen ?”

“ None whatever,” replied Juvenal.

Perrinet breathed more freely. “ In what quarter of the town does her majesty hold her court ?”

“ At the chateau.”

“ A final question, messire. You who are learned, and understand Latin, Greek, and Geography, tell me, I beg of you, towards which quarter of the horizon must I turn, to look in the direction of Troyes ?”

Juvenal considered a minute; then, laying his left hand on Perrinet's head, he turned towards a certain point of the compass, to which he directed at the same time his right hand.

“ There,” said he to him, “ look between the steeples of St. Yves, and the Sorbonne, a little to the moon, which is rising behind the latter. Do you perceive one star that is more brilliant than the others ?”

Perrinet made a sign that he saw it.

“ It is called Mercury. Now, if you draw a vertical line from the place where that star appears to be suspended, to the earth, that line, viewed from this spot, would cut the town, of which you demand the position, into two parts.”

Perrinet allowed a portion of the astronomico-geometrical demonstration of the young master of requests, which appeared rather obscure to him, to pass without observation, considering only the simple fact, that, by looking a little to the left of the steeple of the Sorbonne, his eyes would rest on the very spot where Charlotte breathed. The rest was of little consequence: was not that spot the whole world to him ?

He signified his thanks to Juvenal, who departed gravely, enchanted at having given his young fellow-countryman that proof of a science, the affectation of which, with the mania of wishing every one to believe that he was descended from the family of the Orsini,\* were the only faults with which this severe and impartial historian can be reproached.

Perrinet remained alone, leaning against a tree: and although that portion of Paris, which was then called the

\* Juvenal's father derived his name from the Hotel des Ursines, presented to him by the city of Paris, on the portico of which two young bears at play were sculptured.

university lay before his eyes, he saw it not, as his imagination carried him beyond it. In a short time, as if his eye had really penetrated the gloomy space, he saw only the town of Troyes on the horizon, in the town only the old chateau, and in the old chateau, only one chamber, that which Charlotte occupied. It also showed itself to him like a scene in a theatre, closed on all sides, except on that facing the spectator; and there, in that chamber, (the colour of the hangings, and the form of the furniture of which he figured in his imagination,) sat a young, fair, and graceful girl, released from her attendance on the person of the queen; her white garments irradiating the gloomy apartment she occupied like the angels of Martin and Danby, who carrying their light in themselves, illuminate the chaos through which they pass, where the light of the sun had never penetrated.

By concentrating all the powers of his mind, this fanciful creation had become a reality to Leclerc: and if, instead of this scene of calmness and repose, his imagination had presented to him Charlotte incurring danger, he would unhesitatingly have stretched out his arms, and precipitated himself forward, sure of having only one step to take to protect her.

Perrinet was so completely absorbed in this contemplation—which might induce those who have experienced it to believe that there exists, at certain moments, and in certain organizations, a real faculty of second sight—that he did not hear the noise caused by a troop of horsemen mounting the Rue du Paon, and who, a minute afterwards, drew up a few paces from him on the rampart, the security of which he was charged to watch over.

The commander of this night patrol made a sign for his troop to halt, and advanced alone along the wall. He then sought the sentinel who ought to be there, and his eyes rested on Perrinet, who, with unchanged position, absorbed in his waking dream, and his gaze still directed towards Troyes, had observed nothing that was passing around him.

The commander of the little troop drew nearer to this motionless figure, and, with the point of his sword, raised the hat that covered Leclerc's head.

The vision vanished, with the rapidity of a gilded palace at the shock of an earthquake; a kind of electric

agitation pervaded his whole frame, and, with an instinctive motion, he struck aside with his halberd the sword that threatened him, crying out, "To the rescue, students!"

"You are not yet quite awake, young man, or you are dreaming aloud," said the constable, as, with the blade of his sword, he severed like a rush, the iron-tipped lance that Leclerc had pointed at the visor of his helmet.

On recognizing the voice of the governor of Paris, Leclerc threw down the staff that remained in his hand, crossed his arms on his breast, and calmly waited until the constable should fix the punishment which he knew he had incurred.

"Ah! messieurs the citizens," continued the Count d'Armagnac, "the guard of the city is confided to you; and it is thus that you perform your duty! Ho there! my masters," he added, turning towards his troop, which was approaching him, "three willing men."

Three men advanced from the ranks.

"Let one of you complete the guard of this rascal," said he.

A soldier silently dismounted, cast his horse's bridle to one of his comrades, and proceeded to assume the post that Leclerc had occupied under the shadow of the gate at St. Germain.

"As for you," continued the constable, addressing the other two who were awaiting his orders, "dismount, my lads, and reckon on the shoulders of this vagabond twenty-five strokes of your sword-sheaths."

"Your excellence," observed Leclerc, with great coolness, "that is the punishment of a soldier, and I am not one."

"Execute my order," added the constable, putting his foot in the stirrup.

Leclerc advanced and took him by the arm.

"Reflect, sir," said he.

"I have said twenty-five—not one more, not one less," replied the constable; and he placed himself in the saddle.

"Your excellence," cried Leclerc, seizing his horse's bridle—"your excellence, it is the punishment of a serf and a vassal, and I am neither the one nor the other: I am a freeman, and a citizen of Paris. Order me a fort-

night's or a month's imprisonment, and I will submit to it."

"Verily," said the constable, "we shall be obliged to find a punishment for these wretches of citizens to suit their tastes! Back!"

With these words, he spurred his horse, and, as it sprang forward, he aimed a blow with his mailed hand at Leclerc's bare head, and stretched him at the feet of the two soldiers who were to execute the orders he had just given.

Such commands were always received with pleasure by the men-at-arms, when the recipient of punishment was a citizen. A genuine antipathy existed between the soldiers and the corporations which the political combinations that from time to time arose among them could never entirely destroy. It was therefore rarely that a soldier and a student met in a remote street without the one flourishing his club, and the other his sword; and we may as well confess, that Perrinet Leclerc was not one who would readily yield the crown of the causeway to avoid such a rencontre.

It was, therefore, a piece of genuine good fortune to the constable's men-at-arms to receive the commands he had just given; and when Perrinet rolled over at their feet, they went so willingly to work, that on recovering his senses, he found himself naked to the girdle, his hands tied across above his head, and fastened to the branch of a tree, in such a manner that his toes merely touched the ground. The soldiers then having unfastened their swords from their belts, and laid their blades on the grass, began with the pliant and elastic sheaths, to strike alternately, with as much coolness and regularity as the shepherds of Virgil.

The third soldier had approached to count the strokes.

The first blows fell on that fair and well-knit body without appearing to produce any impression on him who received them, although the blue stripes they left behind might be easily distinguished by the light of the moon. Shortly, however, at every blow, the instrument of punishment brought away a strip of flesh. Insensibly the sound of the blows changed its character. From sharp and whistling, they became dull and heavy, as if falling on a soft body; and as the execution drew towards its

close, the soldiers were obliged to strike with one hand only, the other being employed in guarding their faces from the splashes of blood and particles of flesh that spouted up at every stroke.

At the twenty-fifth blow they stopped, religious observers of their orders. The condemned had emitted no cry—had uttered no complaint.

As it was then finished, one of the soldiers resumed his sword, and quietly returned it to the scabbard, whilst the other cut the cord which bound the young man to the tree.

As soon as the cord was severed, Perrinet Leclerc, who only retained his position whilst upheld by it, fell to the ground, bit the earth, and fainted.

## CHAPTER XIX.

ONE month after the occurrence of these things in Paris, great political events took place around that city.

The French monarchy had never been threatened with more imminent ruin than at that moment: three parties were furiously tearing the kingdom to pieces, each striving to appropriate to itself the richest portion of it.

Henry V. of England, accompanied by his brothers, the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, had, as we have said, landed at Touques, in Normandy; where he immediately attacked the chateau of that name, which, after four days' resistance, had capitulated. Thence he proceeded to lay regular siege to Caen, which was defended by Lafayette, and Montevais, two noblemen of merit and renown. Their obstinate resistance only caused the town to be taken by assault. The recent recollection of the victories of Hontleur and Agincourt, mingling with the reports of these fresh triumphs, spread consternation throughout Normandy, and more than a hundred thousand persons fled and sought refuge in Brittany; insomuch that the King of England, in order to conquer Harcourt, Beaumont le Roger, Evreux, Falaise, Baveux, Lisieux, Coutances, Saint-Lo, Avranches, Argentan, and Alencon, had only to present himself before these towns, or to send detachments to them. Cherbourg alone, defended by Jean d'Angeunes, detained him longer before its walls

than all the towns we have named put together; but this place also at last surrendered; and with it, all Normandy, of which it is the key, fell under the dominion of Henry V. of England.

On their parts, the queen and the duke held Champagne, Burgundy, Picardy, and part of the Isle of France. Senlis declared for the Burgundians; and Jean de Villiers, lord of L'Ile-Adam, who commanded for the king at Pontoise, having cause of complaint against the constable, who treated him with haughtiness, had delivered up that town, which was only a few leagues from Paris, to the Duke of Burgundy, who, having sent a strong reinforcement to it, had continued L'Ile-Adam as its governor.

The remainder of France where the constable commanded in the name of the king and the dauphin, was the less able to resist these its enemies, because the Count d'Armagnac, being obliged to concentrate all his forces on the capitol, had not been able to execute this movement without causing great loss and suffering to the citizens, and the peasants of the surrounding country; his soldiers, as they were without pay or provisions, being forced to live at free quarters. The discontent was, therefore, general; and the constable had almost as much to fear from his allies as from his enemies.

The Duke of Burgundy, despairing of getting possession of Paris by force, laboured to take advantage of the general discontent that the constable had excited against the king's government, and to establish friendly communications in the city. Agents, devoted to his interest, succeeded in entering it in disguise, and a conspiracy was formed to deliver up to him the gate of St. Marceau. An ecclesiastic, and a few citizens, who lived close by, had procured false keys for it, and had sent a message to the duke, to fix the day and the hour of the enterprise. The execution of this he intrusted to the Sire Hector de Saveuse, who had already given a proof of his skill and courage, in carrying off the queen at Tours; the duke himself, at the head of six thousand men, setting out to support him.

While this army is silently advancing to its hazardous attempt, we will introduce the reader to the great saloon of the Chateau of Troyes, in Champagne, where Isabel held her court, surrounded by the nobility of Burgundy and France.

Assuredly, he who saw her thus seated on her gilded throne, in that Gothic chamber, where was displayed all the magnificence of the house of Burgundy—he who saw her smiling to one, graciously offering her hand to another and exchanging a few soft words with a third; and who then, searching the heart of that proud princess, could there read the feelings of hatred and revenge with which it was torn asunder, would have been terrified at the combat she must have had to sustain in confining these violent passions to her own bosom, and in exhibiting so calm and unruffled a brow.

The young nobleman who stood at her right hand, and to whom she most frequently addressed herself, as he was the last who arrived at court, was Sire Villiers de l'Isle Adam. He, also, under a gracious smile and gentle words, had projects of hatred and revenge concealed, in the furtherance of which he had already done something, by surrendering to the Duke of Burgundy the town entrusted to his care. But, as the duke thought, that, having acted traitorously once, he might do so again, he was unwilling that he should accompany him in his undertaking against Paris; and for this reason he had left him with the queen, as at a post of honour.

On either side, and a little behind her, leaning on the back of her chair, in an attitude half respectful, half familiar, were our old acquaintances, the Sires de Giac and de Graville, engaged in private conversation. Having paid their ransom, they again found themselves at liberty to offer their fealty and their swords to their beautiful sovereign. As she turned from time to time towards them, her brow contracted, for they were the brothers-in-arms of the Chevalier de Bourdon; and as often as the name of that unfortunate nobleman was uttered by them, it appeared to her as a mournful and unexpected echo of that voice that cried for vengeance at the depths of her heart.

On her left, and at the foot of the steps that led to the royal throne, stood the Baron Jean de Vaux, recounting to the Lords de Chatelux, de l'An, and de Bar, how, some days before, he with his kinsman Hector de Saveuse, had surprised the Sire Helyon de Jaqueville in the church of Notre-Dame of Chartres: how, that they might not stain the marble altar with his blood, they had dragged him from the church; and then, as they had sworn his death,

in spite of his prayers and entreaties, in spite of an offer of fifty thousand gold crowns as ransom, they had wounded him so severely that he had only survived three days.

Behind these noble lords, and in a circular line, stood a crowd of pages, richly dressed in their masters' or ladies' colours, conversing also, but in a lower tone, of love and of the chase.

In the midst of this general buzz proceeding from these diverse conversations, the queen's voice was occasionally heard to rise. All then were silent, and the question she addressed to any of the young noblemen who were present, as well as his reply, were distinctly heard by every one, when the general conversation was again renewed.

"You mean then, to say, Sire de Graville," said the queen, interrupting the general conversation in the manner already described, and turning half-round towards the young nobleman, who stood nearly behind her, "you mean, then, to say that our cousin of Armagnac has sworn, by the Virgin and Christ, never to wear the red cross of Burgundy, which we, his sovereign, have adopted as the rallying sign of our brave and loyal defenders?"

"Those are his own words, madame the queen."

"And did you not drive them back into his mouth with the pommel of your sword or the hilt of your dagger, Sire de Graville?" observed Villiers de l'Île Adam, in a tone that betrayed some jealousy.

"In the first place, my Lord de Villiers," answered De Graville, "I had neither dagger nor sword, as I was his prisoner. Besides, the presence of so great a warrior does not fail to impose some degree of respect on whoever may stand within it, however brave he be. But I know one to whom he used harsher words than those I have repeated: that man was free; he carried at his side a dagger and a sword; and yet he was afraid, as it appears, to follow the counsel he now bestows on me with an audacity from which the absence of the constable must somewhat detract in the eyes of our royal sovereign."

And the Sire de Graville quietly resumed his conversation with Giac.

L'Île Adam made a movement, which the queen arrested.

"And shall we not force the constable to falsify his oath, Sire de Villiers?" she observed.

"Listen, madame," replied L'Île Adam. "I swear,

like him, by the Virgin and Christ, never to eat at a table or sleep in a bed, till I have seen the Constable d'Armagnac bearing the red cross of Burgundy; and if I break this vow, may God show no mercy to my soul either in this world or in the next."

"The Sire de Villiers," said the Baron Jean de Vaux, turning his head, and looking sarcastically over his shoulder at him, "makes a vow which he will have no great difficulty in fulfilling; for it is probable that before sleep and hunger assail him, we shall learn, this evening, that his excellence the Duke of Burgundy has entered the capital, in which case the constable will be too happy, on his knees, to present the keys of his gates to the queen."

"God grant that it may be so, baron," cried Isabel of Bavaria. "It is high time that this beautiful kingdom of France should enjoy some peace and tranquillity. And I rejoice that an opportunity is offered of recovering Paris, without incurring the chance of a combat, in which your courage would doubtless ensure us the victory; but in which every drop of blood that was shed would be drawn from the veins of my subjects."

"Gentlemen," said De Giac, "when shall we enter the capital?"

At this moment a great noise was heard without, as of a considerable troop of horse approaching at a gallop.—Hasty steps resounded under the peristyle; the double doors of the apartment were thrown open; and a knight in full armour, covered with dust, his helmet hacked and indented by blows, advanced into the middle of the room, and dashed his ensanguined casque on a table, with a violent execration.

It was the Duke of Burgundy himself.

All present uttered an exclamation of surprise, and stood terrified at his paleness.

"Betrayed!" he cried, striking his forehead with his mailed hands—"betrayed by a miserable, shopkeeping fellmonger. To behold Paris! actually to touch it!—Paris, my city—to be within half a league of it—only to have to stretch out my hand to grasp it—and yet to fail; to fail through the treachery of a miserable citizen, who had not a heart capacious enough to contain a secret!—Ah! truly, gentlemen, you look at me with an air of astonishment! You fancied me at this moment thundering at the gates of the palace of the Louvre, or of the

Hotel de St. Paul—did you not? But no! I, John of Burgundy, whom they name the Fearless, have fled! Yes, gentlemen, I have fled! and left behind me Hector de Saveuse, who could not fly! and I have left in the city men whose heads are at this moment falling, while they cry, ‘Long live Burgundy!’ and I cannot assist them! Do you understand, gentlemen? There is a horrible revenge due, and we will take it, will we not? And our turn shall come? And when it does, we will give the executioner some work; and will cause heads to fall that will cry out, ‘Long live Armagnac!’ And in our turn—hell and the devil—in our turn! Oh! curses light on that constable! That man will drive me mad, if I am not so already!”

And Duke John burst into such a paroxysm of laughter as was horrible to hear: then, turning sharply round, stamping his feet, and tearing his hair out by handfuls, he rolled, rather than sat down, on the steps of the queen’s seat.

Isabel, much frightened, threw herself back.

The Duke of Burgundy gazed at her, resting on both his hands, and shading his head, on which his bushy hair was bristling like a lion’s mane.

“Queen,” said he, “it is for you that all these things are done. I speak not of my blood”—and he passed his hand over his brow, which was laid open by a wound—“there yet remains enough in me, and I regret not what I have lost. I speak of that of others, with which the plains in the neighbourhood of Paris are sufficiently enriched to bear double crops; and whilst Burgundy is against France, and sister against sister, the Englishman is coming—the Englishman, whom nothing stops, whom no one resists!” Turning then towards the assembled noblemen, he cried, with yet more violence, “Oh, know you not, gentlemen, that we are mad!”

Every one perceived that the duke was in one of his moments of violence, that allowed of no interruption or advice. Every one, therefore, let him talk on, knowing that he would soon return to his hatred against the king and the constable, and to his favourite project, the capture of Paris.

“When I think that, at this very moment,” he continued, “I might be at the Hotel de St. Paul, where the dauphin is, and hear that brave population of Paris, of

whom, after all, three-fourths are for me, cry 'Long live Burgundy!' that you, my queen, might issue real order throughout entire France, and sign genuine edicts—that I might see this cursed constable begging for pardon and pity—oh! this will happen," he continued, raising himself to his full height—"this will be, will it not, gentlemen? It shall be: for I have determined it; and, if one amongst you should contradict me, he will have lied in his throat."

"Monsieur le Duc," said the queen, "calm yourself. I will send for a physician to dress your wound, unless you prefer that I myself—"

"Thanks, madame, thanks," replied the duke; "it is a mere scratch. I would to God that my brave Hector de Saveuse had not received a worse."

"And what wound did he, then, receive?"

"What know I of it? I had not even time to dismount, to inquire whether he were living or dead. But I saw him fall, with a bolt from a cross-bow in the middle of his body. Poor Hector! it is the blood of Helyon de Jacquville that returns upon him! Take care of yourself, Messire Jean de Vaux! You shared in the murder. Should a battle occur, you may perhaps share in the punishment."

"Many thanks, your excellence," replied Jean de Vaux; "but should that happen, my last sigh shall be for my noble master, John Duke of Burgundy—my last thought for my noble mistress, Queen Isabel of Bavaria."

"Ay, ay, my old baron," cried John the Fearless, with a laugh, as he began gradually to forget his anger, "I know that you are brave, and that, if at your last hour God does not take your soul, you are the man to dispute it with the devil himself, and to remain master of it too, in spite of the little peccadilloes which certainly give Satan some right to it."

"I will do my best, your excellence."

"'Tis well; but, gentlemen, if the queen has no commands for us, my advice is, that we should take some repose, which may be useful for us to-morrow. It is an entirely new war to begin, and God knows when it will end."

Queen Isabel of Bavaria arose, indicating by a gesture that she approved of the Duke of Burgundy's proposal,

and left the room, resting on the arm that the Sire de Gravelle had offered her.

The Duke of Burgundy, already as forgetful of what had happened as if it had been a dream, followed them, laughing with Jean de Vaux, and apparently totally insensible of the pain of his wound, which presented a red and bloody gash on his forehead. Chatelux, De l'An, and De Bar came next; and at last, De Giac and L'Ile-Adam: they met at the door.

"And your vow?" said De Giac, laughing.

"I will observe it," replied L'Ile-Adam, "and that commencing from this evening."

They left the room.

A few minutes afterwards, that room, which an instant before was filled with confused sounds and brilliant lights, had become the domain of silence and obscurity.

If we have succeeded in giving our readers an exact knowledge of the character of Isabel of Bavaria, they will easily imagine that the news which John of Burgundy had announced to her, and which destroyed all her hope, produced an effect upon her very different from that which we have seen it produce on the duke. From his coolness in the combat, the latter had passed to the rage excited by reflection; which in its turn, had spent itself in words. Isabel, on the contrary, had listened to the recital with the cool calculation of a revengeful but politic soul. It was gall heaped upon a heart already surcharged with gall—a heart where so many passions brooded in silence, concealed from every eye, to be discharged from it in one burst: as a volcano throws forth, intermingled with its own lava, every extraneous substance that may, during its moments of repose, have been cast into it by the hands of men.

Nevertheless, on entering her own chamber, her countenance was pale, her arms rigid, and her teeth clenched. Too much agitated to sit down, trembling too much to stand up, she seized one of the columns of the bed with a convulsive grasp, let her head fall on the arm that supported her, and, bending forward with a burning oppression in her bosom, she called on Charlotte.

Some seconds elapsed, without any reply, or any sound in the adjoining room indicating that she was heard.

"Charlotte!" she repeated, stamping her foot, and

uttering the word with so inarticulate and hollow an expression, that it resembled more the cry of a wild beast than a name pronounced by a human voice.

Almost immediately, the young girl made her appearance, fearful and trembling, at the door. She had distinguished, in that well-known accent of her mistress, all the rage and menace that it contained.

"Did you not hear that I called you?" asked the queen; "and must I always do so twice?"

"A thousand pardons, noble mistress: but I was there—with—"

"With whom?"

"With the young man whom you know—whom you have already seen—in whom you had the goodness to interest yourself."

"Who?—his name?"

"Perrinet Leclerc."

"Leclerc!" cried the queen; "whence does he come?"

"From Paris."

"I must see him."

"He, also, madame, wished to speak with you, and begged me to inform you; but I dared not!"

"Bring him in, I tell you—quick! instantly! where is he?"

"There," said the young girl; and, raising the tapestry, she called, "Perrinet Leclerc."

He rushed into, rather than entered, the apartment; and the queen and he found themselves face to face.

It was the second time that the humble iron-dealer was about to treat, on equal terms, with the haughty Queen of France. Twice, in spite of the difference of their conditions, the same feelings had brought them into contact from the two extremities of the social scale: the first time it was love—the second, revenge.

"Perrinet!" said the queen.

"Madame!" replied Perrinet, looking steadily at her, and not quailing beneath his sovereign's eye.

"How is it I have not seen you since?" asked Isabel.

"And for what purpose should you?" replied the youth.

"You desired me, if he were carried alive to another prison, to follow him to the door; if they laid his body in a tomb, to accompany it there, and whether he was living or dead, to return and inform you. *He is there!* Queen, they foresaw that you might have saved him, or,

at least, have disinterred his dead body; so they threw him, living and mutilated, into the Seine."

"And you, wretch! why did you neither save nor avenge him?"

"I was alone, madame—they were six; two of them died. I did what I could; and now I come to do more."

"Let us hear," said the queen

"Ah! madame, do you not execrate the constable? You would recover Paris, I know; and you would willingly grant a favour to the man who should offer, at the same time to deliver the latter into your hands, and to avenge you of the former: ha!"

The queen smiled in a manner peculiar to her. "Oh!" she replied, "everything that man would ask of me he should have—everything: half my life, half my blood; only tell me where he is."

"Who?"

"That man."

"It is me, queen."

"You! you!" cried Isabel in astonishment.

"Yes, madame."

"And how?"

"I am son of the sheriff Leclerc. My father keeps the keys of the city under his pillow at night. I can go some evening, embrace him, and sup with him: and then conceal myself in the house, instead of leaving it; and during the night, I can enter his chamber, steal the keys, and open the gates."

Charlotte uttered a slight cry. Perrinet did not appear to hear it; and the queen paid no attention to it.

"Yes, that might be," asked Isabel, reflecting.

"And it shall be, just as I have said," replied Leclerc.

"But," interposed Charlotte, timidly, "if, the moment you were taking the keys, your father should awake?"

Leclerc's hair rose up on his head, and the perspiration streamed from his brow at the very idea. But, after an instant, he put his hand to his poignard, half unsheathed it, and said—"I will send him to sleep again!"

Charlotte uttered a second cry, and fell upon a chair.

"Yes," exclaimed Leclerc, without paying any attention to his nearly insensible mistress—"yes, I may be a traitor and a parricide, but I will avenge myself!"

"What then, have they done to you?" said Isabel. And she approached him, and, taking his arm, looked at

him with the smile of a woman who appreciates revenge, however atrocious it may be, and at whatever price it may be obtained.

"What does it signify to you, queen? That is my secret. All you need care to know is, whether I shall keep my promise, if you keep yours."

"Well, then, what is it you desire? Is it Charlotte, whom you love?"

Perrinet shook his head with a bitter laugh.

"If it be gold, you shall have it."

"No," said Perrinet.

"Nobility? honours? If we take Paris, I will give you the command of it, and create you a count."

"That is not it," murmured Leclerc.

"What then?" said the queen.

"You are the Regent of France?"

"Yes."

"You have the power of life and death?"

"Yes."

"You have caused a seal to be made, that can confer your power on him who possesses a parchment bearing it?"

"Well?"

"Well, then, I require this seal at the bottom of a parchment, and that this parchment shall give me a life—a life with which I may do as I please, for which I shall be accountable to none, and which I may have the right to dispute even with the executioner."

The queen grew pale.

"Is it neither that of the Dauphin Charles, nor of the king?" she asked.

"No."

"A parchment, and my royal seal!" cried the queen hastily.

Leclerc took both from a table, and presented them to her. She wrote,

"We, Isabel of Bavaria, by the grace of God, Regent of France; holding on account of the seizure of his majesty the king, the government of the realm, grant to Perrinet Leclerc, dealer in iron, at the Petit-Pont, our right of life and death over—"

"The name?" asked Isabel.

"Over the Count d'Armagnac, constable of France, and governor of the city of Paris," replied Leclerc.

"Ah!" said Isabel, letting fall the pen, "it is at least to kill him that you ask his life, is it not?"

"It is so."

"And you will tell him, then, I trust, in the hour of his death, that I take Paris—his city, his capital—in exchange for my lover's life, which he took from me. Blow for blow! You will tell him so?"

"No conditions!" cried Leclerc.

"No seal, then," said the queen, pushing aside the parchment.

"I will tell him so, then—be quick!"

"By your soul?"

"By my soul!"

The queen resumed her pen, and continued:

"We grant to Perrinet Leclerc, dealer in iron at the Petit-Pont, our right of life and death over the Count d'Armagnac, constable of France, and governor of Paris, renouncing for ever our power and right over the person of the aforesaid constable."

She signed it, and affixed her seal by the side of her signature.

"Receive it," she said, presenting the parchment.

"Thanks, madame," replied Leclerc, taking it.

"It is fiendish!" exclaimed Charlotte.

The young girl, pure and fair, seemed like an angel forced to assist at a compact between two demons.

"And now," demanded Leclerc, "a man of action, with whom I may concert and communicate: noble or base-born, it is the same to me, provided he be powerful and willing."

"Call a valet, Charlotte," said the queen.

Charlotte obeyed, and a valet made his appearance.

"Inform the Lord Villiers de l'Île-Adam that I desire his presence immediately."

The valet bowed, and left the room.

L'Île-Adam, faithful to his vow, had thrown himself on the carpet, enveloped in his martial cloak; he had, therefore, only to rise to be ready to appear before the queen. In five minutes, he was in her presence.

Isabel advanced to meet him; and, without paying the slightest attention to his respectful salutation, said,

"Sire de Villiers, here is a young man who delivers into my hands the keys of Paris. I want a nobleman of

courage and action to whom I may entrust them, and have thought of you."

L'Ile-Adam started: his eyes flashed, and he turned towards Leclerc, stretching forth his hand to press his; but when he perceived, by the garb of the iron-seller, the base extraction of him to whom he was about to give this mark of equality, his hand fell down to his side, and his countenance resumed the habitual expression of haughtiness which it had for a moment abandoned.

None of these movements escaped Leclerc, who remained motionless, with his arms crossed on his bosom, as well when L'Ile-Adam offered his hand as when he withdrew it.

"Retain your hand to strike the enemy, Sire l'Ile-Adam," said Leclerc, laughing, "although I have some right to touch it; for, like you, I sell my king and my country. Retain your hand, Lord de Villiers, although we are brothers in treason!"

"Young man!—" exclaimed L'Ile-Adam.

"Enough!" cried Leclerc, interrupting him; "let us talk of something else. Can you provide me with five hundred lances?"

"I have a thousand men in the town of Pontoise, which I command."

"Half this troop will suffice, if it be brave. I will introduce it, with yourself, into the city. There my commission ceases. Do not demand anything else of me."

"I undertake the rest."

"'Tis well. Let us depart without a moment's delay; and, on the road, I will explain my projects to you."

"Courage, my lord of L'Ile-Adam!" said Isabel.

L'Ile-Adam, putting one knee to the ground, kissed the hand which his royal mistress extended to him, and left the room.

"Remember your promise, Perrinet," said the queen—"that he should know, before he dies, that it is I, his mortal enemy, who wrests Paris from him, in exchange for my lover's life."

"He shall know it," replied Leclerc, thrusting the parchment into his bosom, and buttoning his doublet over it.

"Adieu, Leclerc!" exclaimed Charlotte, in a low voice.

But her lover heard her not, as he rushed from the room without answering her.

"May h—ll conduct them to the attainment of their object!" exclaimed the queen.

"May God watch over them!" murmured Charlotte.

The two young men descended to the stables. L'Ile-Adam chose his two best horses; and each having saddled and bridled his own, they mounted.

"Where shall we procure others when these are dead?" said Leclerc; "for, at the pace we are about to go, they will not carry us more than a third of the distance."

"I will make myself known at the Burgundian posts on our route," replied De Villiers, "where they will furnish us with others."

"So, 'tis well."

They buried their spurs in the flanks of their steeds, threw their bridles on their necks, and went off like the wind.

Most assuredly, he who, by the sparks they struck up in their course, had seen them in the obscurity of that grey night, gliding along, side by side, horses and riders devouring space, with hair and manes floating in the wind, would have recounted through many subsequent years, that he had witnessed the passage of a new Faust and of another Mephistopheles, betaking themselves, on their fantastic coursers to some infernal gathering.

## CHAPTER XX.

THE moment could not have been better chosen by Leclerc to execute the project he had formed, of delivering up Paris. The exasperation of the citizens was at its height: and the constable who had redoubled in cruelty and rigour to the Parisians, was loudly accused of creating even the misfortunes which were incident to the period. His men at arms maltreated the citizens, for which they could obtain no reparation. Since the defeat of Senlis, they had become more and more furious. No one was permitted to quit the city; and if, in defiance of the orders given, any one was surprised by the soldiery

in an attempt to do so, he was sure to be beaten and robbed. If he chose to complain of this to the constable or the provost, he would be answered—"Well! and what business had you there?"—or, "You would not come here complaining had it been your friends the Burgundians," or something of the same kind.

The *Journal de Paris* recounts that these vexations extended even to the king's servants. Some of these having proceeded to the wood of Boulogne, to gather branches for a festival on the 1st of May, the men-at-arms who guarded Ville l'Éveque, and who belonged to the constable, pursued them, killing one, and wounding several. Nor was this all. As there was a great scarcity of money, the constable determined on procuring it by every possible means. He seized upon the ornaments of the churches, not excepting even the vases of St. Denis. The ravaged environs could furnish no more provisions. The poor workmen were compelled to labour on the ramparts, and at the engines of war; and when imprudent enough to demand their wages, were beaten and abused. These vexations, of which Count d'Armagnac was the original cause, produced numerous gatherings of people in the streets every evening. The most ridiculous reports were there circulated, and received with cries of hatred and vengeance; but soon a troop of men-at-arms would appear at the extremity of the street, occupying its entire breadth, and sword in hand, their horses at the gallop, striking and riding over everything they found in their way, would speedily disperse these gatherings, which would as quickly form themselves in some other place.

On the evening of the 28th of May, 1418, one of these assemblages blocked up the Place de la Sorbonne: students armed with clubs, butchers with their knives by their sides, and workmen with the various instruments of their labour, which, in the hands of men exasperated as they were, might strictly be considered as arms, composed the greatest portion. The women also here played an active part, and one which was not always devoid of danger to them; for the men-at-arms struck indiscriminately at men and women, childhood and old age, whether they defended themselves or not, whether they came as enemies or from curiosity. They established at that period the principles of an art, of which mo-

dern governments appear to have discovered all the traditions.

“Do you know, Master Lambert,” said an old woman, raising herself on the longest of her legs to enable her to reach the elbow of him she addressed—“do you know why they have taken the canvas from the shopkeepers by force? Tell me, do you know?”

“I presume, Mother Johanna,” replied he whom she addressed—a pewter-pot maker, who was well known never to miss one of these gatherings—“I presume that it is to make, as that cursed constable says, tents and pavilions for the army.”

“Well, now, there you are mistaken: it is to sew up all the women in sacks, and throw them into the river.”

“Ah!” said Master Lambert, who appeared much less indignant at this arbitrary proceeding than his interlocutrix—“Ah! you think so?”

“I am sure of it.”

“Bah! if it were only that—” observed a citizen.

“Only that! And what more would you have, Master Bourdichon?” exclaimed our old acquaintance, Dame Johanna.

“It is not from the women that the Armagnacs fear danger—it is from corporations of men; and all who belong to such associations are to have their throats cut. Those amongst them only who have sworn rather to sell Paris to the English than to deliver it up to the Burgundians, will be spared.”

“And how can they be distinguished?” interrupted the pewter-pot maker, with a precipitation that showed the importance he attached to this piece of news.

“By a leaden escutcheon, having on one side a red cross, and on the other the English leopard.”

“I,” cried a student, getting on the top of a post—“I have seen a standard with the arms of Henry V. of England—it was embroidered at the College of Navarre, which is entirely composed of Armagnacs—and the masters are to plant it on the gates of the city.”

“Down, down with the college!” vociferated several voices, which happily died away, one after the other.

“As for me,” observed a workman, “they made me toil for five-and-twenty days, at their great engine of

war, which they call *La Griete* ;\* and when I asked the provost for my money, he said ‘Dog, have you not a penny wherewith to buy yourself a cord to hang yourself?’”

“Death! death to the provost and the constable! Long live the Burgundians!”

These cries found more echoes than the preceding ones, and were soon repeated by every mouth.

At the same moment, the lances of a free company composed of Genoese, in the private service of the constable, were seen to glitter at the extremity of the street.

Then commenced one of these scenes of which we have spoken, and which we have no occasion to describe, as we are certain that every one can form some idea of it. Men, women, and children began to fly, uttering frightful screams. The horsemen spread themselves completely across the street; and, as a hurricane scatters the leaves of autumn, they swept before them that crowd of human beings, striking some with the points of their lances, and crushing others under their horses’ feet. And, as they searched every angle and every door corner, they exhibited a virulence and inhumanity which soldiers almost always display when they are engaged with citizens.

The moment the guards appeared, everybody, as we have related, endeavoured to fly, with the exception of a young man, covered with dust, who had only a few minutes before joined the crowd. He had contented himself with turning towards the door against which he had been leaning; and, introducing the blade of his poignard between the bolt of the lock and the wall, he had, by using it as a lever, caused the door to give way. He then entered the passage, and closed it behind him; but, when the noise of the horses had diminished, and apprised him that the danger was past, he again opened the door, thrust forth his head, and seeing that, with the exception of some dying persons, who were groaning in their last agonies, the place was clear, he quietly descended the Rue des Cordeliers, as far as to the rampart of St. Germain, where, stopping before a small house that adjoined it, he

\* “Griete” is the diminutive of Marguerite: it was applied to a piece of ordnance that first bore the name of Marguerite.—Tr.

pressed a concealed spring, and the door stood open before him.

"Ah! it is you, Perrinet?" said an old man.

"Yes, father; I have come to sup with you."

"You are welcome, my son."

"But that is not all, father. There is a great disturbance amongst the populace, and the streets are dangerous at night. I must likewise sleep here."

"Very well," replied the old man; "have you not always here, your chamber and your bed? your place at the hearth and table? and did you ever hear me complain that you came to take them too often?"

"Never, father!" said the young man, throwing himself on the chair, and burying his face in his hands; "you are kind, and love me well."

"I have none but you, my boy; and you never caused me any pain."

"Father," said Perrinet, "I feel myself unwell: allow me to retire: I cannot sup with you."

"Go, my son; you are at liberty—you are at home."

Perrinet opened a small door, that carried with it the three first steps of a staircase, the continuation of which was cut out of a solid wall, and began slowly to mount this species of ladder, without turning his head, or looking at his father.

"That boy has been very melancholy for some time," said old Leclerc, as, with a sigh, he placed himself at the table, where, on the arrival of the young man, he had laid a second plate for the evening repast.

For some time he heard his son's step overhead; but as they soon ceased, he supposed that he was gone to sleep. He murmured a few prayers for him, and, entering his own chamber, went to bed, after having taken the precaution as usual, to slip the keys, of which he had the care, under his pillow.

About an hour had passed, and the silence that reigned in the house of the old guardian was undisturbed. Suddenly, a slight noise was heard in the lower room; the door, which we have before mentioned, opened; and the three wooden steps creaked successively under the feet of Perrinet, who appeared pale, and holding in his breath. When he felt his feet upon the floor, he stopped an instant to listen: but not the slightest sound denoted that he had been heard. He then advanced on tiptoe, wiping his

forehead with his hand, in the direction of his father's room ; and, as the door was not fastened, he easily pushed it open.

The lantern which the old man used when, as it sometimes happened, he was obliged to rise and admit some belated citizen, was burning in the chimney, and its pale flame shed sufficient light to enable the bailiff, should he awake, to perceive that he was not alone in the chamber. But Leclerc feared that, were he to extinguish this light, he might tumble against some pieces of furniture in the dark, the noise of which might arouse the old man. He preferred, therefore, to let it burn.

It was a fearful thing to see this young man, his hair bristling, the perspiration streaming from his forehead, with his left hand upon his dagger, and his right groping along the wall, stopping every moment to secure the floor from creaking under him ; advancing slowly, but yet advancing towards the bed, from which his unwinking eye was never turned ; to reach it, following a circular course, like that of a tiger, and starting at the violent beating of his own heart, so strongly contrasted with the calm breathing of the old man. The curtain at last, half drawn, concealed his father's head from him : he took a few more steps, stretched forth his hand and laid it on the bed-post ; stopped a moment to recover his breath : and then crouching on his haunches, he slipped his moist and trembling hand beneath the pillow, gaining a line a minute, holding hard his breath, and utterly careless of the pain that his constrained position caused him ; for he too well knew that one movement, or a single sigh, on the part of the father, would render the son a parricide.

At last, he felt the coldness of the iron ; his trembling fingers touched the keys. He succeeded in getting hold of the ring on which they were hung—slowly drew them towards him, and transferred them to his other hand, pressing them firmly that their clashing might not be heard. He then, with the same precautions he had taken on entering it, turned to leave the room, the possessor of the treasure that was to ensure his revenge.

As he reached the outer door his legs utterly failed him, and he fell upon the steps that led to the rampart. Scarcely had a few minutes elapsed ere the clock of the convent of the Cordeliers struck eleven. Perrinet rose as the clock ceased striking, for he knew that the lord of

L'Ile-Adam and his five hundred lances would then be but a very few paces from the rampart, which he rapidly mounted. When he had reached the top, he heard the noise of a troop of horse approaching from the town.

"Who goes there?" cried the sentinel.

"The night guard," answered the rough voice of the constable.

Perrinet threw himself flat on the ground; the detachment passed within two yards of him. The sentinel having been relieved, and another left in his place, the detachment retired.

Perrinet crept stealthily as a serpent into the middle of the path trodden by the soldier, and as the latter approached him, suddenly springing up, he buried his poignard to the hilt in his bosom, ere he could raise his weapon to defend himself, or utter a single cry. The sentinel heaved one sigh, and fell.

Perrinet dragged the body to a spot where the projection of the gate cast a deeper shadow, and, with the dead man's helmet on his head, and his partisan in his hand, that he might personate a sentinel, he approached the edge of the wall, and directed his look steadily for some time towards the plain. When his eyes had become accustomed to the obscurity, he thought he perceived a dark and dense line silently advancing.

Perrinet then putting both his hands to his mouth, imitated the cry of an owl.

A similar sound answered him from the plain: it was the signal agreed upon.

He descended and opened the gate. A man was already leaning against it outside; it was the Sire de l'Ile-Adam, whose impatience had carried him before the others.

"It is well—you are faithful," he said, in a low voice.

"And your men?" asked Leclerc.

"They are here."

And at that moment, the column, commanded by the Lord de Chevreuse, the Sire de Ferry de Mailly, and the Count Lyonnet de Bournonville, appeared at the corner of the last house of the Faubourg St. Germain, introduced its head under the raised portcullis, and like some huge serpent, glided through this opening into the interior of the city. Perrinet fastened the gate behind them, re-

mounted the rampart, and threw the keys into the trench which was full of water.

"What have you done?" asked L'Ile Adam of him.

"I have deprived you of the power of retreating," was the reply.

"Let us forward, then," cried the other.

"There is your road," said Leclerc, pointing towards the Rue de Paon.

"And you?"

"I!—I take another."

So saying, he rushed along the Rue des Cordeliers, gained the bridge of Notre-Dame, traversed the river, descended the Rue St. Honoré, as far as the Hotel d'Armagnac, and there, hiding himself behind the angle of a wall, he remained as immovable as a statue.

In the meantime, L'Ile-Adam had reached the river, which he descended as far as the Châtelet, where he divided his little troop into four bands. The first, commanded by the Lord de Chevreuse, proceeded towards the Hotel of the dauphin, situated in the Rue de la Verrière; the second, led by Ferry de Mailly, descended the Rue St. Honoré to surround the Hotel d'Armagnac, and surprise the constable, whom L'Ile-Adam had ordered them, on pain of death, to bring to him alive: the third, under the command of L'Ile-Adam himself, took the direction of the Hotel de St. Paul, where the king was; the fourth, with Lyonnet de Bournonville at its head, remained on the Place de la Châtelet, in readiness to render assistance to whichever of the other three might require it. All of them vociferated, "Our lady of peace, long live the king! long live Burgundy! Let those who desire peace arm themselves, and follow us!"

At these cries, along their whole route the windows were thrown open, and pale affrighted heads thrust out in the obscurity; and, as they quickly recognised the colours and cross of Burgundy, replied by shouts of "Death to the Armagnacs! the Burgundians for ever!" Crowds of common people, citizens, and students, armed and tumultuous, followed each of these detachments.

It was certainly an act of great imprudence, in the chiefs who commanded, thus to have roused the city, for the most precious of the prisoners, whom they hoped to make, escaped them. Tanneguy Duchatel, at the first noise, ran hastily to the dauphin's hotel, overthrew every

thing that stood in his way, and penetrated to the room where he was in bed. Here he found him leaning on his elbow, listening to the noise, that had already reached him; and without losing a minute, without answering his questions, he wrapped him up in the bed-clothes, threw him on his brawny shoulders, as a nurse does her child, and carried him off. Robert le Masson, his chancellor, held a horse ready for him, which he mounted with his precious burden, and, ten minutes afterwards, the impregnable Bastile closed behind them, securely sheltering within its thick walls the sole heir of the old French monarchy.

Ferry de Mailly, who advanced on the Hotel d'Armagnac, was not more fortunate than the Lord de Chevreuse. The constable, whom we have seen leading the night round, had heard the cries of the Burgundians, and perceiving that all defence was useless, instead of returning to his hotel, thought of saving his life. He fled to the house of a poor mason, confessed who he was, and promised him a recompense proportioned to the service he demanded of him. The man agreed to conceal him, and promised to keep his secret.

The troop which hoped to surprise him had reached the Hotel d'Armagnac, guarded well every avenue from it, and commenced to break open the principal door. At the moment it gave way, a man, starting suddenly from the opposite wall, pushed every one aside, and rushed the first into the hotel; Ferry de Mailly only entered second.

In the meantime, the lord of L'Ile-Adam, more fortunate, surrounded the Hotel de St. Paul: and, after a slight struggle with the guards, succeeded gaining the interior apartments, penetrating even to that of the king. The poor old monarch, derided by his own servants, who, for a long time, had ceased to obey his orders, appeared to have been completely forgotten by them this evening. An expiring lamp scarce illumined the apartment; some remnants of a fire, that hardly sufficed to repel the cold and humidity of that vast chamber, were flickering on the hearth of the large Gothic chimney; and on a wooden stool sat a half-naked, shivering old man. It was the King of France.

L'Ile-Adam rushed into the room, went straight to the bed, which he found empty, when, turning round, he per-

ceived the old monarch, who, with his shrivelled and trembling hands, was raking together some of the dying embers.

He approached him with great respect, and saluted him in the name of the Duke of Burgundy.

The king turned round, his hands still stretched towards the fire, and looking vacantly at him who addressed him, said,

"How is my cousin of Burgundy? It is a long time since I have seen him."

"Sire, he has sent me to you, that all the calamities which desolate your kingdom may be terminated."

The king turned again towards the fire, without answering.

"Sire," added L'Ile-Adam, who perceived that the king in his then state of madness, could not follow the political reasoning he was about to enter into—"sire, the Duke of Burgundy entreats you to mount your horse, and appear with me in the streets of the capital."

Charles VI. rose mechanically, and leaning upon L'Ile-Adam's arm, accompanied him without resistance. For as there no longer remained either reason or memory to this poor prince, it was but of little consequence to him what was commanded in his name, or in whose hands he found himself. He no longer, indeed, knew the difference between an Armagnac or Burgundian.

L'Ile-Adam proceeded towards the Chatelet with his royal prize, for the captain well understood that the presence of the monarch, in the midst of the Burgundians, would be an indication of the royal approbation of everything that was about to occur. He therefore delivered his royal prisoner into the hands of Lyonnet de Bournonville, recommending him to keep a vigilant but respectful watch over him.

This politic proceeding being accomplished, he descended the Rue St. Honoré at a gallop, and dismounted at the door of the Hotel d'Armagnac, from the interior of which he heard nothing but cries and blasphemies. On rushing up to the staircase, he ran so violently against a man who was descending it, that they laid hold of each other to prevent themselves from falling. They instantly recognised each other.

"Where is the constable?" said L'Ile-Adam.

"I am looking for him," replied Perrinet Leclerc.

"My curse on Ferry de Mailly, who has allowed him to escape!" exclaimed the captain.

"He did not return to his hotel," cried the other.

And, like two madmen, they rushed from the house, each taking the first street that offered itself to him.

In the meantime, a frightful carnage was going on. Nothing was heard but cries of "Death! death to the Armagnacs! Kill, kill them all!" Large bodies of students, of citizens, and butchers, ran through the streets, breaking open the houses of the known partisans of the constable, and cutting down those unhappy wretches with their swords and axes. Troops of women and children followed, despatching with their knives those who still breathed.

The people had appointed Vaux de Bar provost of Paris in the place of Duchâtel, as soon as they found themselves freed from the yoke of the constable. The new magistrate, finding the Parisians in such a state of outrageous excitement, dared not to oppose them; and exclaimed, on witnessing this massacre, "Go on, my friends, in whatever way you please." In a short time, therefore, the butchery became horrible. Some Armagnacs had sought refuge in the church of the Priory of St. Eloy, where they were discovered by some Burgundians, who proclaimed it to their comrades. In vain did the Sire de Vilette, Abbot of St. Denis, clothed in his sacerdotal robes, and bearing the sacred host in his hand, appear at the door to protect them. Already were the blood-stained axes of the throng glittering around his head, and dropping their gore on his cope, when the Lord of Chevreuse took him under his protection, and led him away. His departure was the signal for a general slaughter in the interior of the church. Nothing but death-cries were heard, nothing seen but the flashing of axes and swords. The dead carcases were heaped up in the nave; and, from under this pile of bodies a stream of human blood was flowing, like a spring rising from the base of a mountain. L'Ile Adam who, as he passed, heard these vociferations, urged his horse under the gateway, and, on seeing them thus employed, exclaimed, "Well done! the work goes bravely on! I have got here some handy butchers! Have you seen the constable, my boys?"

"Not yet!" shouted twenty voices at the same time.

"Death to the constable! Death to the Armagnacs!"  
And the massacre was continued.

L'Ile Adam turned his horse's head, and went in search of his enemy elsewhere.

A scene of the same description was being enacted at the tower of the palace. Some hundreds of D'Armignac's adherents had fled there, and endeavoured to defend themselves. In the midst of them, holding the crucifix aloft, were the Bishops of Coutances, of Bayeux, of Senlis, and of Xaintes. The assault, however, lasted but for a moment; the Burgundians scaling the tower, in spite of a shower of stones; and, when once masters of the palace, they cut the throats of all whom it contained.

In the midst of this carnage, a man, covered with perspiration, pale, and more breathless than the others, suddenly rushed forward, exclaiming:—

"The constable! the constable! Is he here?"

"No," answered a crowd of Burgundians.

"Where is he?"

"No one knows, Master Leclerc. The captain L'Ile-Adam has proclaimed, that he will give a thousand gold crowns to him who will inform him where he is concealed."

Perrinet heard no more; for rushing towards one of the ladders that was set against the tower, he slipped quickly down, and was soon in the street.

A troop of Genoese bowmen had been surprised close to the cloisters of St. Honoré; and although they had surrendered under promise of their lives being spared, their throats were cut after they had been disarmed. These unhappy wretches were put to death on their knees, whilst begging for mercy. There was a scramble among the crowd to strike them. Two men, however, each with a torch in his hand, satisfied themselves with tearing off their helmets and examining them, one after the other, leaving the care of killing them to the rest; and this search they pursued with the minuteness and eagerness of revenge. They met in the midst of the crowd, and recognized each other.

"The constable?" asked L'Ile-Adam.

"I am looking for him," replied Perrinet.

"Monsieur Leclerc!" cried a voice at that moment.

Perrinet turned, and, recognizing him who addressed him,

"Well, Thiébert," he inquired, "what want you with me?"

"Can you tell me where I may find Captain L'Ile-Adam?"

"I am he," said the captain.

A man, clothed in a doublet, stained with plaster, came forward.

"Is it true," he asked, addressing the captain, "that you have promised a thousand gold crowns to him who should deliver up the constable to you?"

"'Tis true," replied L'Ile-Adam.

"Tell them out to me, then," continued the mason, "and I will show you where he is concealed."

"Hold out your apron," said L'Ile-Adam; and he threw some handfuls of gold into it. "Tell me now, where is he?"

"At my house; I will lead you there," answered the mason.

A loud laugh was heard behind them, and L'Ile-Adam turned to look for Perrinet Leclerc; but he had disappeared.

"Come quickly," said the captain; "guide me to the place."

"In a moment," replied Thiébert; "hold this torch, whilst I count the money."

L'Ile-Adam, trembling with impatience, held the light to the mason whilst he counted the crowns one by one, even to the last. There wanted fifty to complete the sum.

"I have not got enough," he said.

L'Ile-Adam threw a gold chain, worth six hundred crowns, into his apron. Thiébert went on before him.

But they were preceded by Perrinet Leclerc.

He had no sooner heard the bloody bargain that Thiébert and the captain were making, than he rushed onwards, breathless, in the direction of the constable's retreat. He stopped before Thiébert's door; he found it fastened; but his poignard performed the same office for him that it had done on the Place de la Sorbonne, and the door gave way.

He heard a noise in the second chamber, and said to himself, "He is there?"

"Is it you, my host?" asked the constable, in a whisper.

"Yes," replied Leclerc: "but extinguish your light; it may betray you."

And he perceived through the chinks of the door, that the constable had followed his advice.

"Now open the door."

The door partially opened, and Perrinet rushed upon the constable, who uttered a cry of pain. The young man's poignard had pierced his right shoulder.

A deadly struggle then ensued between the two.

The constable, who, relying on the faith of Thiébert, considered himself in security, was without arms, and half naked. In spite of this disadvantage, he would easily have strangled Leclerc in his powerful embrace, had it not been for his wound, which paralyzed one of his arms. Nevertheless, with that which remained unhurt, he encircled the young man, squeezed him to his breast, and leaning against him with his whole weight and force, he let himself fall over upon him, with the hope of fracturing his skull upon the pavement.

And in this he would doubtless have succeeded, had not Perrinet's head fallen on the mattress, which, serving as a bed, was spread upon the floor.

The constable uttered a second cry, for Perrinet, who had not let go his dagger, had just buried it in his left arm.

He left his hold of the young man, rose, staggered, and fell backwards on a table in the middle of the room; his blood and strength pouring from both wounds.

Perrinet raised himself, looking for and calling on him, when suddenly a third person, with a torch in his hand, made his appearance at the door of the apartment, throwing light upon the scene.

It was L'Ile-Adam.

Perrinet again threw himself upon the constable.

"Stop!" said L'Ile-Adam; "on your life, stop!" as he seized his arm.

"Lord de L'Ile-Adam," replied Leclerc, "this man's life belongs to me; the queen has given it. This is her seal; so leave him to me."

And drawing the parchment from his bosom, he presented it to the captain.

The Count d'Armagnac, extended on the table, and incapable of the slightest resistance, was regarding these two men. His wounded arms were bleeding copiously.

"It imports not," observed L'Ile-Adam. "I do not want his life; so it belongs to you."

"By your soul?" cried Leclerc stopping him.

"By my soul! But I have a vow to accomplish: let me perform it."

Leclerc crossed his arms, and looked on. L'Ile-Adam drew his sword, grasped the extremity of the blade with his hand, so that the point extended only about an inch beyond his thumb, and approached the constable.

He, perceiving that all was over for him in this world, closed his eyes, threw his head back, and betook himself to prayer.

"Constable," said L'Ile-Adam to him, tearing off the shirt that covered his bosom—"constable, do you remember swearing by the Virgin and Christ, that you would never, whilst living, bear the red cross of Burgundy?"

"Yes," replied the constable, "and I have kept my oath, for I am about to die."

"Count d'Armagnac," replied L'Ile-Adam, bending towards him and ploughing up his bosom with the point of his sword, so as to trace there a bloody cross—"thou hast lied in thy throat, for thou bearest living the red cross of Burgundy. You have violated your oath and I have kept mine."

The constable replied only by a sigh. L'Ile-Adam returned his sword to the scabbard.

"I have accomplished what I wanted with you," said he; "now die as a perjurer and a dog. It is your turn, Perrinet Leclerc."

The constable again opened his eyes, and ejaculated, in a dying voice,

"Perrinet Leclerc!"

"Yes," said the latter, again throwing himself on the unhappy and expiring count; "yes, Perrinet Leclerc—he whom you caused to be lacerated by the blows of your soldiers. It appears that each of you has taken an oath; but, for my part, I have taken two. The first, constable, was that you should learn, on your death-bed, that it was Queen Isabel of Bavaria who wrested Paris from you in exchange for the life of the Chevalier de Bourdon; that is accomplished, for you know it. The second, Count d'Armagnac, is, that you should die on learning it; and that," he added, burying his dagger in his heart, "that I have fulfilled as religiously as the first. May

God assist him who honestly keeps his word, both in this world and in the other."

## CHAPTER XXI.

THUS had Paris, impregnable to the powerful Duke of Burgundy and his numerous army, like a capricious coquette, opened her gates at night to a simple captain, commanding seven hundred lances. The Burgundians, with fire in one hand, and sword in the other, had spread themselves through the old streets of the royal city, quenching the flame by blood and drying up the blood by fire. Perrinet Leclerc, the obscure cause of this grand event, after having attained his only object, namely, the death of the constable, had returned to the ranks of the people, where history will henceforth seek him in vain—where his death was as obscure as his birth was unknown; and whence he issued but for an hour, to link to one of the greatest events of the monarchy his plebeian name, crowned with the immortality derived from a great act of treason.

In the meantime, the nobles and men-at-arms, who wished to obtain a share of this vast prey, and hitherto it had been the privilege of loyalty alone to devour, were pouring through all the gates of Paris, like vultures to a field of battle. There was first, L'Ile-Adam, who having come earliest, had taken the lion's portion; there were the Sire de Luxembourg, the brothers Fosseuse, Creve-cœur, and Jean de Poix. There were, after these, the captains of the garrisons of Picardy and the Isle of France; and lastly, there came the peasants of the environs, who, to leave nothing behind, plundered the copper, whilst their masters pillaged the gold.

Then, when the church-plate was melted down, and the state coffers were empty, when neither fringe nor golden fleur-de-lis was left on the royal mantle, they cast the denuded velvet on the shoulders of the venerable Charles, seated him on his half-shattered throne, and putting a pen into his hand, laid four letters-patent on the table before him. L'Ile-Adam and Chatelux were

created marshals. Charles de Lens, admiral; and Robert de Maillé, grand panetier; and, when he had signed, the king imagined that he had reigned.

The people saw all this through the windows of the Louvre. "Good!" they cried; "after having pillaged the gold, behold they seize the places. Happily, there are more signatures in the king's hand than there are crowns in his coffers. Take, take, gentlemen. But Hannotin of Flanders is coming; and should he not be contented with what you have left him, he will make for himself but one portion of all you have divided amongst you."

However, Hannotin of Flanders (this was the name that the Duke of Burgundy sometimes good-humouredly gave himself,) was in no haste to come. He had not indeed seen, without jealousy, one of his captains enter a city, at the gates of which he had himself twice thundered with his sword without being admitted. He received, at Montbelliard, the message that announced the unexpected news to him; and immediately, instead of continuing his march, had retired to Dijon, one of his capitals. Queen Isabel had, on her part, remained at Troyes, trembling yet at the success of her enterprise. The duke and her neither saw nor wrote to each other: ceasing their communications, like two accomplices in a nocturnal murder, who hesitated to meet in the broad light of day.

In the meantime, Paris was in a feverish and convulsive state. It was rumoured that the queen or the duke would not enter the city so long as one Armagnac remained in it; and as the Parisians much desired again to see them, every day this report, to which the absence of both gave some foundation, formed the pretext for a fresh massacre. Every night there was a cry of alarm. The populace traversed the city with torches, shouting, now that the Armagnacs, were entering by the gate of St. Germain, and now, by the gate of the Temple. Groups of men, at the head of whom the butchers were distinguishable by their long knives glittering in their grasp, overran Paris, in every direction; stopping when some one would shout, "Hallo, here! here is the house of an Armagnac." Their knives then executed justice on the owner, whilst fire consumed his house. It was necessary indeed, in order to appear with safety, to wear

the blue hood and red cross; and the most forward, improving on this, formed a Burgundian association, which they called after St. Andre. Each of its members wore a coronet of red roses; and many priests entered it, either from prudence or principle, and said mass with this ornament on their heads. In short, to an eye-witness of these scenes, Paris might have appeared to be in the intoxication of the fetes of the carnival, had he not met so many black places in every street, where houses had been burnt—so many places red with blood, where men had died.

Amongst the most determined of those assassins we have described, there was one who made himself remarkable for his utter want of pity in a massacre, and his skill in dealing death. There was no conflagration where he had not applied his torch; there was no murder in which he had not imbrued his hand. When seen in his red hood and jacket of ox-blood colour, his bull's-hide belt encircling his chest, with a large two-handed sword, the pommel of which touched his chin, and the point his feet, those who wished to see an Armagnac properly decapitated had only to follow him: for there was a popular proverb, which said, that Master Cappeluche could make a head fall before the bonnet had time to perceive it.

Cappeluche was thus the hero of these bloody scenes. Even the butchers acknowledged him as their master, and gave way to him. He was the head of every gathering, the soul of every commotion. By one word he could arrest the crowd that followed him—by a gesture impel them forward. It was a species of magic, to show how all obeyed one man.

Whilst Paris, filled with the noise of these clamours, and illumined by the glare of these conflagrations, started up nightly, as it were, suddenly from its sleep, the old Bastile towered up aloft at its eastern extremity, dark and silent. The cries without found no echo there—the light of the torches, no reflection. Its bridge was high, its portcullis low. During the day, no living thing appeared upon its walls: the citadel appeared to guard itself. But, when any crowd approached nearer than seemed agreeable to it, as many cross-bows as there were loop-holes might be seen levelled from each story at the crowd, it being impossible to distinguish whether they

were directed by men or by an engine. The mob would then, even were they led by Cappeluche himself, suddenly retreat, shaking their heads ; the cross-bows would be withdrawn as the assemblage retired ; and the old fortress would resume, in a minute after, an air of carelessness and good humour ; like the porcupine, which, when danger is past, smoothes down on its back the thousand darts to which it owes the respect paid to it by other animals.

During the night the same silence and gloom reigned there. In vain did Paris light up either its streets or its windows : no light appeared behind the grated windows of the Bastille, no voice issued from within its walls. From time to time, alone, the head of some vigilant sentinel appeared at the windows of the towers which rose, from the four corners of the building ; as it was from this position only that any surprise could have been observed which might be in preparation at the foot of the ramparts. And this head, when it had once appeared, remained so motionless, that it might have been mistaken, in the light of the moon, for one of those Gothic masks that architects delighted to fix, as fantastic ornaments, over the arches of bridges, or the entablatures of cathedrals.

Nevertheless, on a dark night, towards the end of June, whilst the sentinels kept watch at the four corners of the Bastille, two men ascended the narrow circular staircase which led to its platform. The first who appeared on the top was a man of from forty-two to forty-five years of age. His stature was colossal, and his strength proportionate to his size. He was clothed in complete armour, although, for all offensive weapon, his belt supported, where his sword should have hung, only one of those long sharp daggers, called *poignards* of mercy. His left hand rested on it, as if from habit ; whilst, in his right, he held respectfully one of those velvet bonnets, trimmed with fur, for which, in their moments of repose, knights exchanged their helmets, the latter sometimes weighing from forty to forty-five pounds. His uncovered head, therefore, allowed his deep blue eyes to be seen beneath their shaggy eyebrows ; an aquiline nose, and a complexion embrowned by the sun, imparted to the united features of his countenance a character of austerity, which a beard an inch long, cut in a rounded form, and

long black hair hanging down his cheeks, in no way contributed to soften.

Scarcely had the man whom we have here endeavoured to sketch reached the platform, than he turned and extended his arms towards the opening in the ground through which he had ascended; and grasping a plump and elegant hand, which was raised to meet his, he assisted another to gain the terrace. This was a young man of sixteen or seventeen years of age, clothed entirely in velvet and silk, with fair hair, delicate limbs, and a slender figure. He no sooner reached the platform, than, as if much fatigued with his short ascent, he seized his companion's arm, and looked around, as if by habit, for a chair on which he might seat himself. But perceiving that such an ornament had been superfluous on the platform of a citadel, he formed his decision, making a kind of ring, by linking his hands together, and by this means supported himself on the athletic arm of his companion, on which he threw at least half the weight that nature had destined his legs to carry. And thus he commenced a promenade, which he appeared to make more out of condescension towards him who accompanied him, than from any determination of his own will.

Some minutes elapsed without either of them uttering a single word to disturb the silence of the night, or interrupt the promenade, which the smallness of the platform rendered sufficiently confined. The noise of their footsteps formed but one sound, so completely was the light tread of the boy overlaid by the heavy footfall of the soldier. They might easily have been mistaken for a body and its shadow, or it might seem that one soul animated them both. Suddenly the man-at-arms stopped, with his look directed towards Paris, and requested his young companion to do the same. They commanded a view of the whole city.

It was precisely one of those nights of tumult that we have endeavoured to describe. At first, they could not distinguish from the platform anything but a confused mass of houses, extending from the east to the west; the roofs of which, in the obscurity, appeared to touch each other, like the shields of a troop of soldiers marching to the assault. But, suddenly, as a crowd of people would take a road parallel to the line of their vision, the light of the torches, illuminating the street throughout

its whole length, appeared to cut the city into two portions, and ruddy figures were seen confusedly pressing towards it, with cries and laughter. At the first crossway that changed its direction, however, the crowd would disappear with its lights, but the noise of tumult still remained. Everything again became gloomy; and the dull confused sounds that were heard appeared like the stifled plaints of the city, whose entrails the civil war was lacerating with fire and sword.

At this spectacle and noise, the countenance of the soldier became more gloomy even than before. His eyebrows were contracted by a frown; his left arm was extended towards the Louvre; and these words, addressed to his young companion, could scarcely force their way through his teeth, so violently were they held together,

“Your excellence, behold your city! Do you recognise her?”

The countenance of the young man assumed an expression of melancholy, of which a moment before it might have been deemed incapable. He fixed his eyes on those of his companion, and, after having looked at him a moment in silence,

“My braye Tanneguy,” said he, “I have often looked at it, at the same hour, from the window of the Hotel de St. Paul, as I now survey it from the terrace of the Bastille. Sometimes I have seen it calm, but I do not think that I ever saw it happy.”

Tanneguy started: he did not expect such an answer from the young dauphin.

He had interrogated him, thinking that he was addressing a boy, and he returned the answer of a man.

“Your highness will pardon me,” said Duchâtel; “but I thought that, up to this time, you had been more occupied with your pleasures than with the affairs of France.”

“My father,” (for the young dauphin, since he was saved by Duchâtel from the hands of the Burgundians, had given him this appellation,) “this reproach is only half deserved. Whilst I saw my two brothers near the throne, who are now near the throne of God, it is true there was no place in my mind except for pleasures and follies; but, since the Lord has called them to himself, in a manner as unexpected as it was terrible, I have forgot-

ten every frivolity, to remember but one thing, which is, that, at the death of my much-loved father (whom may God preserve!) this beautiful realm of France would have no other master than myself."

"Therefore, my young lion," replied Tanneguy, with a visible expression of joy, "you are disposed to defend it with claw and tooth, against Henry of England, and John of Burgundy."

"Against each of them separately, Tanneguy, or against both of them together; as they may prefer."

"Ah, your excellence, God inspires you with these words, to comfort the heart of your old friend. This is the first time that I have breathed freely for three years. If you but knew the doubts that must cloud the heart of such a man as me, when the monarchy to which he has devoted his arm, his life, and even perhaps his honour, is assailed with blows as severe as that has suffered of which you are now the only hope—if you knew how often I have asked myself, whether the time were not come when this monarchy was to give way to another, and whether it was not rebellion against God to endeavour to uphold it when he appeared to abandon it. For—may God forgive me if I blaspheme—during thirty years, whenever He cast his eyes on your noble race it has been to strike in anger, and not to pity it. Yes," he continued, "one might well think that it was a fatal sign for a dynasty, when its chief was diseased in body and mind as is our sire the king; one might well believe that the order of things was reversed, when the first vassal of a crown was seen to hew down with axe and sword, the branches of the royal stem, as did that traitor, John of Burgundy, with respect to the noble Duke of Orleans, your uncle; one might well imagine in short, that the state was lost, when two noble young gentlemen, like your elder brothers, were seen to perish, one after the other, by a death so sudden and singular, that, if I were not afraid of offending both God and man, I would say the one had no hand in it—that it was the work solely of the other. And when to oppose a foreign war, a civil war and a popular commotion, there remains only a feeble youth like yourself—Oh! your excellence, your excellence, the doubt is a natural one, that has so often nearly cast down my heart, and you will pardon me for it."

The dauphin threw himself on his neck, as he cried—

“Tanneguy, every doubt is allowable to him who, like you, doubts after having acted—in him who like you, thinking that God, in his anger, strikes a dynasty, even to its last heir, yet rescues that last heir from the anger of God.”

“And I did not hesitate, my young master, when I saw the Burgundians entering the city: I ran to you, like a mother to her child; for who could save you, except myself? Not the king, your father, The queen, who was at a distance, had not the power; and were she near, God forgive her! would not, perhaps, have had the inclination. Yourself, your excellence—had you been free to fly, had you found the corridors of the Hotel de St. Paul deserted, and its door open—when once in the street, you would have found yourself more bewildered in this city, with its thousand crossways, than the lowest of your subjects. You had, therefore, only me. At that moment, your excellence, it certainly appeared to me as if God did not entirely abandon your noble family, so greatly did I find my strength increased. I bore you away, your excellence, with as much ease as a bird is carried off in the talons of an eagle. Yes, had I then met the Duke of Burgundy's whole army, with himself at their head, I felt as if I could have overthrown him, and made my way through his army, without injury to either of us: and certainly, at that time, God was with me. But, since that, your excellence—since you have been in security, behind the impregnable ramparts of the Bastile—when, every night, after having contemplated alone, from this lofty terrace, the spectacle that we have both witnessed this evening—when, after having seen Paris, the royal city, a prey to such commotions, the people reigning, and royalty obeying—when, with my ears filled with clamour, and my eyes hurt with the glare of conflagrations, I have descended to your chamber, and observed with what calmness you slumbered, whilst a civil war was raging throughout your kingdom, and conflagration through your capital, I asked myself if he was worthy of the throne, who slept so calmly and heedlessly, whilst his kingdom was deprived of repose by so ensanguined an agitation.”

An expression of dissatisfaction flitted, like a cloud, across the dauphin's countenance.

"And so you watch my sleep, Tanneguy?"

"I prayed, your excellence, by your bedside, for France and for your highness."

"And had you not found me this evening to be what you desired, what was your intention?" asked the dauphin.

"I would have conducted your highness to a place of safety, and then have thrown myself, alone and unarmed, into the midst of the enemy, wherever I encountered him; for, as I should have nothing else left me, the sooner I died the better."

"Not so! Tanneguy, instead of going alone and unarmed to meet the enemy, we will go together, and well armed. What say you?"

"That God has given you the will, and it is necessary he should now grant you the strength."

"But you will be there to sustain me."

"The war we are going to wage, your excellence, is a long one—a long and tedious one; though not for me, who have lived for thirty years in my cuirass, as you have for fifteen in your velvet. You have two enemies to contend with, one of whom alone might make a powerful monarch tremble. The sword once drawn, and the oriflamme waving outside St. Denis, they must not again be sheathed or furled, before, of your two great enemies, John of Burgundy, and Henry of England, one be under the soil of France, and the other beyond it. To accomplish that, there will be some rough encounters. Night-watches are cold, and field-days are killing. It is to assume the life of a soldier, instead of continuing the existence of a prince. It is not a joust at a tournament, but long days of combat; it is not a few mouths of skirmishing and rencontres, but years of protracted struggles and bloody battles. Your excellence, think well of it."

The young dauphin, without replying to Tanneguy, quitted his arm, and went straight up to the man-at-arms on guard at one of the little turrets of the Bastile. In a moment, the belt that had surrounded the archer's quiver was girded round the dauphin's waist; the soldier's ashen bow was transferred to the prince's hand, and the young man's voice assumed such a tone of firmness, as no one had previously known in him, when, turning towards the astonished Duchâtel, he said to him :

"My father, you will sleep tranquilly, I hope, although this should be our son's first night-watch."

Duchâtel was about to answer him, when a development of the scene that was passing at the foot of the Bastille changed the current of his thoughts.

For some moments, the clamours had been drawing nearer, and a great light was rising from the Rue de la Cerisée. But yet it was impossible to discover the cause of the tumult, or to guess what produced the light; the transverse position of the street, and the height of the houses, preventing the eye from penetrating to the crowd which there congregated. Suddenly, more distinct cries were heard, and a man, half naked, rushed from the Rue de la Cerisée into the Grande Rue de St. Antoine, calling for help. He was pursued, at a short distance, by some, who, on their part, were shouting, "Death! death to the Armagnac! kill the Armagnac!"

At the head of those who pursued the unhappy wretch, Master Cappeluche was conspicuous by his great two-handed sword, which he carried naked and bloody on his shoulder, and by his ox-blood jacket and bare legs. And yet the fugitive, with the almost supernatural swiftness of fear, was about to escape his assassins, by turning the corner of the Rue St. Antoine, and throwing himself behind the wall of the Tournelles, when his legs got entangled in the chain which was every evening drawn across the end of the street. He staggered on a few paces further, and fell within an arrow shot of the walls of the Bastille. His pursuers, guided by his fall, leaped over the chain, or passed beneath it, and ere the unfortunate fugitive could rise, he saw Cappeluche's sword flashing over his head. He knew that all hope was past for him, and, falling on his knees, begged mercy, not from men, but from God.

From the first moment that the scene we have here described had the Grand Rue St. Antoine for its theatre, not one of its particulars had escaped the observation, either of Tanneguy or of the dauphin. The latter especially, less accustomed to such spectacles, took an interest in this that was manifested by sudden motions and inarticulate exclamations; insomuch that, when he perceived the Armagnac on the ground, Cappeluche had not been more prompt in precipitating himself upon his victim than the young prince was in drawing an arrow from

his quiver, and fitting it to the cord of the bow, which bent like a fragile reed in his left hand, whilst with the right he drew the cord even to his shoulder; and it would have been very difficult to decide, great as was the difference of the distance, whether the arrow of the dauphin or the sword of Cappeluche would first reach its destination, when Tauneguy, thrusting out his arm, hastily seized the arrow by the middle, and broke it in the hands of the royal archer.

"What mean you, Tanneguy? Why do you do this?" said the dauphin, stamping: "see you not that yonder man is about to kill one of ours—that a Burgundian is going to murder an Armagnac?"

"Perish every Armagnac! your excellence, rather than that your highness should stain the iron of one of these arrows in the blood of such a man."

"But, Tanneguy! Tanneguy! Ah! look!"

At this exclamation of the dauphin, Tanneguy, again cast his look towards the Rue St. Antoine. The head of the Armagnac was ten paces from his body, and Master Cappeluche was quietly allowing the blood to drop from his long sword, while he whistled the well known air—

"Duke of Burgundy  
God keep you happy."

"Look, Tanneguy! look!" said the dauphin, crying with rage: "were it not for you—were it not for you—but look! look there!"

"I see, I see," replied Tanneguy. "But, I again tell you, this man could not die by your hand."

"But, God's blood, who, then, is the man?" exclaimed the prince.

"This man, your excellence, is Master Cappeluche, the executioner of the city of Paris," was the reply.

The dauphin dropped his arms, and bent his head upon his breast.

"Oh, cousin of Burgundy," he exclaimed, in a hoarse voice, "not for the four most splendid kingdoms in Christendom, would I employ the men and the means that you make use of to deprive me of the remnants of mine."

In the meantime, one of Cappeluche's followers with one hand picked up the dead man's head by the hair, and threw upon it the light of a torch which he carried in the

other. The glare fell full upon the features, which were not so much distorted by agony but that Tanneguy, from the top of the Bastille, could recognise them as those of Henry de Marle, the friend of his youth, and one of the warmest and most devoted of the Armagnacs. A profound sigh escaped him.

"By heaven, Master Cappleuche," said he who picked up the head, as he carried it to the executioner, "you are but a rough fellow, to take off the head of the first chancellor of France, as completely, and with as little ceremony, as if it had belonged to the lowest vagabond."

The executioner smiled complacently: he also had his flatterers.\*

The same night, two hours before daybreak, a small but well-armed and well-mounted troop, issued with great precaution from the exterior gate of the Bastille, silently took the road to the bridge of Charenton, and having crossed it, followed the right bank of the Seine for about eight hours, without exchanging one word, or raising one vizzor. At about eleven o'clock in the morning, it came in sight of a fortified town.

"Now, your excellence," said Tanneguy to the horseman who was nearest him, "you may raise your voice, and shout 'Saint Charles and France!' for there is the

\* Should we be accused of delighting in such details as the above, we might answer, that it is neither our taste nor our fault, but solely the fault of history. One extract, taken from "the Duke of Burgundy," by M. de Barante, will perhaps, prove that we have neither chosen the most dismal colours, nor the most hideous pictures of this unhappy period. When kings and princes arm the people for civil wars, when they take human weapons to decide their differences and disentangle their interests, the fault is not with the weapon that strikes, and the blood that is shed falls upon the head that commands the arm that directs the blow. But let us return to our quotation. Here it is:

"In the courtyard of the prisons, the blood was as deep as the ancles, and they slew in the same manner in the city and in the streets. The unhappy Genoese bowmen were driven from the houses where they had sought shelter, and delivered up to the furious populace. Women and children were cut in pieces, and a thousand dreadful horrors were committed on their dead bodies. They made a bloody sling for them, as with the constable, and dragged them through the streets.—The bodies of Count d'Armagnac, of the Chancellor Robert le Masson, and Raimond de la Guerre, were thus drawn through the whole city on a hurdle, and then left for three days on the steps of the palace."

M. de Barante must himself have drawn these particulars from Juvenal des Ursins, the contemporaneous author with whom our readers have become acquainted.

white scarf of the Armagnacs, and you are about to enter your faithful town of Melun.”

Thus it was that the Dauphin Charles, whom history afterwards surnamed *the Victorious*, passed his first night watch, and made his first march of war.

## CHAPTER XXII.

THE political motives which kept the Duke of Burgundy at a distance from the capital are easily explained.

From the moment when another, more fortunate than himself, had seized on Paris, he had thought of leaving him the honour, of which he could not, indeed, deprive him, and securing to himself all the advantages that could be derived from it. It had not been difficult for him to foresee, that the natural reaction which follows such political changes, would draw after it numerous murders and revengeful assassinations, which his presence in Paris could only check, at the cost of his popularity among his partisans, whilst his absence spared him all responsibility of the bloodshed. Besides, this blood flowed from the veins of the Armagnacs: it was a deep wound, that would, for a long time, enfeeble the party opposed to him. His enemies fell one after the other, without his even taking the trouble to strike them. And, then, when he should consider the people fatigued with massacre—when he should see that the city had reached that degree of lassitude, when the necessity of repose superseded that of vengeance—when the mutilated remnants of the party, thus struck in the death of its chiefs, might be spared without trouble or danger—then would he enter the city, as the guardian angel of its walls, extinguishing the fire, staunching the blood, and proclaiming peace and amnesty to all the world.

The pretext on which he explained the motives of his absence has too close a connexion with the sequel of our history for us to withhold it from our readers.

The young Sire de Giac, whom we have seen contending, with the Sires de Graville and de l'Île-Adam, for the heart of Isabel of Bavaria, had, as we have said, accompanied

the queen to Troyes. Being charged with several messages from his royal mistress to the Duke of Burgundy, he had remarked at the court of that prince, a Mademoiselle Catherine de Thian, one of the ladies in the suite of the Duchess of Charolais.\* Being young, brave, and handsome, he had thought that these three qualities, united with the confidence that the conviction of possessing them inspired, were sufficient titles, in the presence of this noble and beautiful girl. It was, therefore, with constantly increasing astonishment he perceived that this homage, although received, was not distinguished above that of other young noblemen. The first idea that suggested itself to the Sire de Giac was, that he had a rival. He followed Mademoiselle de Thian like her shadow; he watched her every motion, he spied out all her looks; and finished, in spite of jealousy, by remaining convinced that no one was more fortunate or more favoured than himself. He was rich, bore a noble name, and thought that the offer of his hand might, perhaps, tempt her vanity, since he could not obtain her love. Mademoiselle de Thian's answer was at once so decided and polished, that the Sire de Giac lost all his hope, but retained all his love. To think of, without being able to comprehend it, was maddening. His sole resource was in absence, and he had the resolution to call it to his aid. He received, in consequence, the duke's commands, and returned to the queen.

Scarcely six weeks had elapsed, when another message carried him back to Dijon. His absence had been more favourable to him than his presence. The duke received him in a more friendly manner, and Mademoiselle de Thian with less reserve. He for some time doubted his good fortune; but one day, Duke John offered to make fresh advances for him to her whom he loved. Such powerful support he knew must smooth down many difficulties. The Sire de Giac joyfully accepted the offer; and, two hours afterwards, a second answer, as favourable as the other had been discouraging, proved that, whether Mademoiselle de Thian had reflected on the merit of the knight, or the influence of the duke had been all powerful, a too prompt credence should never, in such a case, be accorded to the first refusal of a woman.

\* The Count de Charolais, son of Duke John, had espoused the Princess Michelle, daughter of Charles VI.

The duke therefore declared that he would not enter Paris before the marriage of these young people had been celebrated. It was magnificent; the duke insisting on defraying all the expenses. In the morning there were tournaments and jousts, where splendid feats of arms took place; the dinner was prolonged by the introduction of *entremets*, which were at once magnificent and ingenious; and, in the evening, a mystery, or mythologue, was represented with great applause, the subject of which was, Adam receiving Eve from the hands of God. For this purpose, they had brought from Paris an eminent poet, whose travelling expenses were paid, and who received, moreover, twenty-five golden crowns. These things took place from the 15th to the 20th of June, 1418.

At last Duke John imagined that the time was come to re-enter Paris. He commissioned the Sire de Giac to precede him there, and to announce his arrival. The latter only consented to separate himself from his young wife, on the duke's promising to enrol her in the number of the queen's ladies, and to bring her with him to Paris. De Giac was also to inform Isabel of Bavaria, on his route, that the duke would be at Troyes on the 2nd of July, where she could join him, with her attendants, and proceed with him to the capital.

On the 14th of July, Paris was awoken by the joyous sound of its bells. The Duke of Burgundy and the queen had reached the gate of St. Antoine; the whole population was in the streets; every house they passed, on their way to the Hotel de St. Paul, was hung with tapestry, as when the host is carried by. Every step was covered with flowers, every window crowded with women. Six hundred citizens clothed in blue jackets, and led by the lord of L'Ile-Adam and the Sire de Giac, went to meet them, carrying the keys of the city, as if to conquerors. The people followed in large bodies, ranged under their respective standards, joyfully shouting, "Christmas," forgetful that they were hungry the evening before, and that they would be hungry again on the morrow.

The procession found the queen, the duke, and their suite awaiting them on horseback. Having arrived opposite the duke, the citizen who carried the golden keys on a silver plate, put his knee to the ground; and L'Ile-

Adam, touching them with the point of his naked sword, said, "Your excellence, here are the keys of your city: in your absence no one has received them; we waited your arrival to deliver them up to you."

"Give them to me, Sire l'Ile-Adam," said the duke, "for, in common justice, you have a right to touch them first."

L'Ile-Adam leaped from his horse, and presented them respectfully to the duke, who hooked them to his saddle-bow, in front of his battle-axe. Many people considered this action too bold on the part of one who came as a peace-maker, and not as an enemy. But such was the joy felt by all at seeing the duke and queen again, that the enthusiasm was nothing cooled by this incident.

Another citizen then advanced, and presented two blue velvet coats to the duke—one for himself, the other for the Count Philip de St. Pol, his nephew.\*

"Thanks, gentlemen," said he; "it is a happy thought of you to foresee that I should like to enter your city decked in the queen's colours;" and, doffing his velvet mantle, he put on the coat that had been just presented to him, and ordered his nephew to do the same. At this sight the people shouted, "Burgundy for ever!" "The queen for ever!"

The trumpets then sounded, and the citizens, dividing themselves into two bodies, formed a line on either side of the queen and the duke, the people following behind. As for the Sire de Giac, he had discovered his wife in the midst of Madame Isabel's household, and had quitted the place that etiquette had assigned him, to take that which his impatience dictated. The procession began its march.

Throughout its entire progress, it was received with acclamations of hope and joy. Flowers were showered from every window, like fragrant snow, covering the pavement under the feet of the queen's horse. It was an intoxicating delirium; and he would have been thought mad who, in the midst of that fete, had said that, in these same streets, where so many fresh flowers bloomed, where so many joyful shouts rent the air, murder had, even the night before, shed so much blood, and agony uttered so many screams.

\* The Count de St. Pol was the son of the Duke of Brabant, who was killed at the battle of Agincourt.

The procession reached the Hotel de St. Paul, where the king awaited it on the top of the flight of steps. The queen and duke dismounted, and ascended the stairs, when the king and queen embraced. The people uttered loud shouts: they thought that all dissensions were ended by the royal kiss; but they forgot that, since the time of Judas and Christ, the words *treachery* and *kiss* are written with the same letters.

The duke had knelt down, but the king raised him up, saying:—

“Cousin of Burgundy, let us forget what has past. Great misfortunes have arisen from our disputes; but we thank God that we hope, if you will aid us, to apply good and sure remedies to them.”

“Sire,” replied, the duke, “what I have done has always been for the advantage of France, and your majesty’s honour; those who have told you otherwise, have been more your enemies than mine.”

As he finished these words, he kissed the hand of the king, who re-entered the Hotel de St. Paul; the queen, the duke, and their attendants following him. All who were clad in gold entered the palace; the people alone remained in the street; and two guards, placed at the door of the hotel, soon again established that barrier of steel which separates prince and people, royalty and its subjects. It did not signify; the populace was too much dazzled to perceive that it was the only class to whom no word had been addressed—to whom no promise had been made. They dispersed, shouting, “The king, for ever! Burgundy for ever!” and it was not till the evening they discovered that they were even more hungry than on the day before.

The next day there were, as usual, great assemblages of the people. As there was no fête that day, nor procession to follow, they proceeded towards the Hotel de St. Paul, no longer to shout “The king, for ever,” “Burgundy, for ever,” but to demand bread.

Duke John appeared on the balcony. He said that he was deeply engaged in measures to put a stop to the famine and misery that desolated Paris; but, he added, that this was very difficult to accomplish, on account of the depredations and ravages which the Armagnacs had committed in the environs of the capital.

“The people acknowledged the justice of this reason,

but demanded that the prisoners who were confined in the Bastile should be given up to them; "for," they said, "those who are kept in these prisons purchase their lives and liberties at the price of gold, and it is we who must always pay their ransom."

The duke answered these hungry wretches, saying, that their wishes should be complied with; and consequently, in lieu of food, a ration of seven prisoners was served out to them. They were Messire Enguerrand de Marigny, a martyr, descended from a martyr; Messire Hector de Chartres, father of the Archbishop of Rheims; and Jean Taranne, a rich citizen. History has omitted the names of the others.\*

The populace cut their throats, and became a little more patient; while the duke, on his part, lost, by this massacre, seven enemies, and gained one more day's repose. It was an advantage in every way.

The next day there was a fresh assemblage, renewed cries, and another ration of prisoners; but, by this time, the multitude had a greater craving for bread than thirst for blood. To the great astonishment of the four unhappy prisoners themselves, they conducted them to the prison of the Châtelet, where they delivered them up to the provost. They then proceeded to the Hotel de Bourbon, which they pillaged; and, having found there a standard on which was embroidered a dragon, several hundreds of them went to exhibit it to the Duke of Burgundy, as a fresh proof of the alliance of the Armagnacs with England. Having torn it into shreds, they paraded the streets, dragging the tattered banner in the mud, and vociferating, "Death to the Armagnacs!" "Death to the English!" but abstained from killing any one.

Nevertheless, the duke perceived that the sedition gradually drew nearer him, as the tide does to the shore; and he feared that, after having so long occupied themselves with apparent causes, the people might at last apply themselves to real ones. He, therefore, during the night, sent for some notable citizens of Paris, who promised that they would assist him, if he was willing to re-establish peace and restore order. Certain of their

\* Juvenal, Enguerrand De Monstrelet.

support, the duke awaited the next day with more tranquillity.

On the morrow there was but one cry, for there was but one want—"Food! food!"

The duke appeared at the balcony, and desired to speak; but the vociferations of the crowd drowned his voice. He descended to the street, threw himself, unarmed, and with bare head, into the midst of the wan and famished people, shaking hands with every one, and scattering gold by handfuls. The populace closed around him, stifling him in its folds, pressing him to and fro in its waves—the populace, fearful in its lion-like caresses, as it is in its tiger's rage. The duke saw that he was lost, if he could not oppose the moral force of eloquence to this fearful physical power. He again attempted to speak, but his voice was lost in the uproar.

At last he succeeded in addressing one who seemed to have great influence over the mass; and this man, mounting on a post, cried out, "Silence! The duke desires to speak. Listen to him."

The obedient crowd was silent. The duke had on a velvet doublet embroidered with gold, and wore a valuable chain round his neck; this man had only an old red hood, a jacket of ox-blood, and bare legs; and yet he obtained what the powerful Duke John of Burgundy had in vain demanded.

He was as promptly obeyed in his other orders as in the first. When he perceived that silence was established, "Make a circle," said he. The throng retired. The duke bit his lips till the blood sprung, and, ashamed of having recourse to such manoeuvres, or to make use of such men, remounted the flight of steps, repenting that he had descended them. The demagogue followed him; cast his eyes over the multitude, to see if it were attentive to what was about to be said; and then, turning towards the prince, saying, "Speak now, duke—they are attentive;" he laid himself down at his feet, as a dog does at those of his master.

At this moment, some noblemen of the Duke of Burgundy's party appeared from the interior of the hotel, and ranged themselves behind him, and after the man in the red jacket had uttered an imperious and prolonged *hush!* commenced,

"My friends," said he, "you ask me for bread, but it

is impossible for me to give it you; there is scarce enough to be found for the royal table of the king and queen. You would do much better, if, instead of uselessly parading the streets of Paris, you went and laid siege to Marcoussis and Montlhery, in which are the dauphinois.\* There you would find provisions, and you would drive from these towns the king's enemies, who issue and lay waste everything, even to the gate of St. Jacques, preventing the people from gathering in their harvest."

"We ask for nothing better," cried the crowd, with one voice; "only give us leaders."

"Sires de Cohen and de Rupes," said the duke, turning half round, and addressing the nobles who were behind him, "do you want an army? I give it to you."

"Yes, your excellence," they replied, advancing.

"My friends," said the duke, again addressing the people, and presenting to them the noblemen we have named, "will you have these noble lords for your leaders? I offer them to you."

"These, or any others, provided they will lead us on," was the reply.

"Then, gentlemen, to horse!" said the duke; "and quickly, too," he added, in a low voice.

The duke was about to re-enter the hotel. The man who lay at his feet arose, and extended his hand to him; the duke pressed it, as he had done to the others. He was under some obligations to this man.

"Your name?" he inquired of him.

"Cappeluche," he replied, respectfully taking off his hood with the hand which the duke left at liberty.

"Your condition?" continued the duke.

"Chief executioner of the city of Paris."

The duke let go the hand as if it had been a piece of red hot iron, recoiled a step or two, and turned pale. The most powerful prince in Christendom had, in the presence of all Paris, chosen these steps as a pedestal on which to negotiate with the common executioner.

"Executioner," said the duke, in a hollow and trembling voice, "go to the grand Châtelet; you will there find something to do."

\* This was the appellation which, since the death of Count d'Armagnac, was given to the adherents of the dauphin.

Master Cappeluche obeyed this order as if it were no unusual command.

"Thank your excellence," he said: and, on descending the steps, added aloud: "The duke is a noble prince—not the least proud—and he loves the poor people."

"L'Ile-Adam," said the duke, pointing to Cappeluche, who was retiring, "cause that man to be followed; for either my hand or his head must fall."

On the same day,, the Lords of Cohen and Rupes, and Messire Gaultier Raillard, left Paris, with a great quantity of cannon and engines proper to carry on a siege. More than ten thousand of the boldest excitors of the populace voluntarily followed them. The gates of Paris were fastened behind them; and, in the evening, chains were extended across all the streets, as also above and below the river. The corporations of citizens shared the watch with the archers on duty; and this was, perhaps, the first time, for two months, that a whole night had passed without being once disturbed by the cries of murder or of fire.

In the meantime, Cappeluche, quite proud of the squeeze of the hand he had received, and of the message with which he was entrusted, pursued his course towards the Grand Châtelet, thinking of the execution which, without doubt, would take place to-morrow, and of the honourable position in which he should then appear, if, as sometimes it happened, the court was present. Whoever had met him now, could not have failed to recognize, in his look of complacency, that of a man thoroughly satisfied with himself; and as he cut the air with his right hand, now in this, and now in that direction, it would have been easy to divine that he was mentally rehearsing a scene in which he believed he had to play, next day, so important a part.

In this manner he reached the gate of the Grand Chatelet, on which he gave a single knock; but the promptness with which it was opened proved the porter to be sufficiently well aware that he who knocked thus had the right to be speedily admitted.

As the gaoler was at supper with his family, he invited Cappeluche to partake of the repast; which the latter accepted with an air of benevolent protection very natural in a man who had just shaken hands with the most powerful vassal of the French crown. Having carefully depo-

sited his long sword near the door, he took the most honourable place at the table.

"Master Richard," asked Cappeluche, the next moment, "who are the principal nobles you now accommodate in your hotel?"

"On my faith, messire," replied Richard, "I have held the place but a short time, my predecessor and his wife having been killed when the Burgundians took the Chatelet. I know well enough the number of porringers I send down to the prisoners, but am ignorant of the names of those who eat my soup."

"And is this number great?"

"There are a hundred and twenty."

"Well, Master Richard," cried Cappeluche, "to-morrow there will be but a hundred and nineteen."

"How so? Is there a new commotion amongst the people?" eagerly asked the gaoler, who feared a renewal of the scenes in which his predecessor fell a victim. "If I knew which of them they want, I should take care they would not have to wait for him."

"No, no," said Cappeluche, "you mistake me. The populace is just now on its way towards Marcoussis and Montlhery, and so, as you see, is turning its back on the Grand Chatelet. No, it concerns not a tumult, but an execution."

"Are you certain of this?" demanded the other.

"You ask that of *me*?" cried Cappeluche, laughing.

"Ah, 'tis true!" observed the gaoler: "you must have received your orders from the provost."

"No! I have received the news from a higher quarter—from the Duke of Burgundy," answered Cappeluche.

"From the Duke of Burgundy?"

"Yes," continued Cappeluche, throwing his chair back on its hind legs, and rocking himself with easy carelessness—"yes, from the Duke of Burgundy. He took me by the hand, not more than an hour ago, and said,—'Cappeluche, my good friend, will you oblige me by going directly to the Prison of the Chatelet, and there await my orders?' 'Your excellence,' I answered him, 'you may depend upon me, in life and to death.' Thus you see it is clear that some noble Armagnac will be conducted to the Grève to-morrow, and that the duke, intending to be present, desires the affair to be properly despatched, and therefore has given the charge of it to

me. Had it been otherwise, the order had come from the provost, and Gorju, my assistant, would have expected it."

As he concluded this speech, the knocker was heard twice applied to the exterior gate; and the gaoler, having requested and obtained permission of Cappeluche to take the lamp, left the chamber, which, with the company, remained in darkness.

In ten minutes he returned, and, having carefully shut the door, he fixed his eye with a singular expression of astonishment on his guest, and, without re-seating himself, he said:—

"Master Cappeluche, you must follow me."

"'Tis well," observed Cappeluche, emptying his glass, and smacking his tongue with the air of a man who appreciates a friend more fully at the moment of leaving him—" 'Tis well! I know the object."

So saying, he rose and followed the gaoler, having first repossessed himself of his sword, which he had laid aside on entering.

A few steps in a damp passage conducted them to the entrance of a staircase, so narrow that one was forced to concede great credit to the architect who had comprehended so well the mere accessories that staircases are in a state prison. Cappeluche, however, descended with the ease of one familiar with the way, whistling the air of his favourite ballad, and stopping at every landing; exclaiming as the gaoler continued his descent—"What the deuce! it must be some great lord!"

In this manner they descended nearly sixty steps, where, having stopped, the gaoler opened a door, so low that Master Cappeluche, who was of no extraordinary stature, had to stoop before entering the cell with which it communicated. The door was of solid oak, four inches in thickness, and sheeted with plates of iron. He had remarked its solidity on entering, and nodded his head with a knowing air of approval. The cell was empty.

Cappeluche observed this at the first glance, but he concluded that the condemned was either under examination, or under the torture. So, having placed his sword in a corner, he disposed himself to await the prisoner's return.

" 'Tis here," said the gaoler.

" 'Tis well," replied Cappeluche briefly.

Richard proceeded towards the door with the lamp, but Cappeluche requested him to leave it; and as the gaoler had no order to leave him without light, he complied. The moment Cappeluche had the lamp in his hand, he commenced an eager search, in which he became so absorbed that the sound of the key twice turned in the lock, and of the bolts firmly fastened on the outside, were unobserved by him.

He found, among the straw which served as a bed, that which he had looked for so attentively. It was a smooth paving-stone, which had been used as a pillow by some prisoner.

Master Cappeluche carried the stone to the middle of the cell, drew towards it an old wooden stool, on which he placed his lamp, and, having taken his sword from the corner in which he left it, and wet the stone with a few drops of water remaining in the fragment of a pitcher, he seated himself on the ground, with the stone between his legs, and commenced with great gravity to sharpen his weapon thereon. This occupation he continued without other intermission than occasionally trying with his thumb the edge of the blade, which had suffered somewhat in its late constant services, and then resumed his work with fresh ardour.

He was so completely absorbed in this interesting task, that he did not perceive the door opened and shut, and the entrance of a man, who slowly approached, and stood gazing on him in mute astonishment. The latter at last broke silence.

"Truly," said he, "Master Cappeluche, you are very singularly employed."

"Ah! 'tis you Gorju," said Cappeluche, raising his eyes, and turning them again rapidly to the stone, which engrossed all his attention. "What did you say?"

"I say that you are a famous good fellow," answered Gorju, "to busy yourself with these particulars."

"What would you, child?" observed Cappeluche; "nothing is well done that our self-esteem goes not with; and 'tis as necessary in our profession as in any other. This sword, hacked like a saw as it was, it might still do good service in a mob; for there, provided it kills, 'tis little matter should it have to be twice applied. But as the work it has to execute in the morning cannot be com-

pared with what it has been employed in for the last month, I cannot be too careful to have it perform it honourably and well."

Gorju had passed from astonishment to stupefaction, as he gazed at, without answering, his master, who apparently gave greater attention to his work as it drew towards its conclusion. He, however, again paused for a moment, and raised his eyes towards his assistant.

"You know not, then," said he, "that there is an execution to-morrow?"

"Yes, indeed," replied Gorju, "I know there is."

"Well, then," cried the other, as he resumed his task, "What is it that astonishes you so much?"

"You know not, then," asked Gorju, in his turn—"you know not, then, the name of him who is to be executed?"

"No," replied Cappeluche, continuing in his work: "'tis not my business; unless, indeed, it be the name of a hunchback. In that case, the difficulty would require my previous knowledge of it, that it might be properly overcome."

"No, master," observed Gorju: "he who has to suffer has as straight a neck as you or me; and I am very glad of it, as my hand is not yet quite so expert as yours."

"What say you there?" ejaculated Cappeluche.

"I say, that, as I have been appointed executioner only this evening, it would have been unfortunate for me to have fallen the first time on a——"

"You executioner!" cried Cappeluche, interrupting him, and letting fall his sword.

"Oh, yes, certainly. 'Tis but half an hour since the provost sent for me, and handed me this patent."

So saying, Gorju drew a parchment from his doublet, and presented it to Cappeluche; who, although unable to read, recognised thereon the arms of France and the seal of the provostry; and comparing it in his remembrance with his own, he saw at once that it was exactly similar.

"Oh!" cried he, with the air of a humbled man, "to put such an affront on me, on the eve of a public execution!"

"But it is impossible that it could be you, Master Cappeluche," observed Gorju.

"And how so?"

"Because you surely could not execute yourself; that would indeed be something new," was the reply.

Master Cappeluche began to comprehend. He turned his look with astonishment on his assistant; and his hair began to rise on his forehead, from which the perspiration broke suddenly, and rolled in large drops down his sunken cheeks.

"So then!" he gasped, "it is me!"

"Yes, master," answered Gorju.

"And is it you?"

"Yes, master."

"Who has given this order?"

"The Duke of Burgundy."

"Impossible!" cried Cappeluche; "it is but an hour since he took my hand."

"Just so, truly," observed Gorju, "and now he takes your head."

Cappeluche rose slowly, his legs staggering like those of a drunken man, and went straight to the door, the lock of which he took in his large bony hands, and shook with so much force, that the fastenings would have started had they been less solid.

Gorju followed him with his eyes, with all the expression of interest of which his harsh and swarthy countenance was susceptible.

When Cappeluche perceived the futility of his efforts, he returned, and seated himself where Gorju had found him, picked up his sword, and laying it across the stone, proceeded to give him the finishing touch.

"Still!" exclaimed Gorju, with renewed astonishment,

"If it be on me it must do duty," replied Cappeluche, in a hollow tone, "that is an additional reason it should do it well." At this moment, Vaux de Bar, the provost of Paris, entered, accompanied by a priest, and proceeded formally to interrogate the condemned executioner, who avowed the perpetration of eighty-six murders, besides those committed in his legal functions. About a third of these had been on women and children.

In an hour afterwards, the provost departed, leaving with Cappeluche the priest, and the newly-created executioner.

At an early hour on the following morning, crowds of people blocked up the Grand Rue St. Denis, the Rue aux

Fèves, and the Place du Pilori. Every window presented an array of curious faces. The great slaughter-house, close by the Châtelet, and the wall which enclosed the Cemetery of the Holy Innocents, appeared in danger of falling under the weight of the anxious spectators who thronged them. The hour fixed for the execution was seven o'clock.

At half-past six, an undulating movement, an electric vibration, and a loud clamour which arose from the crowd near the Châtelet, announced to those in the Place du Pilori that the condemned had left the prison, and was approaching. He had obtained from Gorju, on whom depended that last favour, the exemption from being conducted on an ass's back, or drawn in the customary cart, and walking with a firm step between the priest and his late assistant, he saluted from time to time such of his acquaintance as he recognised in the crowd.

Having thus reached the centre of the Place du Pilori, they were admitted into a small circle, of about twenty feet in diameter, formed there by a company of archers, and in the middle of which was placed a large block and a heap of sand. On Cappeluche and his companion entering, the circle was again formed, by the spectators closing their ranks. Beyond, benches and chairs were arranged for the accommodation of such as were too far distant to see over the heads of those before them; and each took his place in a vast amphitheatre, of which the roofs of the surrounding houses formed the most elevated seats. The whole scene presented to the mind the idea of a huge vessel, filled with human heads, piled one upon another.

Cappeluche walked straight to the block, and satisfied himself of its weight and steadiness: he then drew it a little nearer to the heap of sand, and again examined the edge of the sword. This done, he threw himself on his knees, and prayed in a low tone, the priest causing him to kiss a crucifix. Gorju stood close by, leaning on his long weapon. The first stroke of seven o'clock was heard. Cappeluche rose, and asked pardon aloud from God, and laid his head on the block.

Not a breath was audible—not a movement ruffled the stillness of that immense crowd. Each seemed rivetted to his place. The eyes of all alone seemed animated.

The sword of Gorju appeared, like a flash of lightning,

for an instant in the air. The last stroke of the clock expired as the weapon fell, and the head of the miserable man was biting the bloody sand in which it rolled.

His body recoiled in the opposite direction, appearing hideously to drag itself for a moment on the hands and knees, the blood spirting from the several arteries like water from a jet.

The crowd uttered a loud cry—it was the long suppressed breath of a hundred thousand spectators.

### CHAPTER XXIII.

THE political anticipations of the Duke of Burgundy were realized. The city of Paris was weary of the agitations that had disturbed it so long; and attributed the cessation of these evils, that came to a natural termination, to the presence of the duke, and the severity that he had displayed, but more especially to the execution of Cappeluche, that ardent exciter of the populace. Immediately after his death, order was re-established: and every voice celebrated the praises of the Duke of Burgundy, when a fresh scourge fell upon the yet bleeding city. It was the plague, that gaunt and haggard sister of civil war.

A frightful epidemic made its appearance. Famine, misery, the dead, left forgotten or neglected in the streets, political passions, which inflame the blood, were the infernal voices that had summoned it. The people, who began to cool, and who were frightened at their own excesses, imagined they saw the hand of God in this fresh scourge; and a singular fever seized upon them. Instead of endeavouring to prevent the malady, or of awaiting it in their own houses, the entire population spread itself through the streets: men ran about like lunatics, exclaiming that the flames of hell were burning them, and cutting paths for themselves through the crowd, which opened, trembling, before them; some cast themselves into the wells, others into the river. A second time the graves were insufficient for the dead, and the priests for the dying. Those attacked by the first symptoms of the disease stopped old men in the streets, and obliged them

to listen to their confessions. The nobles were not more secure from the attacks of this epidemic than the poor: the Prince of Orange, and the lord of Poix fell before it. —One of the brothers Fosseuse, going to pay his court to the duke, felt the first attacks of the disease at the bottom of the stairs of the Hotel de St. Paul: he endeavoured to proceed, but had scarcely mounted six steps before he stopped, as pale as death, his hair bristling, and his knees trembling. He had only time to fold his arms on his breast, saying, "Lord have mercy on me!" and fell dead. The Duke of Brittany, and the Dukes of Anjou and Alençon retired to Corbeil; and the Sire de Giac and his wife to the Chateau of Creil, which the Duke of Burgundy presented to them.

From time to time, the duke or the queen appeared behind the windows of the Hotel de St. Paul, like shadows, and cast their eyes over this scene of desolation. But they could do nothing; and kept themselves shut up in the palace. As for the king, it was said that he had relapsed into one of his fits of madness. During this time, Henry of England, at the head of a powerful army, had laid siege to Rouen, which city had uttered a loud cry of distress, that was lost in the clamors of Paris, ere it could reach the Duke of Burgundy: and yet it was the cry of an entire city. The inhabitants of Rouen, although abandoned, had nevertheless closed their gates, and sworn to defend themselves to the last extremity.

On their part, the dauphinois, led by the indefatigable Tanneguy, by the Marshal de Rieux, and by Barbazan—surnamed the Knight without Reproach—after having gained possession of the city of Tours, which was defended for the duke by Guillaume de Rommenel and Charles Labbi, had pushed their reconnoitering parties even to the gates of Paris.

Duke John had, therefore, on his left, the dauphinois, the enemies of Burgundy; on his right, the English, the enemies of France; and, in his front and rear, the plague, the enemy of all.

In this extremity, he thought of treating with the dauphin; of leaving to the king, the queen, and himself the responsibility of safely guarding Paris; and of marching himself to carry succour to Rouen.

In consequence, the articles of peace, that had been drawn up some time before at Bray and Montereau, were

signed anew by the queen and the Duke of Burgundy. On the 17th of September they were proclaimed with the sound of the trumpets in the streets of Paris; and the Duke of Brittany, the bearer of the treaty, was commissioned to submit them to the dauphin's approbation; at the same time, to dispose him to a reconciliation, he conveyed to him his young wife,\* who had remained at Paris, and had been treated by the queen and the duke with the highest consideration.

The Duke of Brittany found the dauphin at Tours, and obtained an audience. When he was introduced into his presence, the dauphin had at his right hand the young Duke d'Armagnac, who had arrived the evening before from Guienne to demand justice for his father's death, and to whom justice had been loudly promised; at his left Tanneguy Duchâtel, the declared enemy of the Duke of Burgundy; and, behind him, the president Louvet, Barbazan, and Charles Labbe, who had just passed over from the Duke of Burgundy's party to his own: all men desirous of war; since they had high expectations under the dauphin, and everything to fear from Duke John.

Although at the first glance, the Duke of Brittany judged truly what would be the result of the negotiation, he knelt, and presented the treaty to the Duke of Touraine, who took it, and, without unscaling it, said, as he raised him—"Cousin, I know its import: they recal me to Paris. Is it not so? They offer me peace, if I will return. My cousin, I will not make peace with assassins—I will not enter a city still bathed in tears and blood. His excellence the duke has caused the evil, let him also cure it. As for me, I have not committed the crime, and will not offer myself in expiation of it."

The Duke of Brittany attempted to persist, but all importunity was useless, and he returned to Paris, carrying the dauphin's refusal to the Duke of Burgundy. He found the latter about to enter the council chamber, where an envoy from the city of Rouen was to be heard. The duke listened with attention to the answer brought by his ambassador, and when he had heard it, he let his head fall upon his bosom, and reflected profoundly some minutes. "It is he who will have compelled me to this," he then

\* Marie d'Anjou, daughter of Louis, King of Sicily.

suddenly exclaimed, and entered the king's council chamber.

The explanation of the Duke of Burgundy's thoughts is easily given.

The duke was the greatest vassal of the French crown, and the most powerful prince in Christendom. He was adored by the Parisians. For three months he had governed in the king's name; and the prolonged malady of that unhappy prince did not permit even those who most wished, to hope that he could live long. In case of the king's death, from the kind of regency held by the duke, there was but one step to royalty. The dauphinois possessed only Maine and Anjou; the cessation of Guienne and Normandy to the king of England, made him an ally and support. The two Burgundies, Flanders, and Artois, which he held in his own right, and which he would re-unite to the crown, would indemnify it for that loss; and lastly, the example of Hugh Capet was not so distant, that it could not be renewed. And since the dauphin, by refusing all alliance, had desired war, he could not complain of others, when the consequences of his refusal recoiled upon himself.

Under these circumstances, the policy of the Duke of Burgundy was as simple as it was easy. To let the siege of Rouen be slowly dragged on; to open negotiations with Henry of England; and so to prepare everything in concert with him, that, on the death of Charles VI., all power being previously concentrated in his hands, he should only have to add to the regal power with which he was already invested, the title of king, which he could not till then assume.

The moment could not possibly be more favourable for putting this great plan into execution. The king, disordered in mind as he was, could not assist at the council, and had not even been informed of its convocation. The duke was therefore at liberty to give to the envoy of Rouen what he considered the most advantageous answer, not indeed for France, but for his own particular interests.

With these sentiments, which the refusal of the dauphin, just received, had strengthened, he entered the council chamber, and seated himself on Charles's throne, as if to rehearse a character, which he one day hoped to play.

The council had waited for him, and the envoy was immediately introduced.

He was an aged priest, with white hair; and he had journeyed from Rouen with his feet bare, and a staff in his hand, as was fitting in a man who came to demand succour. He advanced into the middle of the chamber, and after having bowed to the Duke of Burgundy, was about to explain the object of his mission, when a great noise was heard at a little door hung with tapestry, which led to the king's apartment. Every one turned towards it, and, to their great surprise, the tapestry was raised, and, liberating himself from the hands of his keepers, who endeavoured to hold him back, King Charles was seen unexpectedly to advance, in his turn, into the middle of the chamber, his eyes sparkling with rage, and his dress in disorder, and to walk straight to the throne on which Duke John of Burgundy had prematurely seated himself.

This unlooked-for apparition struck every one with a vague feeling of fear and respect. The Duke of Burgundy, more especially gazed at him advancing, raising himself, as if obliged by a supernatural force, in proportion as the king approached; and when the latter put his foot on the lowest step of the throne to mount it, the duke, on the other side mechanically placed his foot on the highest to descend it.

Every one looked in silence at this singular game of cross-purposes.

"Yes, I comprehend, my lords," said the king, "you have been told that I was mad—perhaps, even, that I was dead." And he began to laugh wildly.—"No, no, my lords," he continued, "I was only a prisoner. But I had heard that an important council was being held in my absence, and I wished to attend it. My cousin of Burgundy, I hope it is with pleasure you perceive that my condition, of which no doubt the danger was exaggerated to you, yet allows me to preside over the affairs of the kingdom." Then, turning to the priest—"Speak, my father," said he: "the King of France listens to you." And he seated himself on the throne.

The priest knelt before the king, which he had not done before the Duke of Burgundy, and commenced in that posture,

"Sire," said he, the English, your enemies and ours, have laid siege to the city of Rouen."

The king started.

"The English in the heart of the kingdom, and the king to know nothing of it!" he exclaimed. "The English before Rouen!—Rouen! a French city under Clovis, the ancestor of all the kings of France—which was lost, only to be recovered by Philip Augustus! Rouen, my city!—one of the six gems of my diadem!—Oh! treason, treason!" he muttered in a low voice.

The priest, perceiving that the king had ceased to speak, continued:

"Most excellent prince and lord, I am directed by the inhabitants of Rouen, to raise to you, sire, and against you, Duke of Burgundy, who hold the government of the king and of the realm, their great outcry, which is the expression of what they suffer from the English. And they thus inform and apprise you, by me, that if, through want of your assistance, they must become subjects of the King of England, you will not have in the whole world worse enemies than themselves; and that, if they can, they will destroy you and your race."

"My father," said the king, rising, "you have fulfilled your mission, and have recalled me to mine. Return to the brave inhabitants of the city of Rouen; tell them to hold out yet a little, and I will save them, either by negotiation or succour: should I be obliged, to obtain peace, to give my daughter Catherine to the King of England; or should I be obliged to march in person against him, rallying around me all the nobility of the realm."

"Sire," replied the priest, bowing, "I thank you for your good will, and pray God that it may be changed by no other opposing inclination. But, sire, whether for peace or war, you must decide quickly; for many thousands of our inhabitants have already died of famine, and for two months we have lived on flesh that God has not intended for human food. Twelve thousand of our poor, men, women, and children, have been turned without our walls, and support themselves in ditches, on roots and stagnant water: insomuch, that, when an unfortunate mother brings forth, compassionate mortals must draw up, with cords and baskets, the little new-born

infants, to have them baptized, and then restore them to their mothers, that they may at least die Christians."

The king heaved a sigh, and turned towards the Duke of Burgundy.

"You hear," said he, casting a glance of indescribable reproach upon him. "It is not surprising that I, the king, should be in such a wo-begone state of body and mind, when so many unhappy wretches, who believe that their misfortunes proceed from me, raise such a concert to the throne of God, as would make the angel of mercy recoil. Go, my father," he continued, turning towards the priest, "return to your unhappy city, to which I would willingly send my own food: tell it that not in a month, nor in a week, nor on to-morrow, but this very day, this very hour, ambassadors shall depart for Pont-de-l'Arche, to treat of peace; and that I myself, the king, will proceed to St. Denis, to seize with my own hand the oriflamme, and prepare myself for war.

"Monsieur the premier president," he added turning towards Philip de Morvilliers, and successively towards those he addressed, "Messire Regnault de Folville, Messire Guillaume de Champ-Divers, Messire Thierry-le-Roi, you will depart this evening, entrusted with full powers to treat of peace with Henry of Lancaster, king of England; and you, my cousin, you will give orders that we may betake ourselves to St. Denis; we shall depart instantly."

With these words, the king arose, and all followed his example. The aged priest advanced towards him, and kissed his hand.

"Sire," he said, "may God repay you the good you are about to do; to-morrow, eighty thousand persons will bless your name."

"Let them pray for me, and for France, my father," replied the king; "for we both need it much."

At these words the council separated; and two hours afterwards the king, with his own hands, took down the oriflamme from the old walls of St. Denis, and demanded of the duke a knight of renown and bravery, to whom he might entrust it. The duke pointed out one to him.

"Your name?" asked the king, on presenting the sacred banner to him.

"The Sire de Montmort," replied the knight.

The king tried to remember to what great memorial and to what noble stem this name was attached.

After a moment, he delivered the oriflamme to him with a sigh. It was the first time that the royal banner had been confided to a nobleman of so mean a family.

The king, without returning to Paris, sent his instructions to his ambassadors. One of them, the Cardinal des Ursins, received a portrait of the Princess Catherine, which he was to exhibit to the King of England.

On the evening of the 29th of October, 1418, the whole court went to sleep at Pontoise, where it was to await the result of the negotiations of Pont-de-l'Arche, and a command was issued for all the knights to assemble there, with their war equipages, squires, and men-at-arms.

The Sire de Giac was one of the first who answered this call. Although he still adored his wife, yet at the cry of distress, uttered by his king in the name of France, he left everything behind—his beautiful Catherine, with her infantine caresses; his Chateau of Creil, where every chamber reminded him of happiness; those alleys, where the delighted footsteps cast aside the yellow leaves, driven from the trees by the first winds of autumn, and whose melancholy rustle accords so well with the vague reveries of a young and happy love.

The duke received him as a friend; and on the same day invited several young noblemen to dinner, to celebrate his arrival. In the evening, there was a reception and play at the duke's apartments. The Sire de Giac was the hero of the evening, as he had been of the day; every one inquiring of him about the fair Catherine, who had left more than one memorial in the hearts of the young nobles.

The duke appeared to be pre-occupied, but his radiant brow announced that it was with a joyful thought.

De Giac, to escape the compliments of some, and the pleasantries of others, and, more than all, to avoid the heat of the apartment where they were engaged in play, was walking with his friend, the Sire de Graville, in the first room leading to the duke's suite of apartments. As he had only been installed there the evening before, the service of pages, valets, and squires, was as yet so badly organized, that a peasant had made his way into this first apartment, without being conducted by any one, and addressing himself to the Sire de Giac, desired to know

how he could deliver a letter to the Duke of Burgundy himself.

“From whom?” asked De Giac.

The peasant appeared embarrassed, and repeated his question.

“Listen,” said De Giac: “there are but two methods: the first is, to pass with me through these rooms, filled with rich knights and noble ladies, amongst whom such a clown as you would appear a singular blot. The second is to bring the duke here, which he would never pardon, if, as I fear, the letter you bear was not worth his perusal.”

“How, then, must I do, your excellence?” asked the clown.

“You must give me the letter, and wait for the answer.” And before the peasant could prevent him, he had taken the letter from his fingers, and was proceeding, still leaning on Graville’s arm, towards the furthest chamber.

“On my faith!” cried the latter, “by the way in which the missive is folded, and by the delicacy and perfume of the vellum on which it is written, it has to me mightily the air of a love-letter.”

De Giac smiled, and mechanically cast his eyes on the letter. He stopped as if struck by thunder. He had recognized, on the seal that closed it, the impression of a ring which his wife wore before her marriage, and of which he had often, without success, asked her for the explanation: it was a single star, in the midst of a cloudy sky, with this motto—“*The same.*”

“What is the matter with you?” asked De Graville, on seeing him turn pale.

“Nothing, nothing,” replied De Giac, immediately recovering himself, and wiping his forehead, on which a cold perspiration began to break—“nothing but a giddiness. Come, let us carry this letter to the duke.” And he dragged Graville along so rapidly, that he thought his friend had suddenly become mad.

The duke was at the further end of the apartment, with his back towards the chimney, in which a fierce fire was burning. De Giac presented to him the letter, telling him that a man was waiting for an answer to it.

The duke unsealed it. At the first words he read, a slight expression of surprise flitted across his countenance;

but, thanks to the command he held over himself, it immediately disappeared. De Giac stood before him, and fixed his piercing eye on the duke's passionless face. When the latter had finished its perusal, he mechanically rolled the letter up between his fingers, and cast it behind him into the fire.

De Giac would willingly have plunged his hand among the flaming brands, to recover that letter, but he restrained himself.

"And the answer?" he asked, in a voice of which he could not entirely conceal his emotion.

A rapid and searching glance shot from the blue eyes of Duke John, which De Giac appeared to throw back upon him like the reflection from a mirror. "The answer," he coolly observed: "Graville, go and inform the man that I will carry it myself."

As he pronounced these words he took De Giac's arm, as if to lean upon it, but, in reality, to prevent him following his friend.

All De Giac's blood retreated to his heart, and buzzed in his ears, when he felt the duke's arm in his own. He saw no more, he heard nothing. He was seized with an unconquerable desire of stabbing the duke in the midst of that gay and brilliant assembly, but his poignard seemed to adhere to its scabbard. Everything turned round him: he no longer felt the floor beneath his feet; he was in a circle of fire; and when the duke, on De Graville's return, suddenly left his arm, he fell on a seat close by, as if he had been struck by lightning.

When he recovered his senses, he cast his eyes over that assembly, that careless and glittering throng, which prolonged the joyous night, without suspecting that among them was a man who enclosed all hell in his bosom. The duke was no longer there.

De Giac arose with one bound, as if a spring had been placed beneath his feet: he hurried from room to room like a madman, with haggard eyes, and perspiration on his brow, inquiring for the duke.

Everybody had seen him go out.

He descended to the outer gate. A man enveloped in a cloak had just issued forth, and mounted. De Giac heard his horse's gallop at the end of the street; he saw the sparks of fire struck from beneath his feet. "It is the duke," he cried, as he rushed towards the stables.

"Ralff!" he shouted on entering them: "here, my Ralff!" Among the horses that were there, one alone neighed, raised his head, and endeavoured to break the band that confined him to the rack.

It was a handsome Spanish horse, of a dun colour, of pure blood, and with a flowing mane and tail; its veins crossing on its thighs, like a network of cords.

"Come, Ralff," said Giac, cutting with his poignard the band that confined him, when the steed, joyous and free, bounded like a young deer.

De Giac, stamping his foot, uttered an oath; and the horse, frightened at the passionate tone of his master's voice, bent on its legs before him.

De Giac cast the saddle on it, fastened the bridle, and, by the assistance of the mane, threw himself on its back. "Forward, Ralff, forward!" he cried, as he plunged his spurs into its flanks; and the horse went off like lightning.

"Forward, Ralff, forward! we must overtake him," said De Giac, speaking to his steed, as if it could understand him. "Faster, faster, my Ralff!" and Ralff devoured the road, only touching the earth by bounds, the foam flying from his nostrils, and the fire darting from his eyes.

"Oh, Catherine, Catherine! with mouth so pure, with eyes so soft, and voice so candid, and yet so much treachery in your heart! The body of an angel, and the soul of a demon! This very morning she bade me adieu with kisses and caresses; passing her fair hand through your mane, clapping your neck, and saying, 'Ralff, my Ralff, bring me back quickly my well-beloved.' Mockery!—Quicker, quicker, Ralff!" and he struck his horse with his clenched fist on the spot which Catherine's hand had caressed. Ralff was covered with perspiration.

"Catherine! the well-beloved is coming, and it is Ralff who brings him to you! Oh! if it be really so—if it be true that you deceive me—oh, revenge! it will require time to find one worthy of you both. Ralff, faster! faster!" and he tore his horse's flanks with his spurs, till it neighed with pain.

The neighing of another horse responded to his. In a short time De Giac perceived a horseman before him, proceeding at a gallop. Ralff passed by horse and rider with a single hound, as the eagle, with one stroke of her

wing, leaves the vulture behind. De Giac recognised the duke; the duke thought some fantastic apparition had passed him.

The duke was, therefore, really going to the Chateau de Creil.

The duke continued his course. In a few seconds the horse and horseman which passed him had disappeared. Besides, this apparition could not long engage his attention, entirely occupied with thoughts of love. He was going to repose himself for a short time, at a distance from his political and warlike combats. Adieu, then, to all fatigue of body, and to every vexation of the mind! He was going to his beautiful mistress, and love would soon breathe on his brow. It is only the lion-hearted, the men of iron who can really love.

He reached the gate of the chateau. It was enveloped in darkness, one window alone excepted, and behind the curtain of which a shadow was visible. The duke fastened his horse to a ring, and then sounded gently a little ivory horn which he wore at his girdle.

The light then moved, and shortly left in complete obscurity the room where it was first seen; passing successively behind the long suite of windows, each of which it lighted in turn. In another minute the duke heard a light step on the grass and dry leaves at the other side of the wall, and a soft fresh voice asked through the gate, "Is it you, my duke?"

"Yes, my fair Catherine: fear nothing; it is me."

The door opened, and the young woman appeared, trembling, half with fear, half with cold.

The duke threw over her a part of his cloak, and drew her towards him, wrapping her up with himself in its folds. In this manner they crossed the court in darkness. At the bottom of the staircase a little silver lamp, fed with perfumed oil, was burning, which Catherine there took up; she had not dared to carry it further than this, fearing discovery, or that the wind might extinguish it. They then mounted the stairs, each with an arm around the other.

To reach her chamber, they had to cross a large gloomy gallery, and Catherine drew still nearer to her lover.

"Would you believe, duke, that I passed this place alone?" she observed.

"Oh! you are beautiful and brave, my Catherine," he exclaimed.

"But it was to open the gate for you, your excellence."

Catherine laid her head on the duke's shoulder, who pressed his lips to her forehead. Thus they traversed that long gallery; and as the lamp formed around them a tremulous circle of light, in which appeared the stern and bronzed-like head of the duke, and the fair and brilliant head of his mistress, they might have been taken for a walking picture of Titian. They reached the door of the apartment, whence issued a warm and perfumed air: the door closed upon them, and everything again became dark.

They had passed within two steps of De Giac, and had not perceived his livid countenance, behind the folds of the red curtain which hung before the last window.

Oh! who can tell what was passing in his heart, when he saw them approaching, locked in each other's arms! Of what revenge must he have been dreaming, since he did not then throw himself in their path, and stab them!

He traversed the gallery, slowly descended the stairs, walking like an old man, his legs tottering under him and his head bent on his bosom.

When he had reached the end of the park, he opened a little door which led to the fields, and of which he alone kept a key. No one had seen him enter—no one saw him depart. He called on Ralff in a hoarse and tremulous voice; and the gallant steed bounded towards him, neighing. "Silence, Ralff! silence!" said he, throwing himself heavily into the saddle, and letting the bridle fall on the neck of the faithful animal; abandoning him to his own guidance, entirely incapable of directing him, and quite careless of what road he should take.

A tempest was threatening in the heavens, a small icy rain was falling, and low and heavy clouds were rolling in huge waves. Ralff went on at a foot's pace.

De Giac saw nothing, felt nothing: he was absorbed by one single idea. That woman had blasted his futurity by an adultery.

De Giac had dreamed of the life of a true knight—the glory of war, the repose of love. This woman, who had yet before her twenty years of beauty, had received, as a sacred deposit, the happiness of this young man for that

long period. But now, for him all was withered. Farewell! Farewell love! One thought alone, eating up every other, must for henceforth fill his mind—the thought of a double vengeance—a thought to make him mad.

The rain fell thicker, strong blasts of wind bent like reeds the trees which bordered the road, scattering with violence the last leaves that the autumn had yet left them. The rain trickled from De Giac's bare forehead, and he perceived it not; his blood, arrested for a moment at the heart, now rushed to his head, and his arteries throbbled audibly. He saw strange things passing before his eyes, like one in the delirium of madness. One thought alone, an eternal and devouring thought, filled his confused and shattered brain. "Oh!" he suddenly exclaimed, "this right hand to Satan, and let me avenge myself!"

At the same moment Ralf started to one side, and, by a gleam of lightning, De Giac perceived that he was riding by the side of another horseman.

He had not remarked this companion of his journey, and did not understand how he could suddenly be so near him. Ralf appeared to be as much astonished as his master: he neighed with t error, and his whole frame trembled, as if he had just left an icy river. De Giac cast a hasty glance at the new comer, and was surprised to see him so distinctly, in the darkness of the night. An opal, which the stranger wore at the bottom of the plume that adorned his cap, cast that strange light which permitted him to be distinguished in the midst of the obscurity. De Giac's eyes fell upon his own hand, on which he wore a ring, with a stone of the same kind; but whether it was not of so fine a water, or whether it was set in a different manner, it did not possess the same luminous quality. He then turned his eyes on the unknown.

He was a young man, of a pale and melancholy countenance, dressed entirely in black, and mounted on a horse of the same colour. De Giac remarked, with astonishment, that he had neither saddle, bridle, nor stirrups; his horse obeying the pressure of the knees alone.

De Giac was not in a humour to enter into conversation. His thoughts were as a gloomy treasure, which he did not wish to share with any one. A touch of the spur informed Ralf what he had to do; he set off at a gallop.

The horseman and the black horse did the same spontaneously; and when De Giac turned round, after a quarter of an hour's gallop, thinking that he had left his troublesome companion far behind, it was with profound astonishment he perceived the nocturnal traveller at the same distance from him. His motions, and those of his horse, were regulated by those of De Giac and Ralff, although the unknown appeared rather to let himself be carried along, than to guide his horse. It might have been supposed, that the latter galloped without touching the ground, for he produced no noise, and struck no spark from the road.

De Giac felt a shudder through every vein, so strange did what was passing before his eyes appear. He stopped his horse, and the shadow that followed him did the same: they were at the branching off of two roads, one of which led across the plains to Pontoise, the other, burying itself in the thick and gloomy forest of Beaumont. De Giac closed his eyes for a moment, fancying that he was a prey to some delusion: when he opened them again, he saw the same dark horseman, in the same place, and his patience failed him.

"Messire," said he, addressing the unknown, and pointing out to him the spot where the two roads branched off before them, "we are probably not engaged on the same business, and certainly not following the same object. Take which of the two roads is yours; that which you do not take, will be mine."

"You are mistaken, Giac," replied the unknown, in a soft voice; "we are engaged in the same business, and following the same object. I did not seek you: you called me, and I came."

De Giac suddenly remembered the exclamation of vengeance that had escaped him, and the manner in which the horseman had immediately appeared, as if he had started from the earth. He again looked at the extraordinary being who was before him. The light that the opal threw out resembled one of those flames that burned on the foreheads of the infernal spirits. De Giac was as credulous as any knight of the middle ages, but he was as brave as credulous. He did not recoil one step, but he felt his hair rising on his forehead. Ralff, on his part, started back, grew restive, and champed his bit.

"If you are him whom you pretend to be," replied De

Giac, in a firm voice—"if you are come because I called you, you must know why I did so."

"You wish to avenge yourself on your wife—you wish to avenge yourself on the duke; but you wish to survive them, again to find joy and happiness, even between their tombs."

"Can that be so?"

"It can."

"And what must be done to accomplish it?" he asked.

"What you offered me," replied the unknown.

De Gaic felt the muscles of his right hand become rigid: he hesitated.

"You hesitate," replied the dark horseman: "you call for vengeance, and you tremble before it. Your womanish heart could look upon your shame, but is unable to look upon their punishment."

"Shall I see them both perish?" demanded De Giac.

"Both."

"Before my eyes?"

"Before your eyes."

"And I shall have years of love, of power, and glory, after their death?" continued De Giac.

"You shall become the husband of the most beautiful woman at court, and the most cherished favourite of the king, as you are already one of the bravest knights in the army."

"Enough!" cried De Giac in a resolute tone. "What must now be done?"

"Follow me."

"Man or demon, go on! I will follow."

The dark horseman rushed onward, as if his horse were winged, towards the road leading to the forest. Ralff, the swift and active Ralff, breathless and panting, followed; and in a short time both horses and riders disappeared, burying themselves like shadows in the gloomy glades of the Forest of Beaumont.\*

The storm continued throughout the night.

\* This mysterious encounter, of which our author (wisely, perhaps,) does not attempt to give any further explanation, can only be regarded as an illustration of the superstitious feelings of an age in which the belief in supernatural agency was universal. But, even when viewed in this light, we may be permitted to doubt whether M. Dumas would not have better consulted his own fame by wholly omitting an illustration alike absurd and incredible.—T.S.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

In the meantime, the French ambassadors had arrived at Pont-de-l'Arche; where, on his part, the King of England had sent to represent him, the Earl of Warwick, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other eminent persons of his council. But from the first interviews, it became evident to the French envoys, that King Henry (to whom a secret intelligence with Guy le Boutillier, commandant of Rouen, gave a certainty of reducing that city,) only wished to gain time. At first, long discussions were raised to decide whether the articles should be drawn up in French or English. It was a question of words, that concealed a question of things. The French ambassadors saw this, and yielded; but in the place of the difficulty thus resolved, another immediately arose. The King of England wrote to say he had just heard that Charles VI. had again fallen into a paroxysm of madness; that he could not, consequently, at this time, conclude any treaty with him; that the dauphin, his son, was not yet king, and could not be his substitute; and that, as for the Duke of Burgundy, it did not belong to him to decide on the affairs of France, and to lay his hand on the dauphin's inheritance. It was evident that the King of England, in his ambitious hopes considered it disadvantageous to his interests to treat with a portion of France, when he could conquer the whole—thanks to the great disorders that, for the time, alienated the dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy.

When the Cardinal des Ursins, sent by Pope Martin V. to endeavour to establish peace in Christendom, and who, charged with his pontifical and conciliatory mission, had followed the ambassadors to Pont-de-l'Arche, saw these delays brought forward, he proceeded towards Rouen, to have a personal conference with the King of England himself. The latter received the envoy of the Holy Father, with all the consideration due to his mission; but at first he would hear nothing.

“It is the blessing of God,” said he to the cardinal,

“that has inspired me with the desire of entering France, to chastise its subjects, and to reign over them as a real king. All the causes for which a kingdom should be transferred from one person to another, are here combined. It is the will of God that commands this transfer to be made—that I should take possession of France. He has given me the right to it.”

The cardinal then spoke of an alliance with the royal house of France, and presented to him the portrait of Madame Catherine, the king's daughter, who was then only sixteen years old, and was considered one of the most beautiful persons of the time. The King of England received the portrait, regarded it for a long time with admiration, and promised to give the cardinal an answer on the following day.

Henry accepted the proposed alliance; but he required that he should receive, as a dowry with Madame Catherine, a hundred thousand gold crowns; the Duchy of Normandy, part of which he had already conquered; the Duchy of Aquitaine, the county of Ponthieu, and several other seigneuries; all without the oath of vassalage, or any acknowledgment on his part to the jurisdiction of the King of France.

The cardinal and the ambassadors, seeing that there was no hope of obtaining better, carried these proposals to the king and queen, and to the Duke of Burgundy. They were found unacceptable, and were rejected; and the duke and his army advanced to Beauvais.

The people of Rouen, whose hopes had revived with the commencement of these negotiations, were again depressed by their unsuccessful termination; and thus deprived of the aid of peace, they resolved to proceed to Beauvais, there to seek for warlike succour.

For this purpose, ten thousand well armed men assembled, and chose for their leader, Alain Blanchard. He was a man much esteemed, leaving more to the people than to the rich burgesses, and who, since the commencement of the siege, had been chosen as their captain. Every man furnished himself with provisions for two days, and at nightfall they prepared to put their enterprise into execution.

It had been agreed upon that they should all issue forth from the gate of the chateau. Nevertheless, Alain Blanchard judged it expedient to change that plan,

thinking it would be more effective to attack on both sides at once; and in consequence, he went forth from a gate near that of the chateau, in order to commence the attack with his two thousand men. He was to be supported by the other eight thousand men; who on their part, were to leave the city at the same time, combining their movement with his.

At the hour appointed, Alain Blanchard and his two thousand brave warriors issued silently forth, advancing in the obscurity, and, at the first challenge of the enemy's sentinel, commenced a desperate attack on the quarters of the English king. They made, at first, a great carnage amongst his troops, for the latter were unarmed, and for the most part asleep: but in a short time the alarm spread throughout the camp, the trumpets sounded, and the knights and the men-at-arms rushed to the king's tent. They found him half-armed; but he did not wait to assume his helmet; and, in order that he might be seen by his soldiers, who otherwise might suppose him slain, and take alarm, he caused two lighted torches to be carried on each side of his horse, so that both friends and enemies might distinguish his countenance. Those who had rallied round the king (and their number was continually increasing) soon perceived with what a small number of enemies they had to contend. They therefore rushed upon them, and from being attacked, they become the assailants. They then extended themselves in the form of a crescent, and began powerfully to assault the flank of the little troop. Alain Blanchard and his men, who defended themselves like lions, were unable to understand why their friends had abandoned them. Great cries were now heard from the direction of the chateau, and the French, thinking that they were the shouts of their companions, hastening to their assistance, recovered their courage. They were the cries of distress.

The traitor Guy, although unable to forewarn the King of England of the resolution that had been so suddenly formed to attack him, had nevertheless contrived to obstruct the enterprise. He had caused the beams on which the bridge rested to be sawn three parts through, and the chains which supported it to be filed in the same proportion. About two hundred men passed over; but behind these, the bridge broke under the weight of the cannon, and the cavalry; and horses, and men, and ar-

tillery rolled together into the trenches. Those who shared the catastrophe, and those who witnessed it, uttered at the same time loud cries—the one of despair, and the others of terror. These were the cries that Alain Blanchard and his men had heard.

The two hundred men who were already on the other side of the trench, not being able to return, rushed forward to the assistance of their comrades. The English thought that it was the entire garrison that had made a sortie, and opened a way before them. It was then that Alain Blanchard learnt the treachery which had betrayed him; but at the same time, by a rapid glance, he perceived the road that the English had incautiously opened before them. He therefore commanded a retreat; it was made in good order, supported by the two hundred men who had just reached him. They retired, constantly fighting, till they reached the gate through which they had come forth. Their friends, whom the fall of the bridge had detained in the city, had mounted the rampart, and covered their retreat by a shower of stones and arrows. The drawbridge was at last lowered, the gate opened, and the little army re-entered the city, having lost in its attempt five hundred men. Alain Blanchard was followed so closely by the English, that fearing they would enter the town with him, he shouted to those within to raise the bridge, although he was himself still on the other side of the trench.

This failure rendered the situation of the besieged still more desperate. Although the Duke of Burgundy, with a large force, had reached Beauvais, they received no assistance. They therefore sent to him four fresh deputies, who were the bearers of a letter couched in the following terms:—

“ You, our father the king, and you, the noble Duke of Burgundy: the good people of Rouen have already often signified and made known to you the great necessity and distress they suffer for your sakes; for which, you have hitherto provided no remedy as you promised. Nevertheless, for this last time, we have been sent to you, to announce to you, on the part of the aforesaid besieged, that if they are not succoured within a very short time, they will surrender to the King of England; and from this time, should you deny them, they return you the

faith, oath, loyalty, service, and obedience that they owe you."

The Duke of Burgundy answered them, that the king had not yet collected around him a force sufficiently strong to compel the English to raise the siege; but with God's favour they should soon be succoured.

The envoys then requested him to fix some term; and the duke having pledged his word that it should be before the fourth day after Christmas, the deputies returned, incurring a thousand dangers, to carry this answer to the poor city, now pressed by the English, abandoned by the duke, and forgotten by the king, who had actually relapsed into one of his fits of madness.

The fourth day after Christmas arrived, but no aid appeared before Rouen. Two simple gentlemen then resolved to do what John the Fearless dared not or wished not to attempt. They were Messire de Harcourt, and the Lord of Moreuil. Collecting two thousand combatants, they endeavoured to surprise the camp of the English; but if they had sufficient courage, they had much too feeble a force. The Lord of Cornouailles put them to flight, taking prisoners the Lord of Moreuil and the bastard of Croy. Jacques de Harcourt was indebted for his safety to the swiftness of his horse, which he leaped across a ditch ten feet wide.

The besieged then saw that they must regard themselves as lost. They were in such a wretched state that even their enemy pitied them. In honour of the nativity of Christ, the King of England caused some provisions to be carried to the poor wretches who were dying of famine in the trenches of the city. The besieged, finding that they were forsaken by the king, who was mad, and by the Duke of Burgundy, who was perjured, resolved to negotiate. They had, indeed, also thought of the dauphin; but he, on his part, had to support a sufficient rough contest in Maine, obliged as he was to strike the English with his left hand, and the Burgundians with his right.

A herald therefore proceeded from the besieged to demand a safe conduct from the King of England. This was granted; and two hours afterwards, six ambassadors, of whom two were churchmen, two knights, and two citizens, their heads bare, and clothed in black, as became suppliants, traversed the camp, and marched slowly towards Henry's tent. The king received them

seated on his throne, encircled by all his warlike nobility ; and after having allowed them to remain a moment before him, that they might be fully aware that they were at his mercy, he made them a sign to speak.

“ Sire,” said one of them, in a firm voice, “ it conduces but very little to your glory, and does not display much courage, to starve a poor people, who are simple and innocent. Would it not more redound to your honour and dignity, to allow these poor wretches, who are perishing between our walls and our trenches, to seek their living elsewhere ; and then to make a vigorous assault on us, and conquer us by valour and force ? It would yield you more glory in the sight of man, and you would merit the favour of God by your pity towards these unhappy wretches.”

As the king had begun to listen to this speech, he caressed the head of his favourite dog, who was extended at his feet. But in a short time his hand became motionless, through surprise ; for he expected supplications, and he heard reproaches. His eyebrows were knit, a bitter smile played round his mouth, and having looked at them an instant, to give them time to withdraw their words, seeing that they remained mute, he answered them in a tone of haughtiness and raillery :—

“ The Goddess of War,” said he, “ keeps three servants at her command—the sword, fire, and famine. I had the choice of employing all, or only one of them ; but have called to my assistance the mildest of these three sisters, to reduce your city, and to bring it to reason. Besides, no matter which of them a commander may make use of provided that he succeed, the success is not the less honourable ; and it is his business to determine which is the most advantageous.

“ As for the unhappy wretches who are dying in the trenches, it is your own fault, who have had the cruelty to drive them from your city, at the hazard of my killing them. If they have received any assistance, it is from my charity, and not from yours ; and since your request is so audacious, I can well see that your necessities are not so great. I will therefore leave them to your care, that they may assist you in consuming your provisions. As for the assault, I will make it how and when I please. It is for me, and not for you, to determine that.”

“ But, sir,” replied the deputies, “ in case we were

commissioned by our fellow-citizens to surrender to you the city, what conditions would be granted to us?"

A smile of triumph lighted the king's countenance, on hearing this question.

"My conditions," he replied, "would be those which are granted to men taken with arms in their hands, and to a city taken by force—men and town at my discretion."

"Then, sire," they replied, with an air of resignation, "as you fail us, may God have mercy on us! for, men and women, old men and children, all will perish, even to the last, rather than surrender on such conditions."

They then bowed respectfully; and, taking leave of the king, they returned with his answer to the inhabitants of the city, who were awaiting them with agonising impatience.

There was but one cry amongst this noble population—to live or die fighting, rather than submit themselves to the will of the English. It was therefore agreed, that on the night of the next day, they would level a portion of the wall, set fire to the town, and placing their wives and children in the centre, with their swords in their hands, would cut their way through the English army, going wheresoever God might lead them.

Henry of England learned this heroic resolution the same evening, Guy le Boutillier sending him intelligence of it; and as he desired the city, and not its ashes, he sent to the besieged a herald, bearing the following conditions, which were read on the public place.

By the first, the citizens and inhabitants of the City of Rouen were to pay the sum of three hundred and fifty thousand golden crowns, of the coin of France.

This was accepted.

By the second, the king required three men to be given up to him at discretion—that is to say. Messire Robert de Linet, Vicar-General of the Archbishopric of Rouen; Jean Jourdain, Commander of the cannoniers; and Alain Blanchard, Captain of the common people.

A cry of indignation and rejection broke forth from every mouth. Alain Blanchard, Jean Jourdain, and Robert de Linet, advancing from the ranks, said—

"That is our affair, and not yours. It pleases us to deliver ourselves up to the King of England. That concerns no one: let us pass."

The people made way for them, and the three martyrs took the road to the English camp.

By the third, the king claimed from all the citizens indiscriminately, an oath of faith, loyalty, and obedience to him and his successors; promising, on his part, to defend them against all force and violence, and to preserve to them the privileges, franchises, and liberties that they possessed from the time of King Louis. As for those whose good pleasure it might be to quit the town, to escape this condition, they might depart, carrying with them only the dress they wore, the rest of their goods being confiscated to the king. The men-at-arms were to depart to where the king pleased to send them, and to make the appointed journey on foot, like pilgrims and mendicants, with staves in their hands.

This condition was a cruel one, and yet it was necessary to accept it.

As soon as the observance of this treaty was sworn to, the king authorised the besieged, who were dying of hunger, to procure provisions from his camp, where everything was in such abundance, that a sheep only cost six sous of *Paris*.\*

This circumstance, that we have just recounted, took place on the 16th of January, 1419.†

On the evening of the 18th, the eve of the day fixed by the King of England for his entrance into the subdued city, the Duke of Brittany, who was ignorant of the surrender of Rouen, reached Henry's camp, to propose to him an interview with the Duke of Burgundy, in which they should treat concerning the raising of the siege.

King Henry allowed him to remain in ignorance, telling him that he would give him an answer the next day; and entertained him well and pleasantly.

The next day, the 19th of January, the king entered the duke's tent at eight o'clock in the morning, and proposed to him a ride on Mount St. Catherine, whence the whole city of Rouen can be seen. A page held at the door two handsome horses, one for the king, the other for the duke. The latter accepted the proposal, hoping, during this tete-a-tete, to be able to seize a favourable moment to induce

\* The money coined at Paris was of one fourth more value than that coined at Tours.—Ta.

† New Style. 1418, old style: the year did not commence till the 26th of April.

the king to consent to the interview he had come to solicit.

The king conducted his guest to the western side of Mount St. Catherine. A thick fog, rising from the Seine, covered the whole city; but with the first rays of the sun, a north wind which came in gusts, cut the mist into large flakes, which retired rapidly like the waves of an ebbing tide, and allowed the view to embrace at once the magnificent panorama displayed from that spot, where, even now, traces of a Roman encampment, called the Camp of Cæsar, may be discovered.

The Duke of Brittany surveyed this vast picture with admiration. To the right, a chain of hills, covered with vines, and dotted with villages, bounded the view; in front, the Seine, creeping and winding its course through the valley, unfolds itself, undulating like an immense stripe of silk stuff; then gradually widening, it loses itself in that vast horizon, beyond which the ocean suggests itself to the thoughts; to the left, the rich and broad plains of Normandy extend like a carpet, stretching far out into the sea, where, with its gaze fixed towards England, Cherbourg incessantly watches, the sentinel of France.

But it was when his eyes returned to the centre of this picture, that his looks were really arrested by a sight as strange as it was unexpected.

The city, sad and submissive, was extended at his feet; no standard was floating on its walls; all its gates were open; its garrison disarmed, was attending in the streets the pleasure of its conqueror. The whole English army, on the contrary, was under arms, with colours flying, horses prancing, and trumpets sounding—an iron belt, that encircled the city beyond its belt of walls.

The Duke of Brittany divined the truth, and he lowered his humbled head upon his breast. A portion of the shame that had overwhelmed France redounded on himself—the second vassal of the throne, the second gem in the crown.

King Henry did not appear to mark what was passing in the duke's mind. He called the squire, gave him some orders in a low voice, and the squire departed at a gallop.

In a quarter of an hour afterwards, the Duke of Brittany saw the garrison begin to move. According to the

agreement made, it was on foot, with bare heads, and staves in their hands. It left the city by the Gate du Pont, and was conducted, skirting the Seine, as far as the Bridge of St. George, where commissioners had been placed by order of the King of England. They searched the knights and men-at-arms, taking from them gold, silver, or jewels, and giving them in exchange two sous of Paris. From some, also, they took their mantles, lined with marten-skin, and garnished with lace, and gave them, as substitutes, mantles of thick cloth, or of inferior velvet. Then those who came in the rear, perceiving how the first were treated, threw their jewels, purses, and ornaments into the Seine, rather than see their property pass into the hands of their enemies.

When the whole garrison was on the other side of the Bridge of St. George, the king turned towards the Duke of Brittany.

"My lord duke," said he, smiling, "will you enter my City of Rouen with me? You will be welcomed there."

"Sire, I thank you," replied the Duke of Brittany, "but I will not make a portion of your suite. You are a conqueror, it is true; but I am not yet conquered."

So saying, he dismounted from the horse lent him by King Henry, in spite of the urgent importunities of the latter that he should keep him as a present; declaring that he would there await his attendants, and that no human consideration should induce him to set foot again in a city which no longer belonged to the King of France.

"That is a pity," said Henry, piqued at this tenacity, "for to-morrow you might have witnessed a fine spectacle. The three clowns who have maintained the siege will then be beheaded in the grand place of the city."

He then spurred on, without taking leave of the duke, who remained alone, awaiting his men and horses. He saw the king proceed towards the city, followed by a page, who, instead of a standard, carried a fox's tail at the end of a lance.

The clergy, clothed in their sacred robes, and bearing several relics, had come forth to meet him. Chaunting a hymn, they conducted him to the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, where, on his knees, before the great altar, he offered his prayer of thanks; thus taking possession of the City of Rouen, which King Philip Augustus, the grand

father of St. Louis, had taken two hundred and fifteen years before, from John Lackland, when, on the death of his nephew Arthur, his property was sequestered.

In the meantime, the Duke of Brittany's suite had joined him. He immediately mounted his horse, cast a last glance at the city, and heaving a profound sigh as he thought of the prospects of France, set off at a gallop, without again looking back.

The next day, as the King of England had foretold, the head of Alain Blanchard fell in the public place of Rouen; Robert Linet and Jean Jourdain having succeeded in purchasing their ransom.

Guy, the traitor, was appointed the lieutenant of the Duke of Gloucester, who assumed the government of the conquered city. He swore fidelity to King Henry, who, two months later, presented him, as a gift and recompense, with the chateau and estates of the widow of Messire de la Roche Guyon, slain at the battle of Agincourt.

And, as far as regards England, this was but just; for, this noble and beautiful woman had refused to swear fealty to King Henry. With her two young children, the eldest not seven years old, possessing a regal chateau, and a fortune to excite the jealousy of a duchess, she had lived with the luxury of a sovereign, in the midst of her property, and of her vassals. She left all,—however,—chateau, lands, and vassals—took her beautiful children, one in each hand, clothed herself in a stuff gown, and went on the highways, begging bread for them and herself, rather than become the wife of Guy le Boutillier, and give herself up into his hands of the old and inveterate enemies of the kingdom.

If we have dwelt so long on the details of the siege of Rouen, it is because the capture of this city was a fatal event, that was felt quickly and terribly throughout the whole realm. From this day forth, the English really planted both their feet on the soil of France, of which they possessed both the extremities—Guienne by right of fealty and homage, and Normandy by the right of conquest. The two hostile armies had but to march towards each other to join and traverse France, as a sword passes through the heart. The whole disgrace of the loss of Rouen fell upon the Duke of Burgundy, who saw its capture, whilst he had only to stretch forth his hand to

save it; but who nevertheless refrained. His friends knew not what term to apply to this singular inaction; but his enemies called it treason. It furnished, to those who surrounded the dauphin, fresh weapons against the duke; for if he had not delivered them up, he had at any rate allowed to be taken the keys of the postern, by which the English might enter Paris; and the consternation was so great, that twenty-seven Norman towns opened their gates when they learnt the capture of their capitol.\*

When the Parisians perceived these proceedings, and that the enemy was only thirty leagues from the city, the parliament, the university, and the citizens sent an embassy to Duke John, entreating him to return with the king, the queen, and all his forces, to defend the capital of the kingdom. The duke's sole reply was, to send them his nephew, Philip Count de St. Pol, aged fifteen, with the title of the king's lieutenant, and the charge of managing the whole affairs of the war in Normandy, the Isle of France, Picardy, the bailiwicks of Senlis, Meaux, Melun, and Chartres. When they saw this boy, sent to defend them, entering their city, they fairly thought they were abandoned, like their brethren at Rouen; and among them also great murmurs burst forth against the honour of the Duke of Burgundy.

\* These were, on the right bank of the Seine, Caudebec, Montivilliers, Dieppe, Fecamp, Arques, Neufchatel, Denicourt, Eu, Monchaux; and, on the left bank, Vernon, Mantes, Gournay, Honfleur, Pont-Audemer, Chateau-Mollinaux, le Trait Tancarville, Abrechier Maulvriere Vallemont, Bellencrombe, Neuville Fontaine, le Bourg Preaux, Nougondourville, Longentpre, St. Germain-sur-Cailly, Beausemont, Bray, Villetterre, Chatel-Chenil, les Boules, Galincourt, Ferry, Fontaine-le-Bec, Crepin and Faqueville,

## CHAPTER XXV.

ON a beautiful morning in the beginning of the month of May of the following year, an elegant barque, its prow moulded to represent a swan's neck, and its poop sheltered by a pavilion covered with fleurs-de-lis, and surmounted by a flag with the arms of France, glided, by the aid of six rowers and a small sail, like an aquatic bird over the surface of the river Oise. The curtains of the pavilion, closed on every other side, were open to the south, to allow the early rays of the sun, and the first aromatic breath of the warm and refreshing springtide air, to penetrate to the persons within.—There, two women were seated, or rather reclined, upon a rich carpet of blue velvet, embroidered with gold, leaning their backs on cushions of the same material; and, behind them a third was standing in an attitude of respect.

Assuredly it would have been difficult to find in the entire kingdom three women who could dispute with these the palm of beauty, of which it appeared that hazard had chosen, in its caprice, to unite in this confined space the three most prominent and yet most dissimilar types. The eldest is already known to our readers, by the description which we have given of her; but at this moment her pale and haughty face was covered with a factitious bloom, for which she was indebted to the warm reflection of the sun's rays from the red stuff of the tent, which imparted a singular expression to her countenance. This was Isabel of Bavaria.

The young girl who was reclining at her feet, whose head rested in her lap, and whose small hands also she held inclosed in one of her own—with black hair, decked with pearls, escaping from the gilt head-band, and eyes, soft as those of an Italian, casting forth with a half smile, such glances as appeared incompatible with their deep colour—this was the youthful Catherine, the fair and gentle dove about to issue from the ark, carrying the olive branch to two nations.

She who stood behind the two, was Mademoiselle de Thian, the lady of De Giac: a fair and rosy head, half reclined on her bare shoulder; a figure so fragile, apparently, that a breath of air might bend it; her mouth and feet those of a child—a slyph-like form and angelic countenance.

Opposite her, and leaning against the mast with one hand on the guard of his sword, and in the other a velvet cap trimmed with fur, a man stood, contemplating this picture of Albano: it was John, Duke of Burgundy.

The Sire de Giac had desired to remain at Pontoise. He was entrusted with the guard of the king, who, although convalescent, was not yet in a condition to attend the conferences that were about to be held. No change had occurred in the relative positions of the duke, the Sire de Giac, and his wife, in spite of the scene which we have endeavoured to portray in one of our preceding chapters; and the two lovers, their eyes fixed on each other, silent and absorbed in one thought alone—that of their love—knew not that they had been watched and discovered, on that night when we saw the Sire de Giac disappear, with his unknown companion, in the depths of the forest of Beaumont.

At the moment we have drawn the attention of our readers to the bark which was descending the river, it was very near the place where its passengers were to land; and already, from the spot where they were, they could perceive, in the little space lying between the town of Meulan and the river Oise, several tents, some surmounted by a little pennon with the arms of France, the others, by a standard bearing the arms of England. These tents had been erected, at the distance of a hundred paces, opposite each other, so as to resemble two camps. In the midst of the space between them, an open pavilion had been erected, the two opposite doors of which were in the direction of the two entrances of a park, closed by solid gates, and surrounded by stakes and broad trenches. The park enclosed on every side the camp we have described; and each of its barriers were guarded by a thousand men; the one, of the army of France and Burgundy; the other, of the English army.

At ten o'clock in the morning, the doors at the opposite extremities of the park opened simultaneously: the trumpets sounded, and from the French side, advanced

the persons whom we have already seen in the bark; whilst, from the opposite side, Henry of England, accompanied by his brothers, the Dukes of Gloucester and Clarence, came forward to meet them.

These two small groups of royal personages advanced towards each other, so as to meet under the pavilion. The Duke of Burgundy had the queen on his right, and Madame Catharine on his left; while King Henry was between his two brothers; behind whom, at the distance of some paces came the Earl of Warwick.

Having reached the pavilion where the interview was to take place, the king respectfully saluted Madame Isabel, and kissed her on each cheek, saluting also in the same manner Madame Catherine. As for the Duke of Burgundy, he bent his knee slightly: but, the king, taking him by the hand, raised him: and these two powerful princes, these two valiant knights, thus at last finding themselves face to face, regarded each other for some moments in silence, with the curiosity of men who had often wished to meet on the field of battle. Each knew the force and valour of the hand he pressed. The one had merited the name of Fearless, the other had obtained that of Conqueror.

The king, however, quickly turned towards the Princess Catherine, whose graceful countenance had already touched him, when, before Rouen, the Cardinal des Ursins had presented him with her portrait. Having led her, as well as the queen and the duke, to the seats that had been prepared for them, he sat down opposite to them, and desired the Earl of Warwick to advance, that he might serve as his interpreter. The latter then knelt, and, addressing the queen in the French language, he said—

“Madame the Queen, you have desired an interview with our gracious sovereign King Henry, in order to devise the means of concluding a peace between the two kingdoms. His excellence the king, as anxious for this peace as yourselves, has readily agreed to this interview. You are now in each other's presence, and hold the fate of your people in your hands. Speak, Madame the Queen; speak, sir duke; and may God put into your royal and sovereign mouths the words of conciliation.

The Duke of Burgundy then on a sign from the queen, rose and spoke in his turn,

"We have received the king's demands," he said; "They consist of three requisitions: the execution of the treaty of Bretigny, the surrender of Normandy, and the absolute sovereignty of what should be yielded up to him by the treaty. Here are the answers given by the council of France."

And the Earl of Warwick took the parchment, which the duke presented to him.

The king demanded one day to examine it, and to append his remarks. He then arose, offering one hand to the queen and the other to Madame Catherine, and led them back to their tents, with marks of respect and tender courtesy, which sufficiently indicated the impression made on him by the daughter of the King of France.

The next day another conference was held, which Madame Catherine did not attend. The King of England appeared dissatisfied, and returned to the Duke of Burgundy the parchment which he had received the day before. The interview was cold, and soon over.

The king had added with his own hands, such exorbitant conditions to the replies of the council, that neither the queen nor the duke dared to take upon themselves to accept them.\* They sent them, therefore, to Pontoise, that they might be laid before the king, urging him, at the same time, to accept them; peace, at any sacrifice whatever, they said, being the sole means of saving the monarchy.

\* The following are the answers of the council of France, and the marginal conditions that the King of England had appended to them:—

1st. The King of England shall renounce his title to the crown of France.

"The king consents, provided it be added;—(saving for what shall be given up by the treaty.)"

2nd. He shall renounce his claim to Touraine, Anjou, Maine, and the sovereignty of Brittany.

"This article does not please the king."

3rd. He shall swear that neither he nor any of his successors shall receive, at any time, or for any reason whatever, the transfer of the crown of France, from any person who has, or pretends to have, a right to it.

"The king consents to this, on condition that his adversary shall swear the same thing, with regard to the domains and possessions in England."

4th. He shall cause these renunciations, promises, and engagements, to be registered in the best manner in which the King of France and his council shall be able to resolve.

"This article does not please the king."

The King of France was then in one of those moments of returning reason, which may be compared to that hour of morning twilight, when the day, still contending with the yet unvanquished night, renders visible only the confused and shadowy form of each object: the summits of the loftiest mountains alone are illumined by the rays of the sun; but the plain is still in the shade. Thus, in the king's disordered mind, the primitive thoughts—thoughts of general instinct and personal preservation—drew towards them the first rays of returning reason, leaving in obscurity what was merely vague interest, and political abstractions. These moments of transition, which followed every great physical crisis, were always accompanied by extreme feebleness of mind, and a total abandonment of the will, during which the old monarch yielded to all demands, should they even be entirely contrary to his personal interest, or that of the realm. In his hours of convalescence, therefore, he experienced an imperious necessity of repose and mental quietude, the continuance of which alone could restore to that machine, worn by intestine quarrels, foreign war, and civil commotion, those days of tranquillity which his premature old age so much required. And assuredly, had he been simply an honest burgess of his own good city, or had other circumstances led him to the condition in which he was, a loving and beloved family, tranquillity of soul,

5th. Instead of Pontheiu and Montreuil, the King of France shall be allowed to give some equivalent, in such part of his kingdom as he shall judge fit.

“ This article does not please the king.”

6th. As there are many fortresses in Normandy, that the King of England had not yet conquered, but which, nevertheless, must be ceded to him, he shall, on this consideration, yield up all the other conquests that he has made elsewhere; every one shall return to the enjoyment of his property, in whatever place it may be situated; and, moreover, an alliance shall be made between the two kings.

“ The king approves, on condition that the Scotch and the rebels should not be comprised in this alliance.”

7th. The King of England will restore the 600,000 crowns given to King Richard as Madame Isabel's dowry, and 400,000 crowns for the jewels of that Princess, that are retained in England.

“ The king will counterbalance this article with what remains due to King John's ransom; and he, moreover, wishes to remark, that the jewels of Madame Isabel are not worth one quarter of the sum demanded.”

and careful attention to his bodily comforts, might have yet prolonged, through many a year, that feeble existence. But he was a king! Factions were warring around his throne, like the lions round Daniel. Of his three eldest sons, the triple hope of the realm, he had seen two die before they were of age, and had not dared to scrutinize the causes of their death. But one alone remained to him, a fair and youthful boy, who often, in his fits of delirium, passed before him like an angel of love and consolation among the demons of his dreams. But, alas! this beloved one, this last child of his heart, this latest shoot from the aged stem—he, who, when his father was abandoned by his servants, forgotten by the queen, despised by his great vassals, would glide at night into his dark and solitary chamber, comforting him by his words, warming him with his breath, smoothing his brow by his kisses—him, also, civil war had seized with violence, and torn from him. Since his departure, whenever, in this struggle between mind and matter, between reason and madness, reason had gained the sway, and the king had wrested his power from the fatal hands that abused it, every thing combined to shorten the lucid intervals; whilst, on the contrary, when his madness, like a half-conquered enemy, had resumed her dominion over him, it had for faithful allies the queen and the duke, lords and valets—every thing, in short, that reigned, instead of the king, when the king himself could no longer reign.

Charles VI. perceived, at the same time, the evil, and his inability to remedy it. He saw the kingdom torn to pieces by three factions, which a strong hand might have curbed. He felt that the will of a king was required; and he, a poor old man, a miserable madman, he was scarcely the phantom of one. At last, when with such affright as is caused by an earthquake, he heard the vast edifice of the feudal monarchy cracking around him, and comprehended that he had neither the strength to support it, nor the power to fly, he lowered his grey head with resignation, and patiently awaited the blow.

The message of the duke, with the conditions of the King of England, had been sent to him, and his servants had left him alone in his chamber. As for his courtiers, he had for a long time had none.

He had read the fatal parchment, which compelled legitimacy to treat with conquest, and had lifted his pen

to sign it; but as he was about to inscribe the seven letters which composed his name, the thought occurred that each of these would cost him a province, and throwing down his pen with a cry of agony, he let his head fall between his hands, saying, "My God and Saviour, have pity on me!"

During an hour he remained absorbed in incoherent thoughts resembling delirium, endeavouring, in the midst of them, to grasp that manly will which his maddened brain could neither pursue nor fix, and which, whilst it constantly escaped him, awoke in his mind a thousand new thoughts, having no connexion with it. He foresaw that, in this chaos, the remnant of his reason would soon escape him. He pressed his hands against his head, as if to retain it there: the earth wheeled round with him; he heard a buzzing in his ears; gleams of light passed before his closed eyes; and at last he felt demoniac madness seize upon him, piercing his head with her teeth of fire.

At this important moment the door, which was guarded by the Sire de Giac, opened gently, and a young man glided in, light as a shadow, and leaned against the back of the old man's seat. After having contemplated him a moment with compassion and respect, he bent his head to his ear, and spoke only these two words—"My father!"

But these two words produced a magical effect on him to whom they were addressed. At the tones of that voice, his hands unclasped themselves, his head arose: and with body bent forward, his bosom panting, and his eyes fixed, he dared not look round, so much did he fear that he had but imagined the words he heard.

"It is me, my father," said the same soft voice a second time; and the young man went quickly round the seat, and softly placed himself on his knees, on the cushion where the feet of the old man rested.

The latter gazed at him a moment with a haggard eye; then suddenly uttering a cry, he threw his arms round his neck, drew that fair head against his bosom, pressing his lips to his hair with an almost violent expression of love.

"Oh! oh!" he exclaimed, in a sobbing voice, "oh, my son! my child! my Charles!" and the tears gushed forth from his eyes. "Oh, my much-loved child, is it

you, is it you? in the arms of your old father! Is it so— is it so? Speak to me again—for ever.”

Then holding that youthful head from him, he fixed his haggard eyes on those of his son, who, no longer able to speak, so completely had his tears choked his utterance, made him a sign with his head, with mingled smiles and tears, that he was not mistaken.

“And how did you reach me?” asked the old man: “what route did you take? What dangers have you encountered for me, to see me again? Oh, may you be blessed, my child! for your filial heart—may you be blessed by the Lord, as you are by your father!” And the poor king again covered his son with kisses.

“My father,” said the dauphin, “we were at Meaux when we heard of the conferences which were to be held to treat of a peace between France and England; and at the same time we learnt, that, suffering and ill, you could not be present at the interview.”

“And by what means did you learn that?” asked the king.

“Through one of our friends, devoted to you and to me, my father—through him who is entrusted at night with the guard of this door;” and he pointed to that by which he had entered.

“Through the Sire de Giac!” cried the king in alarm.

The dauphin gave an affirmative nod.

“But this man is in the interest of the duke,” continued the king, with increasing terror; “this man has enticed you here, perhaps to give you up!”

“Do not fear anything, my father,” replied the dauphin: “the Sire de Giac is with us.”

The tone of conviction with which the dauphin spoke, reassured the king.

“And then, when you learnt that I was alone?” resumed the old man.

“I wished to see you again, my father,” replied the dauphin; “and Tanneguy, who had himself to converse on affairs of importance with the Sire de Giac, consented to accompany me: besides, for even greater security, two more brave knights were with us.”

“Tell me their names,” said the king, “that I may guard them in my heart.”

“The Sire de Vignolles, surnamed La Hire, and Ponthon de Xaintrailles. This morning, at ten o'clock, we

set out from Meaux; and having turned round Paris, as far as Louvres, where we took fresh horses, at nightfall we reached the gates of the city, where Ponthon and La Hire awaited us. The Sire de Giac's letter served as a safe conduct; and without its being suspected who we were, I reached this door, which the Sire de Giac opened for me. And here I am, my father—here I am, at your feet, and in your arms."

"Yes, yes," said the king, letting his hand fall on the parchment which lay before him, containing the grievous conditions of peace which we have recounted: "yes, here you are, my child, coming like the guardian angel of the realm, to say—'King, do not surrender France,'—coming, as my son, to say—'Father, preserve my inheritance for me!' Oh! kings! kings!—they are less free than the lowest of their subjects: they owe an account to their successors, and to France also, of the patrimony transmitted to them by their ancestors. Ah! when I shall shortly find myself face to face with my royal father, Charles the Wise, what a fatal account shall I have to render of the kingdom which he left me, rich, tranquil, and powerful, and which I shall leave to you, poor, torn with disorders, and rent into shreds! Ah! you are come to say—'Do not sign that peace!' Is it not so?"

"It is true that this peace is oppressive and fatal," said the dauphin, who had just glanced over the parchment on which the conditions were written: "that I and my friends," continued he, "will shiver our swords, even to the hilt, on the casques of these English, rather than sign such a treaty with them; and that we will all, even to the last of us, fall on this our soil of France, rather than yield it willingly to our ancient enemy. Yes, this is true, my father."

Charles VI. took up the parchment with a trembling hand, looked at it for some time, and then suddenly tore it into two pieces.

The dauphin threw himself on his neck.

"Be it so!" said the king. "Let there be war: a battle lost is better than a disgraceful peace."

"The God of arms will be with us, my father!" cried the dauphin.

"But should the duke abandon us, and go over to the English?"

"I will negotiate with him," said the dauphin.

"You have hitherto refused all intercourse."

"I will solicit an interview."

"And Tanneguy?" asked the king.

"Will consent to it, my father: and, more than that, he will be the bearer of, and will support my request. The duke and myself will turn upon these accursed English, and will drive them even to their ships. Ah! we have noble men-at-arms, loyal soldiers, and a good cause! One look alone from God, and we are saved."

"May the Almighty hear you!" ejaculated the monarch. He took the torn parchment. "At any rate," he said, "here is my answer to the King of England."

"Sire de Giac!" the dauphin called, in a loud voice.

The Sire de Giac raised the tapestry that hung before the door, and entered.

"Here is the answer to King Henry's proposals," said the dauphin; "you will carry it to the Duke of Burgundy: and will add to it this letter, demanding of him an interview, as good and loyal friends, to settle the affairs of this wretched kingdom."

De Giac bowed, took the two letters, and left the room without replying.

"And now, my father," continued the dauphin, approaching the old man, "what can prevent you withdrawing yourself from the queen and the duke? Why should you not follow us? Wherever you may be, there will be France. Come: you will, with us, find respect and devotion from my friends; and, from myself, love and pious attentions. Come, my father: we have strong cities, well guarded—Meaux, Poitiers, Tours, Orleans: their ramparts will crumble to pieces; their garrisons will die fighting; myself and my friends, to the last man, will expire on the threshold of your door, ere any injury shall befall you."

The king looked tenderly at his son.

"Yes," he said to him, "you would fulfil all that you have promised; but it is impossible for me to accept it. Go, my young eaglet—you have a youthful pinion, strong and swift; go, and leave in his nest the old eagle whose wings age has broken, and whose talons time has blunted. Go, my child, and let it suffice, that you have, by your presence, given me one happy night; and that you have, by your caresses, driven madness from my

brow. Go, my son; and may God give you back the good you have rendered me!"

The king then arose, the fear of being surprised forcing him to curtail those moments of happiness, now so rare, which the presence of the only being by whom he was loved had given him. He led the dauphin to the door, once more pressed him to his heart, and the father and son, who were never again to meet, exchanged their last farewell, and their last embraces. The young Charles left the room.

"Make yourself perfectly easy," De Giac was at that moment saying to Tanneguy; "I will lead him under your axe, like a bullock under a butcher's mallet."

"Who's," asked the dauphin, suddenly joining them.

"No one, your excellence," coolly replied Tanneguy: "the Sire de Giac was relating to me an adventure that passed some years ago,"

Tanneguy and De Giac exchanged a meaning look.

De Giac conducted them beyond the gates of the city. In ten minutes they encountered Ponthon and La Hire, who were waiting for them.

"Well," asked La Hire, "the treaty?"

"Torn," replied Tanneguy.

"And the interview?" continued Ponthon.

"Will take place a short time hence, if God permit; but at present, my lords, I believe the most important thing is, to take the road. We must be at Meaux to-morrow at break of day, if we wish to avoid a skirmish with these cursed Burgundians."

The little troop appeared convinced of the justice of this observation, and the four horsemen set off as rapidly as the gallop of their heavy war-horses would permit.

The next day the Sire de Giac proceeded to Meulan, charged with his double message to the Duke of Burgundy; and entered the pavilion where that prince was conferring with Henry of England and the Earl of Warwick.

Duke John eagerly broke the silk thread that fastened the letter which his favourite presented to him, and to which the royal seal was appended. He found the torn treaty under the envelope. It was the king's sole response, as he had promised the dauphin at the recent interview.

"Our sire is in one of his moments of delirium," said

the duke, colouring with anger; "for, God forgive him, he has torn what he should have signed."

Henry looked earnestly at the duke, who had formally engaged himself in the name of the king.

"Our sire," calmly observed De Giac, "was never more sane in body and mind than he is at this present time."

"Then it is I who am mad," said Henry, rising, "for having trusted in promises which you had not the power, nor probably the wish to perform."

At these words Duke John started up: every muscle of his countenance agitated, his nostrils dilated with rage, and his breathing sounding like the respiration of a lion; but he had no word to utter—he could find nothing to answer.

"It is well, my cousin," continued Henry, purposely giving to John of Burgundy the same appellation that was given to him by the King of France—"it is well! I am now glad to inform you, that we shall take by force from your king, what we asked him to yield us voluntarily—our portion of this land of France, and our place in his royal family; we will have his towns and his daughter, and all that we have demanded with them; and we will drive him from his kingdom, and you from your duchy."

"Sire," replied the Duke of Burgundy, in the same tone, "you speak of this at your ease, and according to your own will and pleasure. But before you have driven his excellency the king from his kingdom, and me from my duchy, we doubt not you will have some trouble; and perhaps, instead of the result you appear to think so certain, you will have enough to do to guard yourself in your own island."

So saying, he turned his back on the King of England, without waiting for his answer, or saluting him, and left the pavilion by the door leading to his own tents.

De Giac followed him.

"Your excellence," said the latter, after having gone a few steps, "I have yet another message."

"Carry it to the devil, then, if it is like the first!" cried the duke; "as for me, I have had enough with one for to-day."

"Your excellence," replied De Giac, in the same tone,

“it is a letter from his highness the dauphin: he requests an interview with you.”

“Ah! that will set all to rights,” exclaimed the duke, turning quickly round. “Where is this letter?”

“Here it is, your excellence,” replied de Giac.

The duke, snatching it from his hands, eagerly read it.

“Let the tents be struck, and the barriers be removed,” cried the duke, addressing the servants and pages, “and by evening let not the slightest trace remain of this accursed interview! And you, gentlemen,” he continued, turning to the nobles whom these words had drawn from their tents—“to horse! Swords unsheathed! and a war of extermination—a war to the death, against all famished wolves who invade us from beyond the sea, and to that assassin’s son whom they call their king.”

## CHAPTER XXVI.

ON the 11th of the following July at seven o'clock in the morning, two considerable bodies of men, the one of Burgundians from Corbeil, the other of Frenchmen from Melun, were marching towards each other, as if to engage in combat. What might have given weight to this supposition, was, that every precaution customary on such occasions had been strictly observed by each party: the men and horses were covered with their war armour; squires and pages were carrying lances; and each horseman had either a mace or a battle-axe hanging within reach of his hand at his saddle-bow. Having drawn near the Chateau de Pouilly, the two hostile troops found themselves on the causeway of the marshes of Vert, within sight of each other. A halt was immediately made by both bodies: vizors were lowered, and the squires presented the knights with their lances. Then, simultaneously, both troops put themselves in motion with distrust and precaution; and when they had approached to about the distance of two bow-shots from each other, they again halted.

Eleven horsemen, with vizors lowered, then detached themselves from each party, and advanced, leaving behind them, immoveable as a wall of steel, the troop to which they belonged. At twenty paces only from each other, these again halted; and from each party one man dismounted, threw his horse's bridle over his neighbour's arm, and advanced on foot into this open space, until each had traversed the half of the distance that lay between them. When they had approached within four paces, each raised the vizor of his helmet, and every one recognised, in one of them, the dauphin, Charles Duke of Touraine, and, in the other, John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy.

As soon as Duke John perceived that he who advanced to meet him was really the son of his lord and sovereign, he bowed several times, and knelt before him. The young

Charles immediately took him by the hand, kissed him on each cheek, and desired him to rise; but the duke refused, saying—

“Your excellence, I know well the posture in which I should address you.”

The dauphin at last succeeded in raising him, and said, presenting to him a parchment, to which was appended his signature and seal, “Fair cousin, if, in the treaty which is here made between ourself and you, there is anything which is not agreeable, we hope that you will correct it; and, from henceforth, we trust that our wishes are and will be the same.”

“It is I who will conform myself to your orders, your excellence,” replied the duke; “for it is both my duty and my inclination henceforth to obey you in everything you may desire.”

After these words, each laid his hand upon the cross of his sword—the gospels, or any holy relic not being at hand—and swore to maintain a lasting peace. Those who accompanied them immediately advanced with great joy, shouting “Christmas,” and cursing by anticipation him who should hereafter take up arms in such a fatal quarrel.

The dauphin and the duke, then, in token of fraternity, exchanged their swords and horses; and when the dauphin mounted, the duke held his stirrup, although the former begged him not to do so. They subsequently rode side by side for some distance, conversing amicably; the French and Burgundians intermingling in their suite.

After having embraced a second time they separated—the dauphin to return to Melun, and the Duke of Burgundy to Corbeil; the Dauphinois and Burgundians following their respective masters.

Two men alone remained behind.

“Tanneguy,” said one of them in a hollow voice, “I have kept my promise: have you kept yours?”

“Was it possible, Messire de Giac,” replied Tanneguy, “covered with armour, and accompanied as he was? But be tranquil: ere long, we shall have a fairer field and a better opportunity.”

“May Satan favour us!” cried De Giac.

“May God pardon me for it!” exclaimed Tanneguy.

And, turning their backs, both spurred their horses, the one to join the duke, the other the dauphin.

On the evening of that day a violent storm burst forth at the very place where this conference was held, the lightning shattering the tree under which the peace had been sworn. Many regarded this as a bad omen, and some openly declared, that this peace would not be more lasting than it was sincere.

Nevertheless, a few days after, the dauphin and the duke published their letters ratifying the treaty.

The Parisians had received the news of it with great joy: they imagined that either the duke or the dauphin would return to Paris to defend them; but these expectations were deceived. The queen and the king had quitted Pontoise, which was too near the English to be secure, and left there the Sire l'Ile-Adam, with a numerous garrison. The duke rejoined them at St. Denis, whither they had retired; and the Parisians, perceiving no troops assembled to march against the English, again relapsed into discouragement.

As for the duke, he had once more abandoned himself to that inconceivable apathy of which examples are found in the lives of the bravest and most active men, and which, in almost every case, has been an augury that their latest hour was not far distant.

The dauphin wrote him letter upon letter, requesting him to look to the defence of Paris, whilst, on his part, he should make a diversion on the frontiers of Maine. The duke, on receiving these letters, issued a few orders; and then, as if unable to continue the struggle which he had sustained for twelve years, went, like a tired child, to lay himself at the feet of his beautiful mistress, losing, in one look from her, the entire recollection of the whole world: it being the character of violent love to despise everything that does not relate to itself; because every other passion proceeds from the head, whilst this alone occupies the heart. Nevertheless, the murmurs which the peace had stilled, were again soon heard. Vague reports of treason began to be circulated, and one event, which took place during these transactions, imparted additional credit to them.

Henry of Lancaster had judged truly, that the alliance between the duke and the dauphin would be disadvantageous to him. He consequently resolved to seize on

Pontoise before his united enemies could combine their movements. To effect this, three thousand men, led by Gaston, the second son of Archambault, Count de Foix, now become an Englishman, departed from Meulan on the evening of the 31st of July, and, in the darkness of the night, came below the walls of Pontoise. They silently fixed their ladders against the rampart at some distance from one of the gates, and, without being perceived by the watch, mounted on the walls, one by one, to the number of three hundred. Then those who had mounted drew their swords, approached the gate, and, after slaying the picket of troops on guard, opened it for their comrades, who rushed through the streets, shouting, "St. George! the town is taken."

L'Ile-Adam heard these cries, and knew them well, from having uttered them himself. He leapt out of bed, and dressed himself hastily, but was only half clothed when the English had reached, and were knocking violently at the door of his house. He had only time to seize a weighty battle-axe, to extinguish his lamp, which might betray him, and to leap from a window into the court-yard, at the same moment that the English broke down the street door. L'Ile-Adam ran to his stables, mounted the nearest horse, and, without saddle or bridle, rushed towards the gate; and holding the mane of his horse with one hand, and brandishing his battle-axe with the other, he passed through the midst of the English, who were crowding there, at the very moment when they least expected it.

An Englishman, who had wished to bar his passage, had fallen with his head cloven asunder; and but for this man, extended bleeding at their feet, the others might have thought they had seen an apparition passing.

L'Ile Adam rushed towards the gate leading to Paris; it was closed. The confusion was so great, that the porter had lost the keys. It was necessary to break it open, and L'Ile Adam himself commenced the work. Behind him the fugitive citizens were thronging the narrow street, every moment increasing in numbers, having no hope except in the speed with which the axe of L'Ile Adam, that rose and fell incessantly, might open a passage for them.

Soon, however, cries of despair were heard at the further end of the street. The fugitives had them-

selves pointed out the way to their enemies; and the English, hearing the blows which resounded from the gate, had, to reach L'Ile Adam, charged this unarmed crowd, that opposed to them only an inert mass. But it was a broad and deep one—a living and serried rampart, in its very consternation, rendering it more difficult to penetrate. Nevertheless, the men-at-arms ploughed through it with their lances—the crossbow-men levelled whole ranks with the ground; the arrows flew around L'Ile Adam, and quivered in the shattered and groaning, but still resisting gate. The clamour was drawing near him. At one moment he thought that the rampart of wood before him would endure longer than the rampart of flesh behind him. The English were only three lance-lengths from him—when, at last, the gate gave way, and there vomited from it a stream of men, at the head of which the terrified horse bore off L'Ile Adam, like an arrow.

When the Duke of Burgundy learnt this news, instead of assembling an army to march against the English, he caused the king, the queen, and Madame Catherine to enter a carriage, mounted his horse, and, with the nobles of his household, retired by Provins, to Troyes in Champagne; leaving in Paris the Count de St. Pol as lieutenant, L'Ile-Adam as governor, and M. Eustache Delaistre as chancellor.

Two hours after the departure of the Duke of Burgundy, the fugitives began to arrive at St. Denis. It was pitiful to behold those poor wounded people, bleeding, half naked, dying of hunger, and worn out by a march of seven leagues, during which they had not dared to rest an instant. The account of the atrocities committed by the English, were listened to every where with as much eagerness as terror: groups were formed round these unfortunate wretches in the streets, when suddenly there would arise a cry of "The English! the English!" and every one fled, each to his own house, closing their windows, barricading their doors, and calling for mercy.

In the meantime, the English were engaged more in profiting by their victory, than in following it up. The residence of the court at Pontoise had made it a luxurious town. L'Ile-Adam, and a party of nobles who had enriched themselves at the capture of Paris, had there deposited their treasures; and the booty obtained by the

English on this occasion, amounted in value to more than two millions.

At the same time, it was learnt that Chateau-Gaillare, one of the strongest citadels of Normandy, had been taken. Olivier de Mauny was its captain; and although he had with him only twenty gentlemen for its garrison, he held out sixteen months, and was only forced to surrender by a circumstance which could not have been foreseen. The cords of the water buckets were worn out, and broke; and for seven days these brave men endured their thirst, but at last surrendered to the Earls of Huntingdon and of Kyme,\* who carried on the siege.

The dauphin was at Bourges, collecting his army, when the tidings reached him of the honourable capitulation of Chateau-Gaillard, and the unexpected surprise of Pontoise. The bearers of the intelligence did not fail to represent to him that this last town had been sold to the English; and what gave some appearance of truth to this report, was, that the Duke of Burgundy had entrusted the command of Pontoise to one of the nobles who was most devoted to him, who, although of known bravery, had allowed the town to be taken, without having ostensibly done anything to defend it. The duke's enemies, who surrounded the dauphin, took advantage of this opportunity to infuse into the prince's mind some suspicions for which it had long been prepared. All demanded a rupture of the treaty, and a frank and loyal war, instead of this hollow and treacherous alliance. Tanneguy alone, in spite of his known hatred to the duke, entreated the dauphin to demand a second interview before he had any hostile demonstration.

The dauphin took a resolution that at the same time accorded with both recommendations. With a force of twenty thousand men, he proceeded to Montereau, to be ready either to treat with him, should the duke agree to the interview, or to renew hostilities, should he refuse it. Tanneguy (who, to the great astonishment of all, who knew his character for decision, had always supported conciliatory measures,) was sent to Troyes, where we have said the duke had retired. He carried to him letters, signed by the dauphin, fixing on Montereau as the place

\* This must be the error of a Frenchman in writing an English name.—Tr.

for the second interview; and as there was no room in the chateau for the accomodation of Duchatel and his suite, the Sire de Giac afforded him hospitality.

The duke agreed to the interview, but on condition that the dauphin should come to Troyes, where were the king and the queen. Tanneguy returned to Montereau.

The dauphin and those around him were of opinion that they should consider this answer of the duke as a declaration of war, and have recourse to arms. Tanneguy alone indefatigable, immoveable, and obstinately opposing every hostile measure, proposed to the dauphin to make a new attempt. Those who knew the hatred that this man cherished in his heart against Duke John, could no longer understand it. They believed that he had been corrupted, as many others had been, and imparted their suspicions freely to the dauphin, who immediately communicated them to Tanneguy himself, adding, "You will not betray me, father, will you?"

A letter at last arrived from De Giac. Thanks to his persuasions, the duke every day became less unwilling to come and treat with the dauphin. This letter astonished every one except Tanneguy, who appeared to have anticipated it.

In consequence, Duchâtel, in the dauphin's name, returned to Troyes, where he proposed, to the duke, the Bridge of Montereau as the spot most suitable for the interview. He was authorised to engage, in the dauphin's name, to give up to the duke the chateau, and the right bank of the Seine, with the liberty of lodging in that fortress, and in the houses built along the river, as many men-at arms as he might think necessary—the dauphin reserving the town and the left bank for himself. As for the tongue of land that lay between the Yonne and the Seine, it was neutral ground, and should belong to neither; and as at that period, with the exception of a solitary mill, built on the borders of the Yonne, it was completely uninhabited, it would be very easy to ascertain whether any surprise were prepared on it.

The duke accepted these conditions, and promised to depart for Bray-sur-Seine, on the 9th of September. The interview was to take place on the 10th; and the Sire de Giac, who still possessed the duke's entire confidence, was chosen by him to accompany Tanneguy, and

to see that all proper precautions were taken by both parties.

It will now be necessary for our readers to cast with us a glance over the topographical position of the town of Montereau, that they may be enabled clearly to comprehend the scene which is about to take place on that bridge, to which, in 1814, Napoleon attached another historical memorial.

The town of Montereau is situated about twenty leagues from Paris, at the confluence of the Yonne and the Seine, where the first of these rivers loses its name on emptying itself into the other. If, going from Paris, you mount the course of the stream that divides it, you will, on coming in sight of Montereau, have to your left the lofty mountain of Surville, on which was built the chateau, and at the foot of which, separated from the town by the river, was situated a kind of faubourg. This is the side that was offered to the Duke of Burgundy.

Opposite you, you will discover, resembling the sharpest angle of the letter V, and almost in the same position as the Pont Neuf, at Paris, where the Templars were burnt, the tongue of land by which the duke was to arrive, approaching from Bray-sur-Seine—a tongue of land still increasing in width, between the stream and the river that borders it, until the Seine bubbles up from the earth at the Baigneuxles-Juifs, and the Yonne takes its source, not far from the spot where the ancient Bibracte was situated, and where, in our own days, the town of Autun raises its head.

To the right, the entire city will unfold itself, lying gracefully in the midst of its corn-fields and vineyards, whose variegated surface the eye loses amid the rich plains of Gatinais.

The bridge on which the interview was to take place, connects, even yet, the faubourg and the town, extending from left to right, and crossing first the stream and then the river; and resting, at their point of junction, one of its massive feet on the tongue of land which we have described.

It was on the level portion of the bridge, over the river Yonne, that a timber shed was erected, having two doors opposite each other, which were closed on each side by a barrier composed of three transverse bars. Two

more barriers had been formed, the one at the extremity of the bridge towards the town, the other, a little on that side of the road by which the duke was to approach. All these preparations were hastily made on the 9th of September.

Our human nature is at the same time so feeble, and yet so proud, that when there happens here below any events to shake an empire, overthrow a dynasty, or revolutionize a kingdom, it fancies that the heavens, interested in our paltry passions, and wretched cabals, change for us the course of the stars, or the order of the seasons,\* sending us certain signs, by means of which, man, were he not blind, might withdraw himself from his destiny. Perhaps, also, when these great events are once accomplished, those who survive, and who have witnessed them, recalling to mind the minutest circumstances that preceded them, find in these such a coincidence with the catastrophe as the event itself could alone complete; and without which these incidents would have been lost in the crowd of trifling occurrences, which, separately, have no individual importance, but which, united, form the chain of that mysterious web called human life.

However this may be, here is what was recounted by the men who saw these strange things; and here is what others after them have written.

On the 10th of September, at one o'clock in the afternoon, the duke mounted his horse in the court-yard of the house where he lodged, at Bray-sur-Seine. He had on his right, the Sire de Giac, and the Lord of Noailles on his left. His favourite dog which had howled lamentably the whole night long, on seeing his master ready to depart, had rushed from the recess in which he was fastened, with eyes on fire, and hair erect. When the duke (after having saluted for the first time the wife of De Giac, who from her window was viewing his departure) had prepared to move, the dog made so great an effort, that he broke his double iron chain; and, at the moment that the duke's horse was stepping over the threshold of the gate, he darted at his chest, and bit him so severely that the horse reared, and nearly caused his

\* On the 11th of September, snow fell, sufficient to cover the fields three inches deep. All the vintage that had not been gathered was lost.

rider to lose his saddle. De Giac, impatient, attempted to drive him away with his whip, but the dog seemed not to feel the blows he received, and again flew at the throat of the horse. The duke himself, supposing the hound to be mad, seized a small battle-axe which hung at his saddle-bow, and clove his head in twain. The dog, uttering a cry of agony, went rolling over in his death struggles on the threshold of the gate, as if still to bar the passage; and the duke, with a sigh of regret, leaped his horse over the body of the faithful animal.

He had proceeded about twenty paces, when an old Jew, who was of his household, and who dabbled in magic, suddenly came from behind a wall, and seizing the duke's horse by the bridle, said: "Your excellence, in the name of God, do not go any further!"

"What want you with me, Jew?" asked the duke, stopping his horse.

"Your excellence," replied the Jew, as he held back the horse by the bit, "I have passed the night in consulting the stars, and science informs me that if you go to Montreanu, you will not return from it."

"What say you to this, De Giac?" asked the duke, turning towards his young favourite.

"I say," replied the latter, colouring with impatience, "that this Jew is a nahn an, who should be treated like your dog, if you do not wish his unclean contact to bring you a penance of a week's duration."

"Allow me to pass, Jew," said the duke thoughtfully, and gently making him a sign to stand aside.

"Back, Jew!" exclaimed de Giac, dashing his horse's chest against the old man, and sending him rolling ten paces from him: "back! hear you not his excellence ordering you to leave his horse's bridle?"

The duke threw his hand across his brow, as if to remove a cloud; and casting another glance at the Jew, who was stretched insensible on the further side of the road, he continued his course.

In three quarters of an hour the duke reached the chateau of Montreanu. Before he dismounted, he gave orders that two hundred men-at-arms, and a hundred archers, should place themselves in the faubourg, and take possession of the head of the bridge; Jacques de la Lime, grand

master of his crossbow-men, receiving the command of this small troop.

At this moment, Duchatel advanced towards the duke, and informed him that the dauphin had been waiting for him on the bridge for nearly an hour.

The duke replied that he was going there; and at the same time one of his servants, running up in great trepidation, spoke to him in a low tone.

The duke turned towards Duchatel.

"By the blessed light of God!" cried he, "every one has agreed this day to warn us of treason. Duchatel, are you quite convinced that our person runs no risk? You would do wrong to deceive us!"

"My most redoubted lord," replied Tanneguy, "I would rather perish, soul and body, than act treacherously to you or any one. Have no fear, therefore; for his excellence the dauphin designs no evil to you."

"We will go, then," said the duke, "trusting in God,"—he raised his eyes towards heaven—"and in you," he continued, fixing on Tanneguy one of those piercing looks which he alone could give. But Tanneguy supported it without lowering his eyes.

The latter then presented to the duke the parchment on which were written the names of the ten men-at-arms appointed to accompany the dauphin. They were inscribed in the following order:—

The Viscount de Narbonne, Pierre de Beauveau, Robert de Loire, Tanneguy Duchâtel, Barbazan, Guillaume le Boutellier, Guy d'Avaugour, Oliver Layet, Varennes, and Frottier.

Tanneguy received the duke's list in exchange. Those whom he had selected for the honour of accompanying him were:—

His excellency Charles de Bourbon; the Lord of Noailles, Jean de Fribourg, the Lord of St. George's, the Lord of Montaigu, Messire Antoine de Vergy, the Lord de d'Ancre, Messire Guy de Pontarlier, Messire Charles de Lens, and Messire Pierre de Giac. Each, moreover, was to take with him his secretary.

Tanneguy carried away this list; and the duke proceeded to follow him, descending from the chateau to the bridge. He was on foot, his head covered with a black velvet hood, his whole defensive armour being a simple

hauberk of mail, and his only weapon a light sword, richly inlaid with a golden hilt.\*

On reaching the head of the bridge, Jacques de la Lime informed him that he had seen many armed men entering a house situated close by the other end of the bridge, and that on perceiving him, as he took up his station with his troop, they had hastily closed the windows of the house.

"Go and ascertain if this be true, De Giac," said the duke, "I will await your return here."

De Giac directed his steps towards the bridge, crossed the barriers, passed through the wooden shed, and going to the house pointed out, opened the door. Tanneguy was there, giving instructions to about twenty soldiers, armed in all points.

"Well?" asked Tanneguy, on seeing him.

"Are you ready?" asked De Giac,

"Yes, he may come now," was the reply.

De Giac turned towards the duke.

"The grand master has seen imperfectly, your excellence," he said, "there is no one in that house."

The duke walked forward. He passed the first barrier, which was immediately closed behind him. That gave him some suspicions; but as he saw before him, Tanneguy and the Sire de Beauveau, who were come to meet him, he did not wish to draw back. He took his oath in a firm voice; and, pointing out his light coat of mail and slender sword to the Sire de Beauveau, "You see, sir," said he, "how I am come. Besides," he continued, turning towards Duchâtel, and slapping him on the shoulder—"Here is he in whom I trust."

The young dauphin was already in the middle of the bridge. He wore a long mantle of blue velvet, trimmed with marteu-skin, a cap whose shape somewhat resembled our modern hunting caps, and whose top was encircled by a small coronet of golden fleurs-de-lis; the peak and edges were of fur, similar to that on the mantle.

On perceiving the dauphin, the duke's doubts vanished. He advanced directly towards him, entered the tent, and remarked, that, contrary to all custom, there was no

\* This sword is still shown suspended in the Church of Montereau.

central barrier, to separate the two parties; but doubtless he must have thought this an accidental omission, as he made no observation on it. When the ten noblemen who accompanied him had entered, the barriers were closed.

In this small shed there was scarcely standing room for the twenty-four persons who were enclosed in it; Burgundians and French being so close together as to touch each other. The duke uncovered himself, knelt on his left knee before the dauphin, and said :

"I am come, your excellence, at your command, although some have assured me that you have sought this interview only that you may reproach me. I hope that it is not so, your excellence, as I do not deserve it."

The dauphin folded his arms, without embracing or raising him, as he had done at the first interview.

"You are mistaken, sir duke," he replied, in a severe tone. "Yes, we have serious reproaches to make you, for you have not kept the promise which you gave us. You have allowed my town of Pontoise, the key of Paris, to be taken; and, instead of throwing yourself into the capital, to defend it or die, as, like a loyal subject, you ought to have done, you fled to Troyes."

"Fled, your excellence!" exclaimed the duke, starting at this contumelious expression.

"Yes, fled," repeated the dauphin, dwelling on the word. "You have—"

The duke rose, thinking, doubtless, that he ought no longer to listen; and as, in the humble position he had assumed, some of the chancing of his sword-hilt had got entangled in the mail of his hauberk, he proceeded to restore his weapon to its proper position.

The dauphin recoiled one step, not knowing what might be the duke's intention in touching his sword.

"Ah! you put your hand to your sword, in your master's presence," exclaimed Robert de Loire, throwing himself between the duke and the dauphin.

The duke wished to speak, but Tanneguy, stooping, seized a short battle-axe which was concealed beneath the tapestry; and drawing himself up to his full height, cried, "*Now is the time!*"

The axe glittered over the head of the duke, who per-

ceived the blow which menaced him, and attempted to parry it with his left arm, whilst with his right hand he seized his sword. But he had not time to draw it. Tanneguy's axe fell, striking down the duke's left arm, and by the same blow cleaving his head, from the cheek-bone to the bottom of the chin.

The duke remained upright for a minute, like an oak that cannot fall: when Robert de Loire drove his poignard into his throat, and left it there.

The duke uttered a cry, stretched out his arms, and fell at De Giac's feet.

Then arose a mighty clamour, and a frightful struggle ensued; for, in a space, where two men would scarcely have had room enough to fight, twenty combatants were rushing on each other. At one moment, nothing could be seen above their heads but arms, swords, and axes. The French shouted, "Kill! Kill! Death!" The Burgundians, crying "Treason! Treason! Alarm!" The sparks flew from the clashing weapons; the blood spouted from the wounds of the combatants. The dauphin, greatly terrified, had attempted to scale the barrier, but failed. At his cries, the President Louvet came up, took him by the arms and drew him out, leading him, nearly fainting, to the town; his blue velvet mantle drenched with the blood of the Duke of Burgundy, which had spurted out even so far as to him.

In the meantime the Sire de Montaignu, who accompanied the duke, had contrived to climb the barrier, and gave the alarm. De Noailles was about doing the same, when Narbonne clove the back of his head, and he fell outside the shed, and almost immediately expired. The lord of St. Georges was severely wounded in the right side by a blow from an axe: and the lord D'Ancre had his hand cut off.

The combat and the clamour, however, had not ceased in the tent. They were trampling on the dying duke, whom no one thought of aiding. Up to this time the Dauphinois, being better armed, had the advantage; but, at the cries of the lord of Montaignu, Antoine de Thoulongeon, Simon Othelimer, Sambutier, and Jean d'Ermy ran up to the shed; and whilst three of them were thrusting with their swords at those within, the fourth broke down the barrier. On the other side, the men-at-

arms concealed in the house issued forth to the assistance of the Dauphinois; and the Burgundians, perceiving that all resistance was useless, took to flight through the broken barrier. The Dauphinois pursued them, three persons only remaining in the narrow and bloody tent.

These were, the Duke of Burgundy, stretched out and dying; Pierre de Giac, standing with his arms folded, looking at this dying agonies; and, lastly, Olivier Layet, who, touched by the sufferings of this unhappy prince, was raising his hauberk to finish his sufferings with his sword. But Messire de Giac desired not to see the slightest abridgment of his agony, of which he claimed each convulsion as his own; and, on perceiving Olivier's intention, he kicked his sword violently from his hands. Olivier raised his head in astonishment.

"Odsblood!" cried De Giac, laughing, "leave this poor prince to die in tranquillity."

When the duke had breathed his last sigh, De Giac laid his hand upon his heart, to assure himself that he was quite dead; and as the rest troubled him but little, he departed without any one observing him.

In the meantime the dauphinois had returned, after having pursued the Burgundians to the foot of the chateau. They found the duke's body extended on the place where they had left it, and near it the Curé of Montereau, who, kneeling in the blood, was repeating the prayers for the dead. The dauphin's people prepared to seize the body, and throw it into the river; but the priest, arising his crucifix above the dead duke, threatened with the anger of God whoever should dare to touch this wretched body, from which the soul had been so violently separated. Then Cœsmerel, the illegitimate son of Tanneguy, taking one of his gold spurs from his foot, swore that he would henceforth wear it as an order of chivalry; and the dauphin's valets, following this example, tore off the rings with which his fingers were covered, as well as the magnificent gold chain that hung from his neck.

The priest remained there till midnight; and, at that hour, with the assistance of two men, he carried the body into a mill near the bridge, laid it on the table, and continued to pray near it till the next morning. At eight o'clock the duke was laid in the earth, near the altar of

St. Louis, in the church of Notre-Dame. He was clothed in his doublet and hose, and his cap was drawn over his face. No religious ceremony attended his burial ; but a dozen of masses for the repose of his soul were said during the three days following his assassination.

Thus fell, by treachery, the powerful Duke of Burgundy, called John the Fearless. Twelve years previously, he had treacherously dealt to the Duke of Orleans the same blows which he now received in his turn. He had commanded his left hand to be cut off, and his own left hand had fallen ; he had caused his head to be cleft by the blow of an axe, and his own head had been laid open by the same weapon. Religious and believing persons saw in this singular coincidence an application of these words of Christ--“ He who strikes with the sword, shall perish by the sword.” Since the Duke of Orleans had fallen by his orders, civil war had, like a vulture, incessantly gnawed the vitals of the kingdom. Duke John himself, as if he carried with him the punishment due to his homicide, had never, from the time he perpetrated it, had one moment's repose. His fame had suffered a thousand insults, his happiness had suffered a thousand interruptions, and he had become distrustful, irresolute, nay, even timid.

The axe of Tanneguy Duchâtel gave the first blow to the feudal edifice of the monarchy founded by Hugh Capet. It struck down the strongest column of that great vassalage which supported its arch. For a moment the edifice toppled, threatening to fall to pieces. But the Dukes of Brittany, the Counts d'Armagnac, the Dukes of Lorraine, and the Kings of Anjou, still remained erect to sustain it. The dauphin, instead of an uncertain ally, which he had lost in the father, had gained an open enemy in the son. The union of the Count of Charolais with the English, drove France to the very brink of destruction ; but the usurpation of Duke John, which could not have succeeded by the perpetual surrender to the English of Normandy and Guienne, would certainly have accomplished its ruin.

As for Tanneguy Duchâtel, he was one of those men, of head and heart, of courage and execution, to whom history, at rare intervals, erects statues of bronze. His devotion to the monarchy led him to assassination. It

was his virtue which produced his crime. He committed the murder for another's advantage, bearing its responsibility himself. His action is one of those which men cannot judge, which the result stamps as right. A simple knight, it was granted to him twice to turn the almost accomplished destinies of the state, and entirely to change them:—the night on which he carried off the dauphin from the Hotel de St. Paul, he saved the monarchy; the day on which he struck down the Duke of Burgundy at Montereau, he did even more—he saved France.\*

\* We here remind the reader, once for all, that in our summary of reigns, of periods, or of events, we express a purely, personal opinion, with no desire to proselytise, and without any hope of its becoming general.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

WE have said, that, as soon as the Sire de Giac had witnessed the death of the duke, he had left the bridge.

It was seven o'clock in the evening: darkness was gathering, and the night was approaching. He unfastened his horse, which he had left at the mill, and returned alone towards Bray-sur-Seine.

In spite of the severe cold which was felt, and of the obscurity which every moment became more dense, the horse and horseman went at a foot pace. De Giac was absorbed in gloomy thoughts. The dew of blood had not refreshed his brow. The duke's death had only half quenched his thirst for vengeance; and the political drama in which he had just performed so conspicuous a part, finished as it was for all besides, required for him alone a double catastrophe.

It was half-past eight o'clock when the Sire de Giac reached Bray-sur-Seine. Instead of entering by the streets of the village, he rode round, fastened his horse to the exterior wall of the garden, whose door he opened, and, making his way into the house, he mounted noiselessly the narrow winding stairs which led to the first story. When he reached the top, the light that glimmered through a half-open door indicated to him his wife's chamber. He approached the threshold. The fair Catherine was alone, and seated, her elbow leaning on a small carved table, covered with fruit. Her glass, half emptied, announced that her slight collation had been interrupted by one of those reveries of the youthful female heart, so sweet in their contemplation to him who is their object, but so infernal when conviction cries to jealously—"You are not the object of them—it is not of you that she is thinking."

De Giac could bear this sight no longer. He had entered unheard, so great was the pre-occupation of his wife. He suddenly pushed the door open with violence;

and Catherine, uttering an exclamation, rose as if an invisible hand had lifted her. She recognised her husband.

"Ah! it is you?" she said, passing suddenly from an expression of terror to one of joy, and forcing her features into a smile.

De Giac looked bitterly at that sweet countenance, which a moment before, had been yielding to the impressions of the heart, and was now so skilfully obeying the dictates of the mind. He shook his head, he took his seat beside her, without answering; and yet he had never seen her so beautiful.

She held out to him a white and slender hand, the fingers of which were entirely covered with rings: while her arm, bare to the elbow, was there lost in a large falling sleeve, trimmed with fur.

De Giac took that hand, examined it earnestly, and turned upward from the palm the bezel of one of the rings. It was that of which he had seen the impress on the seal of the letter sent to the duke. He there found the star, lost in the stormy sky; and read the words engraved underneath it. "*The same*—" he murmured:—"the motto will not deceive."

In the meantime Catherine, whom this examination disquieted, endeavoured to divert him from it. She passed her other hand across De Giac's brow. Although pale, it was burning hot.

"You are fatigued, your excellence," said Catherine; "you must require some refreshment. Shall I call some one? 'This feminine repast,'" she continued, smiling, "is a little too frugal for a famished knight."

She rose, and taking a small silver whistle to call one of her women, was about putting it to her mouth, when her husband arrested her.

"I thank you, madame," said De Giac, "it is unnecessary. What is here will suffice: only give me a glass."

Catherine herself went to obtain what her husband required; and while she turned her back, De Giac hastily drew a little phial from his bosom, and poured the liquor it contained into the half-emptied glass which stood on the table. Catherine returned without having perceived him.

"Here, your excellence," she said, pouring some wine into the glass, and presenting it to her husband, "drink to me."

De Giac raised the glass to his lips as if to obey her.

"You do not continue your repast," he observed.

"No: I had finished as you entered."

De Giac frowned, and cast his eyes on Catherine's glass.

"I hope, however," he continued, "you will not refuse to pledge me in my toast as I have pledged you in your's." And he presented the poisoned glass to his wife.

"And in what toast, your excellence?" asked Catherine, on taking it.

"The Duke of Burgundy!" replied De Giac.

Catherine, without any suspicion, bent her head, smiling, carried the glass to her lips, and almost entirely emptied it. De Giac eyed her with an infernal expression, and, when she had finished, began to laugh. This strange laugh startled Catherine, who looked at him with astonishment.

"Yes," cried Giac, as if in answer to this mute interrogation; "yes, you were so anxious to obey me, that I had no time to finish my toast."

"And what remained unsaid?" asked Catharine, with a vague feeling of terror: "was not the toast complete, or have I not rightly understood you?—'To the Duke of Burgundy!'"

"Yes, madame; but I was about to add—'and may God have more mercy on his soul, than men have pity on his body.'"

"What say you?" exclaimed Catherine, as she stood, her lips asunder, her eyes fixed, and suddenly turning pale—"what say you?" she repeated with greater energy, while the glass she held escaped from her stiffening fingers, and was shattered to pieces.

"I say," replied De Giac, "that Duke John of Burgundy was assassinated, two hours ago, on the bridge of Montereau."

Catherine uttered a loud scream, and sunk, or rather fell, into a seat that stood behind her.

"Oh! it cannot be!" she cried, in an accent of despair—"it cannot be!"

"It is true," coldly replied De Giac.

"Who told you this?"

"I saw it."

"You?"

"I saw him at my feet—do you understand, madame? I saw the duke, writhing in agony, his blood pouring through five wounds, dying, without a priest and without hope. I saw when his last breath was about to leave his lips, and I leaned over him to feel it pass."

"Oh! you did not defend him! You did not throw yourself before the blow! You die not save—"

"Your lover! Was it not so, madame?" broke in De Giac in a terrible voice, and fixing his eyes sternly on his wife's face.

She uttered a scream, and, unable to support the penetrating look her husband fixed upon her, she hid her face with both her hands.

"But do you then divine nothing?" continued De Giac, rising in his turn. "Is it stupidity, madame, or effrontery? Do you not then divine, that the letter you wrote sealed with the ring you carry on that finger—(and he snatched her hand from her eyes)—that that letter, in which you made an adulterous appointment with him, came into my hands; that I followed him; that that night—(and he cast a glance at his right hand)—a night of delight to you, but of the torments of hell to me, has cost me my soul? You do not divine that, when he entered the Chateau of Creil, I entered it before him; that, when you passed through that sombre gallery, with your arms mutually entwined, I saw you; that I was there, and almost touched you? Oh! oh! you can guess nothing? Must I then tell you all?"

Catherine, in utter consternation, fell on her hands and knees, exclaiming, "Mercy! mercy!"

"And now say," continued De Giac, folding his arms on his breast, and shaking his head, "you dissembled your shame, and I my vengeance; but which of us is now the superior in dissimulation? Ah! that duke, that haughty and powerful vassal, that sovereign prince—he whom the serfs of his vast domains called, in three languages, Duke of Burgundy, Count of Flanders and Artois, Palatine of Malines and Salins; he, at whose single command fifty thousand men-at-arms assembled in his six provinces; he, this prince, this duke, this palatine, fancied that he was sufficiently powerful to put an affront on me—on me, Pierre de Giac, a simple knight! And he did it, the fool! But I said nothing then. I did not write imperial letters; I did not call together my men—

at-arms, my vassals, my squires, and my pages. No! I shut my vengeance up in my own bosom, and gave it to my heart to feed upon; and when the time was come, I took my enemy by the hand, like a sick and feeble child, and led him to Tanneguy Duchâtel, saying, 'Strike, Tanneguy!' And now,"—he began to laugh convulsively—"now, this man, who held under his dominion provinces enough to cover half the kingdom of France—this man is lying in the dirt and in his blood, and, perhaps, will not find six feet of earth in which peacefully to repose through eternity."

Catherine was on the floor at his feet, begging for mercy, and rolling on the broken glass, which cut her hands and knees, causing her blood to flow.

"Well, madame! you now know," continued De Giac, "in spite of his name, in spite of his power, in spite of his men-at-arms, I avenged myself upon him. Judge whether I shall avenge myself on his accomplice—a mere woman, alone, whom I could shatter with a breath, whom I could strangle in my hands."

"Oh! what are you about to do?" cried Catherine.

De Giac took her by the arm. "Up, madame!" he said, as he raised her before him; "up!"

Catherine looked at herself, and saw her white robe stained with blood. A mist passed before her eyes; her voice died away in her throat; and stretching out her arms, she fainted.

De Giac raised her over his shoulder, descended the stairs, crossed the garden, and laying his burden on his horse's croup, fastened it there by means of her scarf. He then placed himself in the saddle, and bound Catherine's body to his own by means of his sword-belt.

In spite of the double weight, Ralf started at a gallop, in obedience to his master's spur.

De Giac directed his course across the fields. Before him lay the vast plains of Champagne, extending towards the horizon; and the snow, that began to fall in large flakes, covered the meadows as with an enormous pall, giving them the harsh and savage appearance of the Steppes of Siberia. No mountain showed itself in the distance; plains, nothing but plains; but, from spot to spot, some whitened poplars were rocking in the wind, like phantoms in their winding-sheets. No sound of any human being disturbed this desolate solitude. The horse,

whose feet fell on a carpet of snow, redoubled the speed of his noiseless bounds. His rider himself held close his breath, so strong was the feeling, that in the midst of this frozen nature, everything ought to assume the aspect, and imitate the silence, of death.

After some minutes, the flakes of snow which fell on her face, the movements of the horse, bruising her slight and feeble body, and the biting cold of the night, recalled Catherine to life. On recovering her senses, she fancied that she was a prey to one of those painful dreams, in which we fancy that some winged dragon is conveying us through the air. Soon, however, a sharp pain in her bosom, a pain like that produced by a burning coal, reminded her that everything was real. The dreadful truth, blood-stained and inexorable, started up before her. Everything that had occurred again presented itself to her memory; the menaces of her husband were remembered; and the situation in which she found herself inspired her with dread that he was putting them into execution.

Suddenly a fresh pang, more burning, sharper, and more cutting, forced from her a scream of agony; it was lost without echo, gliding over that vast sheet of snow.

But the frightened horse, starting at it, redoubled his speed.

"Oh, your excellence! I suffer greatly," cried Catherine.

De Giac did not answer.

"Let me descend?" she continued; "allow me to take a little snow? My mouth burns! my bosom is on fire!"

De Giac still continued silent.

"Oh! I beseech you, in the name of heaven! for mercy, for pity's sake! They are red hot blades of steel! Water! oh! water!"

Catherine writhed in the leathern belt which bound her to her husband. She endeavoured to slip to the earth, but the scarf retained her, She resembled Leonora bound to the phantom. The horseman was as silent as Wilhelm; and Ralf shot along like the phantom steed of Bénger.

Catherine, now losing all earthly hope, addressed herself to heaven.

"Mercy, my God! mercy!" she cried; "for it is thus that those must suffer who are poisoned."

At these words, De Giac laughed wildly; and that strange demon-like laugh found an echo; another laugh responded to it, loudly flying on, o'er that dark and dismal plain. Ralff neighed, and his mane stood erect with terror.

Then the young woman perceived that she was lost—that her last hour was come. She felt that nothing could retard it, and began to pray aloud to God; but her prayers were every moment interrupted by the screams which her agony forced from her.

De Giac remained silent.

He soon perceived that Catherine's voice became weaker, and felt her body, which he had a thousand times covered with kisses, writhe in convulsions of agony. He could even reckon the death-shudders which ran through her limbs, bound to his own. Then her voice died gradually away into a hoarse prolonged rattle; the convulsions became almost imperceptible shudders; and at last, the body stiffened, and the lips breathed forth a sigh—the final effort of life—the last adieu of the soul. De Giac was bound to a dead body.

For three quarters of an hour longer he continued his course without uttering a word, without turning, without looking behind him.

At last he found himself on the banks of the Seine, a little below the spot where the Aube joins it, rendering its course deeper and more rapid. He drew up Ralff, undid the buckle of the belt that fastened Catherine to him, and the body which nothing now supported except the scarf which bound it to the saddle, fell curved across the horse's croup.

De Giac then dismounted; and Ralff, all foaming and dripping with perspiration, wished to enter the river; but his master restrained him with his left hand, and taking his dagger in his right, he felt under Ralff's neck with its sharp and slender point, till he found an artery. The blood gushed forth.

The wounded animal immediately reared and uttered a plaintive neigh; then tearing himself from his master's hands, he rushed into the stream, carrying with him the dead body of Catherine.

De Giac, standing on the bank, witnessed him struggling against the current, that he would easily have crossed were it not for the wound which enfeebled him. When he got about one third over the stream, he began to deviate from his course; his respiration became quick, and he endeavoured to return to the bank he had left. His croup had already disappeared, and Catherine's white robe could scarcely be discerned on the surface of the stream. In a short time he turned over on his back, as if drawn down by a whirlpool, his fore legs beat the water, dashing up the spray, and his neck slowly sank. The head, in turn, gradually disappeared—a wave entirely covered it. It reappeared for a moment, sank a second time, and then some air-bubbles arose to the surface of the water. It was over; and the stream, for a moment disturbed, resumed its silent and tranquil course.

“Poor Ralf,” said the Sire de Giac, with a sigh.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE day after the Duke of Burgundy's death, the men-at-arms whom he had placed the evening before in the Chateau de Montereau, surrendered that fortress to the dauphin, on condition of their lives and property being safe. Their captains were, the Chevaliers de Jouvelle and de Montaigu.

On the same day the dauphin held a grand council, in which letters were written to the cities of Paris, Chalons, Rheims, and others. In these he rendered an account of his conduct, that he might not be accused of having broken the peace which he had sworn, or having violated his royal word. When these things were done, he retired to Bourges with his prisoners, leaving Messire de Guित्रy as captain of the town of Montereau.

When the event that we have related was known at Paris, it produced there a melancholy and profound sensation. The young Count de St. Pol, the king's lieutenant in that city, immediately summoned the Chancellor of France, the Provost of Paris, the Provost of the guilds, all the king's officers and counsellors, and, with them, a crowd of nobles and citizens. He then announced to them the sanguinary death of John Duke of Burgundy, and caused them to swear on the gospels and relics not to make any treaty with seditious men and murderers, and to denounce and bring to justice all who should favour the partisans of the dauphin.

It was at Ghent that Philip of Charolais, the sole male heir of the Duke of Burgundy, heard of the assassination at Montereau. He threw himself in tears into his wife's arms, exclaiming, "Michelle, Michelle, your brother, the dauphin, has caused my father to be assassinated!" The poor princess was much grieved and disturbed by this news, for she feared that the event might have a disastrous influence on the love her husband bore her.

When the despair of the Count of Charolais was somewhat calmed, he solemnly assumed the title of the Duke

of Burgundy; held a council with the good people of Ghent, of Burges, and of Ypres, as to what measures he should adopt; and took possession of the county of Flanders. He then immediately proceeded to Malines, where he held a conference with his cousin, the Duke of Brabant, John of Bavaria, his uncle, and the Countess of Hainault, his aunt. All three were of opinion that he should instantly form an alliance with King Henry of England. Consequently, the Bishop of Arras, Messire Athis de Brimeux, and Messire Roland de Heckeherk, were despatched to Rouen, where they were received graciously by the English king, who saw in the alliance, proposed by the new duke, a means of renewing the proposals for a marriage with Madame Catherine of France, of whom he had preserved a warm recollection—a marriage which also involved political considerations of the highest importance.

The King of England therefore answered, that, with the least possible delay, he would send ambassadors to Duke Philip, to present to him a treaty. He hastened to arrange the conditions of one; and, towards St. Andrew's day, the Bishop of Rochester and the Earls of Warwick and Kent betook themselves, in the name of King Henry, to the town of Arras, where the duke received them with great magnificence.

The following are the king's proposals and the articles, for the ratification of which the Duke of Burgundy was to employ his influence with King Charles, and his counsellors. It will be seen how greatly his pretensions had increased since the incredible apathy of Duke John had allowed to fall into his hands the cities of Rouen and Pontoise, those two gates of Paris, by the possession of which, the hostile king already carried the keys of the capital at his girdle.

"1. The King of England offers to espouse Madame Catherine without imposing any charge on the kingdom.

"2. To leave to King Charles during his life, the enjoyment of the crown and the revenues of the kingdom.

"3. That, after the death of King Charles, the crown of France should devolve on King Henry and his heirs for ever.

"4. On account of the king's malady, which prevents his attention to the government, the King of England will take the title and authority of regent.

“ 5. The princes, the nobles, the commons, and the citizens, shall take an oath to the King of England, as regent, and shall engage to acknowledge him as their sovereign, on the death of King Charles.”

Duke Philip engaged to procure the subscription of the King of France to this treaty, on condition, that in his turn, the King of England would engage to acknowledge and observe the following articles:—

“ 1. One of King Henry’s brothers shall espouse one of the duke’s sisters.

“ 2. The king and the duke shall love and assist each other as brothers.

“ 3. They shall, in conjunction, prosecute the punishment of the dauphin, and of the other murderers of Duke John.

“ 4. Should the dauphin, or any other of the aforesaid murderers, be made prisoners, he should not be ransomed except with the duke’s consent.

“ 5. That the King of England should assign to the duke, and to Madame Michelle his wife, lands to the value of 20,000 livres of rent, for which homage should be paid him.”

It may be seen, that in this double treaty, which disposed of France, and robbed the king, only two things had been forgotten, which had probably been considered as useless: the first was, the king’s consent; and the second, the ratification of France.

Such, however, were the conditions on which, under the pretext of avenging the death of Duke John, France was sold by Duke Philip of Burgundy to King Henry of England, on the 21st of December, 1419. The father had betrayed her, and the son delivered her up.

In the meantime, and whilst they were thus granting royalty to him, as a pension for life, the old king was at Troyes, with Madame Isabel, whom he loved during his moments of reason, and hated during his periods of madness. The news of Duke John’s assassination, and the part that the enemies of the dauphin accused that young prince of having taken in it, produced such an impression on the feeble old man, as to throw him again into a state of the most complete madness. Although, from this period, to the time of his death, many important mandates were signed by him, and, amongst others, the treaty

known as the "Treaty of Troyes," it is quite certain that he never recovered his reason, and that the responsibility of these acts, which were more and more prejudicial to the interests of France, must fall on the memory of Duke Philip and Queen Isabel; for, from this day, the life of Charles VI. was an agony, and not a reign.

On the 21st of March, 1420, the Duke of Burgundy entered the town of Troyes, amid the acclamations of the citizens and people, and rendered fealty and homage to the king, as the successor of the duke his father in the right of the Duchy of Burgundy, of the counties of Flanders and Artois, and of other seigneuries. But the duke, before France was ceded to England, wished, for his part, doubtless in his capacity as a prince of the fleur-de-lis, to carry off some splendid portions of it. Lille, Douay, and Orchies, had been mortgaged to the house of Burgundy; and Charles was induced to renounce his right of redeeming them. Madame Michelle's dower had not yet been paid; and the duke consented to receive, instead, the towns of Roye, Montdidier, and Peronne—Peronne the impregnable, which, in the midst of every assault of foreign and domestic war, preserved her name of *maiden*; as certain mountains of the Alps, which cannot be ascended, take the name of *virgin*.

Thus the Englishman and Burgundian, that they might the more easily conquer France, began by seizing her belt of fortresses. The dauphin alone defended his country.

When Duke Philip had chosen, from among our cities, those which he considered suited him best—when he had ranged them in a line so straight, that Montdidier, situated only twenty-five leagues from Paris, appeared to penetrate into the heart of France like the point of a sword, whose handle was at Ghent—then, faithful as an accomplice, he occupied himself with the promises that he had made to King Henry; and it must be confessed that he fulfilled them well. The king consented to the marriage of his daughter Catherine with Henry of Lancaster; and ratified the exclusion of the dauphin, his son and heir. And he also annulled the wise constitution, founded by his predecessors, which forbade the succession through the females.

On the 13th of April, 1420, Duke Philip wrote to the

King of England, that he might come, as everything was then completed.

And, in truth, the English king arrived on the 20th of the following May, accompanied by his two brothers, the Dukes of Gloucester and Clarence, escorted by the Earls of Huntingdon, of Warwick, and of Kent, and followed by fifteen hundred men-at-arms. The Duke of Burgundy went to meet him, and, as became the future vassal to his destined sovereign, conducted him to the apartments which had been prepared for him in the city. Immediately after his arrival, the king went to see the queen and Madame Catherine. He found the latter more graceful and beautiful than ever; and, perhaps, he himself did not know which he was most eager to possess—France, or his affianced bride.

The next day, the two kings signed the famous treaty of Troyes. It was the disgrace and ruin of the kingdom; and one might imagine, that, from this moment, the guardian angel of the country had remounted to the skies. The dauphin, alone, never despaired: with his hand on the heart of France, he counted its throbs, and knew that she still might live.

On the 2nd of June, the marriage of Henry of England and Catherine of France was celebrated. This was the second flower that had been plucked from the stem of the royal lilies to adorn the English crown. Twice was the present fatal to those who received it—twice did death, in the bed of the Kings of England, follow the embrace of the daughters of France. Richard survived his marriage only three years; and Henry was doomed to die at the expiration of eighteen months.

From this day there were two regents of France, and two heirs to the crown. The dauphin was master of the south, and the King of England possessed the north. Then commenced that great duel, of which the prize was a kingdom.

The advantage of the first blows was with the King of England. After a siege of some days, Sens surrendered; Villeneuve-le-Roi was carried by assault, and Montereau taken by escalade.

There, the Duke of Burgundy had a duty to perform to his murdered father, and it was his first care on entering the town. Some women pointed out to him his father's tomb. A pall was thrown over the stone

sepulchre, a wax taper lighted on each end of it, and the priests chaunted the offices of the dead during a whole night. The next morning the stone was raised, and the tomb opened. The duke's body was found there, covered with his doublet and casque: the left had was completely severed; and the head, cloven by Tanneguy Duchâtel, showed the gaping wound by which the English had entered the realm of France.

The body was deposited in a leaden coffin, filled with salt, and afterwards laid in state in a convent of the Chartreux, situated outside the town of Dijon, in Burgundy. The body of the Bastard of Croy, who had been slain at the attack of the town, was buried in the same grave from which that of the duke had just been taken.

These cares accomplished, the Burgundians and English proceeded to lay siege to Melun; but this town seemed disposed to offer a steady resistance to them. It was full of brave French blood. Its commander was the Sire de Barbasan; and he had under his orders the Lord Preaux, Messire Pierre de Bourbon, and one named Bourgeois, who performed wonders during the siege.—When they perceived its preparations for defence, the King of England and the duke encompassed the town; the former, with his two brothers and the Duke of Bavaria, establishing his quarters on the side of the Gâtinas; and the latter, accompanied by the Earl of Huntingdon and several other English captains, pitching his tents on the side of the Brie. A bridge of boats was thrown over the Seine, for the purpose of establishing communications between the two armies; and the Duke of Burgundy, and the king, that they might not be surprised by the besieged, each enclosed their camps with deep trenches and stakes, guarding the entrances to and from by strong barriers. The King of France, and the two queens, had, in the meantime, quitted Troyes, and come to hold their court at Corbeil. The siege lasted, in this manner, for four months and a half, without any great advantage on the side of the besiegers.

The Duke of Burgundy had, however, got possession of a very strong bulwark, erected by the besieged in front of their trenches, and from which their cannons and bombards had done great damage to the besiegers. On his side, the King of England had prepared a mine, which was already approaching the wall, when it was

discovered by Juvéna! des Ursins, the son of the parliamentary advocate. He immediately ordered a countermine to be made; and, with a long battle-axe in his hand, and supported by some men-at-arms, he himself directed the work. The Sire de Barbasan happening to pass, was informed of the circumstances by Juvéna!, who also intimated his intention of leading the combat, there, underground. Barbasan, who loved him as a son, examined his long axe, and, shaking his head, said, "Ah! brother, you know not yet what 'tis to fight in a mine. You must have shorter weapons than this, when hand to hand." He then took his sword, and cut the handle of the axe to a convenient length. But ere he returned his weapon to its scabbard, he desired Juvéna! to kneel, and having given him the stroke of knighthood, raised him up, saying, "Act now as a good and loyal knight."

After two hours' labour, the English and French miners were not separated from each other by more than the thickness of an ordinary wall, and in a moment more this was broken down. On each side the workmen then retired, and the men-at-arms began to engage each other roughly in this narrow and gloomy passage, where four men could scarcely stand abreast. It was then that Juvéna! acknowledged the correctness of Barbasan's observations; his short-handled battle-axe performed wonders. The English took to flight; the new made knight gained his spurs.

An hour afterwards, the English returned in force, pushing before them a barrier, which they established in the middle of the mine, to obstruct the passage of the Dauphinois. While they were engaged in this labour, a reinforcement reached the townsmen, and during the whole night there was a violent thrusting of lances. This new method of fighting offered this singularity, that they might wound, and even kill, but they could not take each other prisoners; each party combatting on his own side of the barrier.

The next morning an English herald, preceded by a trumpeter, appeared before the walls of the town, bringing a challenge from an English knight, who desired to remain unknown. He offered to any Dauphinois, who was a knight, and of noble family, a passage of arms on horseback, in which each champion should break two lances; after which, should neither be wounded, the

combat was to continue on foot, with either the battle-axe or sword: the English knight choosing the subterranean passage as the place of combat and leaving it to the Dauphinois knight to name the day.

When the herald had announced this challenge he proceeded to nail on the nearest gate of the town his master's glove, as a gage of combat and a signal of defiance.

The lord of Barbasan, who, with a great number of his people, had mounted the wall, then threw his glove from the top of the rampart, as a signal that he accepted the challenge of the unknown knight, and ordered a squire to take down that which the herald had nailed to the gate.

Many people, however, said, that it was improper for the commander of a fortress thus to expose himself in single combat; but Barbasan allowed them to talk, and prepared himself for the encounter for the next day.

During the night, the passage was levelled, that nothing might impede the horses; niches for the trumpeters were made on each side of the barrier, and torches were fastened to the ceiling to light the combat.

The next morning, at eight o'clock, each with a trumpeter behind, presented themselves at their respective extremities. The English trumpet sounded first; and then the four trumpets placed near the barrier sounded in their turn.

Scarcely had the last sound died away when the two champions rushed onwards with lance in rest.

As they approached each other, it seemed like the encounter of two phantoms, in some passage of the infernal regions; but the heavy gallop of their armed horses, making the vault tremble, and resound with the noise, sufficiently proved that there was nothing shadowy or fantastic about them.

The two champions, in taking the necessary ground, had not been able to calculate the distance, and Sire de Barbasan, whether he had the swiftest horse, or the distance was too short, reached the barrier first; he immediately perceived the disadvantage of his position; for he was about to receive, motionless, his adversary's blow, augmented by all the force of his horse's charge; and as the unknown knight was coming upon him like a thunderbolt, he had only time to unhook his lance from the

rest, to plant it against his shield, as against a wall of iron, and to fix himself firmly in his saddle and stirrups, This manœuvre turned the advantage in his favour; his adversary receiving the shock, instead of giving it. In fact, he precipitated himself with his breast full of Barbasan's lance, which was shivered like glass; while that of the unknown knight, being in the rest, and therefore too short, did not even touch its object. The English knight, nearly overthrown by the shock, fell back so far, that his horse recoiled some paces, bending back on his haunches. When he recovered his position, he found the iron of his adversary's lance fixed in his breast; it had passed through his cuirass, but was stopped by a coat of mail which he fortunately wore beneath it. As for Barbasan, he had no more stirred than an iron statue on a marble pedestal.

The two knights turned their horses, and regained the entrance of the subterranean passage. Barbasan took a fresh lance; and the trumpets again sounded.

They were answered by those of the barrier, and the two knights again thundered along the vault, followed, now, by a number of French and English; for this passage being the last, and the combat to be continued, as we have said, on foot, and with the battle-axe, the spectators were permitted to enter the subterranean passage.

The distances had been so well calculated in this second course, that the two champions encountered each other precisely in the middle of the passage. The lance of the unknown knight struck the left side of Barbasan's cuirass, and gliding along its polished surface, it raised, like a shell, the joint of the armour covering the shoulder, and penetrated the shoulder itself to about the depth of an inch. As for that of Barbasan, it had struck his adversary's shield with such violence, that the force of the blow broke his horse's girth, and the knight, too firmly seated to lose his saddle, was sent rolling back ten paces, carrying away with him the lofty saddle in which he was fixed.

Barbasan had dismounted, and the unknown knight regained his feet immediately; when, each seizing a battle-axe from the hands of his squire, they renewed the combat with more eagerness than ever. Both of them, however, whether in attack or defence, exhibited a degree of prudence which showed that each had recognized the

valour of his adversary. Their heavy axes, wheeling and glittering above their heads, descended on their shields with so much force, that myriads of sparks were struck from them. These two men, bending their bodies backwards to throw more strength into their blows, looked like woodmen at work; every stroke might have felled an oak; yet, although twenty had been given and received, both were still erect.

At last, Barbasan, impatient of this giant struggle, determined to end it by one blow. Throwing away his shield, which prevented him using his left arm, and resting his foot on a transverse bar of the barrier, he seized his axe with both his hands. It whistled for a moment like a sling, and, passing by the side of his adversary's shield, descended with a fearful crash on the casque of the unknown knight.

Happily for the latter, he instinctively inclined his head to the left, and the axe, the full force of which was lost by this movement, glancing along the rounded helmet, encountered the fastening of the visor on the right side; which it snapped like thread. The visor falling, revealed the face of the knight; when Barbasan, with great astonishment, recognised in his unknown adversary, Henry of Lancaster, the King of England.

Barbasan then respectfully retired two paces, let fall his battle-axe, and, taking off his helmet, confessed himself vanquished.

The king understood the courtesy of this avowal. He took off his gauntlet, and extended his hand to the old knight.

"From this moment," he said, "we are brothers in arms. Remember this, when the occasion presents itself, Sire de Barbasan; for I will not forget it."

Barbasan accepted this honourable fraternity, which, three months afterwards, saved his life.

As the two champions required repose, they returned, the one to the camp, the other to the town; but other knights and squires continued this singular joust, which lasted nearly a week.

Some days afterwards, as the besieged still resisted, the King of England brought to his camp the King of France and the two queens, and lodged the latter in a house he had erected beyond the range of cannon-shot, and before which, every morning and evening, he caused

the trumpeters and musicians of his army to assemble. For never had the King of England displayed such state as during this siege.

But the presence of King Charles did not determine the besieged to surrender. They answered, that if the king wished to enter his good town, he must enter it alone, and that then he should be well received, but that they would never consent to open their gates to the enemies of the realm. Moreover, every one in the army of the Duke of Burgundy began to murmur at King Henry's neglect of his father-in-law, and at the paltry condition to which his household had been reduced. But the capture of other fortresses and chateaux, such as the Bastile, the Louvre, the house of Nesle, and the wood of Vincennes, which were surrendered to the English, consoled King Henry for the length of the siege. He sent his brother, the Duke of Clarence, to the command of the Bastile, with the title of Governor of Paris.

The besieged had now, however, been for a long time on short allowance of provisions. They had no longer any bread, and had eaten their horses, dogs, and cats, when they wrote to the dauphin, informing him of their distress, and demanding succour. While in expectation of an answer, they one morning descried in the horizon a considerable body of troops, marching towards the town. Believing that it was a reinforcement from the dauphin, they mounted their ramparts; and whilst the steeples of the town rung out in token of joy, they began to shout to the besiegers to make haste and saddle their horses, as they would soon be dislodged from their position. But they quickly perceived their error. The troops they had seen approaching were Burgundians, whom the lord of Luxembourg, governor of Picardy, was leading from Peronne, in aid of the besiegers.

The besieged, crestfallen, now descended from their ramparts, and stopped their senseless bells; and as, on the next day, they received a letter from the dauphin, declaring that he was too weak to aid them, and authorising them to make the best conditions they could with the King of England, they opened a negociation with him, and the exhausted garrison surrendered on the simple condition of their lives being spared. From this condition, however, were excepted the murderers of the

Duke of Burgundy, or those who, being present at the assassination, had not prevented it; together with all the English and Scotch knights who were in the town. In consequence, Messire Pierre de Bourbon, Arnault de Guilhelm, Sire de Barbasan, and six or seven hundred noble men-at-arms, were sent to Paris, and imprisoned in the Louvre, the Châtelet, and the Bastile.

The next day, two monks of Joy-en-Brie, and a knight, named Berirand de Chaumont, who although a Frenchman, had at the battle of Agincourt gone over to the English, and afterwards had returned from the English to the French, were beheaded on the public square at Melun. Leaving an English garrison in the town, King Henry, King Charles, and the Duke of Burgundy then departed for Paris, into which they were to make a public entry.

The citizens impatiently expected them. A magnificent reception had been prepared for them, every house on their route being hung with tapestry. The two kings rode in front, the King of France being on the right hand. After them, came the Dukes of Clarence and Bedford, the brothers of the King of England; and on the other side of the street, to the left, rode the Duke of Burgundy, entirely clothed in black; and with him all the knights and squires of his household.

They reached, thus, the middle of the Grand Rue St. Antoine, where they were met by the entire clergy of Paris, on foot, carrying the holy relics for them to kiss. These were first kissed by the King of France, and then by the King of England. The clergy, then, chaunting all the way, conducted them to the Church of Notre-Dame, where they performed their devotions before the high altar; after which, again mounting their horses, each repaired to his own residence—the King of France to the Hotel de St. Paul, the Duke of Burgundy to the Hotel d'Artois, and the King of England to the Chateau of the Louvre. On the next day, the two queens made their entrance.

Scarcely had this new court been installed, before the Duke of Burgundy took measures to avenge the death of his father. For this purpose the king held a court of justice, in the lower hall of the Hotel de St. Paul. The King of England was seated on the same bench with the

King of France, and near them was Master John Lœclerc, Chancellor of France, Philip de Morvilliers, first president of the parliament, and several other noble members of King Charles's council. On the other side, and towards the middle of the hall, was the Duke of Burgundy, and, with him, the Dukes of Clarence and Bedford, the Bishops of Therouanne, of Tournay, of Beauvais, and of Amiens, Messire John of Luxembourg, and many other squires and knights of his council.

Messire Nicholas Rolin, advocate for the Duke of Burgundy and the duchess his mother, then arose, and requested of the two kings, permission to speak. This being granted, he related the homicide committed on Duke John; accusing of this murder, the dauphin Charles, the Viscount of Narbonne, the Sire de Barbasan, Tanne-guy Duchatel, Guillaume Bontellier, Jean Louvet, president of Provence, Messire Robert de Loire, and Oliver Layet. He concluded by demanding the punishment of the guilty. He demanded, that they should be placed in carts, and drawn, during three days, through the principal streets and public places of Paris, bareheaded, holding lighted tapers in their hands; and confessing, in a loud voice, that they had foully, falsely, damnably, and through envy, assassinated the Duke of Burgundy: that, afterwards, they should be taken to the place where the murder had been committed, and that they should there say and repeat the same expiatory words; that, besides, on the bridge, and on the very spot where the duke had breathed his last sigh, a church should be built and administered by twelve canons, six chaplains, and six clerks, whose sole office should be to pray for the soul of the deceased. The church was to be provided, at the expense of the culprits, with sacred ornaments, tables, chalices, books, cloths, and, in fine, with all things necessary. Moreover, from the property of the condemned he claimed an endowment of two hundred Parisian livres yearly for the canons, one hundred for the chaplains, and fifty for the clerks. That the object for which this church was to be erected should be inscribed over its gates, in deep cut letters, to perpetuate the memory of this expiation; and that similar churches should be erected, for the same object, at Paris, Rome, Ghent, Dijon, St. Jaques de

Compostelle, and at Jerusalem, on the spot where our Saviour suffered death.

This proposition was supported by Pierre de Narigny, the king's parliamentary advocate, and approved of by Master Jean PArcher, doctor in theology, named by the Rector of the University of Paris.

The Chancellor of France then responded on the part of the king, who had heard all the pleadings with the most perfect indifference. He said, that, through the grace of God, and with the aid and advice of his brother and son, Henry, King of England, Regent of France, and heir of the crown, the fulfilment by justice of the things said and proposed should take place, as the Duke Philip of Burgundy demanded.

The court then rose, and the two kings returned to their respective hotels.

Thirteen years before, the same hall re-echoed with similar words of accusation. At that time, however, it was the Duke of Burgundy who was the assassin, and Madame Valentine of Milan the accuser. She demanded justice, and justice was then promised to her, as it had been just now to the duke; but the royal promise had then been borne away by the wind, as it was now about to be a second time.

Nevertheless, in virtue of letters issued by the king, the parliament, on the 3d of January, 1421, commenced proceedings against Charles de Valois, Duke of Touraine and Dauphin of France. He was summoned to appear within three days, under pain of banishment by sound of trumpet, and on the table of marble; and, as he did not answer this summons, he was accordingly banished from the kingdom, and declared unworthy of succeeding to all the lordships that had already fallen, or might in future lapse to him.

The dauphin heard of these proceedings at Bourges, in Berri. He made his appeal to his sword, and swore that he would carry that appeal, and his defiance, to Paris, into England, and into Burgundy.

It is true, that, in spite of this judgment, a great sympathy in his favour existed in the hearts of all true Frenchmen; which was further augmented by the madness of his father. It was well known, that the heart of the old king had not banished his much-loved son; and, to

most men of worth and intelligence, these proceedings, in the name of a madman, carried no great weight. The luxury, too, which the King of England displayed at the Louvre, contrasted with the misery that surrounded the King of France at the Hotel de St. Paul, caused all respectable men in Paris to murmur. This neglect was carried to such an extreme, that, on the day of the Nativity, in the year 1420, whilst the two queens, the Duke Philip, and the Knights of France and Burgundy, paid their court to the King of England, in the splendidly-lighted saloons of the Louvre, the King of France, in the obscure and damp apartments of the Hotel de St. Paul, was surrounded by only a few aged servants, and some good citizens, who retained for him their old and faithful affection.

About this time an unexpected circumstance created some coldness between King Henry and Duke Philip. Amongst the prisoners made at Melun, was the Sire de Barbasan, as we have related. This knight was accused of having shared in the assassination at Montrean; and, according to the treaty made between Duke Philip and King Henry, every favourer of, or accomplice in, this assassination, was to be left at the discretion of the Duke of Burgundy. The articles on which this knight was to be interrogated, were already drawn up by the duke's council at Dijon, when the prisoner appealed to the fraternity in arms offered by the King of England, after the combat in the mines at Melun. And King Henry respected his engagement. He declared that he who had touched his royal land should not undergo an infamous condemnation, even should our holy father the Pope demand it. The Duke of Burgundy retained a feeling of resentment on account of this refusal, which the punishment of the Bastard of Tanneguy, the Sire de Cœsmerel, and of Jean Gault, who were quartered by a decree of the parliament, could not soften. The first considered so honourable the assassination committed by his father, that he had caused an embroidered sheath to be made for the axe with which Duke John had been struck; and carried, suspended by a rich chain, the gold spur which he had himself taken from the duke's boot.

About the end of the month, the King of England and

the Duke of Burgundy separated: King Henry to carry Madame Catherine to London, there to have her crowned; and Duke Philip to visit his good cities, by many of which he had not yet been acknowledged.

This double absence was injurious to the affairs of the duke and King Henry. The Dauphinois, discouraged by the capture of Melun and Villeneuve-le-Roi, took heart on seeing their enemies absent—the one in London, and the other at Brussels. They re-entered the town, surprised the Chateau de la Ferté, took St. Riquier by escalade, and, finally, defeated the English near Beaugy, with so much slaughter, that the Duke of Clarence, the king's brother, the Lord of Ross, marshal of England, the Earl of Kynie, and the flower of the English chivalry and knighthood, were left dead on the field of battle. The Earls of Somerset, Huntingdon, and Percy, surrendered themselves prisoners unconditionally. Nevertheless, the body of the Duke of Clarence did not remain in the hands of his enemies: an English knight laid him across his horse, and defended him with such courage and good fortune, that he succeeded in restoring this sacred deposit to the Earl of Salisbury, who sent it to England, where it was interred.

On the other hand, the Duke of Exeter, governor of Paris since the death of the Duke of Clarence, had quickly cooled the enthusiasm of the citizens. His government was harsh and haughty. Upon a frivolous pretext, he caused Marshal Villiers de l'Isle-Adam to be arrested, and the people to be fired upon, as they were attempting to rescue the prisoner from the archers who were conducting him to the Bastile. An Englishman, a foreigner, and an enemy, dared to do what the Duke of Burgundy shrunk from.

King Henry learnt in London, and Duke Philip at Ghent, the events that we have just related, and both of them felt that their presence in Paris was indispensable. They, therefore, immediately set off for that city; although the king of England was suffering from illness, and the Duke of Burgundy had to settle the disputes of his cousin, Duke John of Brabant, and Jacqueline of Hainault, his wife.

The two allies had formed a correct judgment of their position. There was no time for them to lose, as the

dauphin was besieging Chartres. The united armies of Duke Philip and King Henry marched to the assistance of the city; and, as the Dauphinois were not sufficiently strong to hazard a battle, they raised the siege, and the dauphin retired to Tours. The Duke of Burgundy, instead of pursuing him, took possession of St. Remi-sur-Somme, and laid siege to Saint Riquier; but, in his turn, he found his army was too weak, and uselessly wasted a month before the place.

Whilst engaged in this siege, he learnt that the Sire de Harcourt, who had gone over to the Dauphinois, accompanied by Pothon de Xaintrilles, in the hope of surprising him, was approaching at the head of the garrisons of Compiègne, of Crespy-en-Valois, and of other towns, that had submitted to the dauphin. The duke therefore departed secretly at night, passed the Somme, and marched to meet the Dauphinois, with the intention of offering battle.

On the 31st of August, at eleven o'clock in the morning, the two armies came within sight, and, halting at about the distance of three bow-shots from each other, they formed their ranks. In this war between the three brothers-in-law, this was the first combat of importance, in which the young duke, who was not yet twenty-four years of age, made his essay in arms. Before the engagement, he desired to be knighted, and the Lord of Luxembourg gave him the accolade. He himself then, in turn, dubbed the Sire de Collard de Commines, Jean de Roubex, André de Villain, Jean de Villain, and others. On the side of the Dauphinois, the principal knights made on this occasion, were the Lords of Gamache, Regnaut de Fontaine, Collinet de Villequier, the Marquis de Serre, and Jean Royau.

As soon as the first arrangements were made, the Duke of Burgundy ordered Philip de Saveuse, with a standard and one hundred and twenty men, under the orders of Messire de St. Leger and the bastard of Roussy, to make a circuit across the fields, and to fall on the flanks of the Dauphinois, when the action had commenced. The duke then commanded his army to remain motionless, to mask this movement; and it was not until he perceived the whole line of the Dauphinois, with all their cavalry, approaching at full gallop, that he cried out "Forward!"

himself setting the example, by charging at the head of his troops.

The space that separated the two armies was quickly traversed, and the first lines met with a dreadful shock, courser dashing against courser, man against man, and iron against iron. Many were overthrown, either slain or cruelly wounded: many broke their lances, and immediately seized either their swords or battle-axes. Then commenced the combat, hand to hand, man to man, with its sleights of address, its feats of valour, and its desperate struggles.

A singular circumstance appeared at first to make the victory lean towards the Dauphinois. The standard of Burgundy had inadvertently been left in the hands of the servant who carried it; and as this man was not accustomed to such battles, he took to flight at the first encounter, leaving the standard on the ground. Many noblemen, no longer seeing the standard floating, thought that the duke was taken: and the Flemish herald of arms even cried aloud that he was dead. All who had seen the standard fall, and who heard the herald's words, immediately disbanded themselves; and about five hundred men, seized with a panic, abandoned the field of battle, where the duke, with the remainder of his army, was performing prodigies of valour, desirous, in presence of those about him, to win his spurs, and show himself worthy of his father.

On their side, the Dauphinois, perceiving this flight, dispatched about two hundred men, under the command of Jean Rollet, and of Pierron de Luppel, to follow their enemies, who continued their flight for six leagues, without stopping, and crossed the Somme at Pecquigny.

In the meantime, the main bodies of the two armies had remained firm, terribly intermingled, and performing wondrous feats of valour. The duke who was one of the foremost in the attack, was pierced by two lances: one completely transixed his war saddle, which was bound with steel; and the other, passing through his buckler, got so entangled in it, that the duke abandoned his shield, being unable to disengage the lance. At this moment a powerful man-at-arms of the Dauphinois seized him by the waist, and attempted to lift him from

his saddle; but the duke, who was mounted on a vigorous charger, let his sword hang from his wrist, threw his arms round his adversary's neck, and, spurring his horse forward, tore him from his stirrups, as the whirlwind does a tree from the earth, and threw him amongst his own men, who made him prisoner.

Two others also performed wonders. These were, on the side of the Dauphinois, Pothon de Xaintrailles, whose career commenced at the siege of Orleans; and, on the side of the Burgundians, Jean de Villain, the new-made knight, of whom history, subsequently, scarcely preserves a trace. The latter was a man of colossal stature, covered with strong Flemish armour, and mounted on a powerful horse; he had let his bridle fall on his charger's neck, and when his lance was broken, he had taken his weighty battle-axe in both hands, and entered the ranks of the Dauphinois, like a thresher in a barn, overthrowing men and horses, and felling those whose armour he could not penetrate. He might have been taken for one of Homer's heroes.

On his side, Xaintrailles had opened for himself a passage into that iron wall, which closed behind him. But that did not much concern him. And his long and powerful sword whistled and gleamed above his head, like that of the exterminating angel. Jean de Luxembourg, seeing him thus penetrating the Burgundian ranks, had pushed his horse before him, with the hope of arresting him; but by a back stroke of his terrible sword, he broke open his vizor, cutting his face across, underneath the eyes. The Burgundian captain fell like a statue from its pedestal; and a man-at-arms, named Le More, who followed Xaintrailles, made him prisoner, when the lord of Viefville, coming to his assistance, endeavoured to rescue him. Xaintrailles turned against this madman, who wished to deprive him of his captive, and with one blow of his sword, broke his right arm in his cuirass. The Sire de Viefville, fell close to him whom he hoped to save; and Le More, whom two prisoners would have too much embarrassed, dispatched him by thrusting his dagger beneath his gorget.

In the meantime, the Chevalier Jean de Villain, perceiving the disorder which Xaintrailles had caused among the ranks of the Burgundians, endeavoured to make his

way to him: but the throng into which he had thrown himself had closed upon him; effacing his trace, as the waves do that of a ship. Nevertheless, as, in wielding his terrible axe, he stood in his stirrups, and thus overtopped by a head those who surrounded him, Xaintrailles perceived him in turn.

"Here! ye Dauphinois! come on!" shouted the Chevalier de Villain, redoubling his blows, with each of which he overthrew a man; for when his weapon did not cut as an axe, it knocked down like a mace.

Xaintrailles pushed his horse towards him by whom he was thus delied; but when he saw the ranks falling before him, when he saw the armour crushed to pieces, and the helmets cloven by that gigantic arm, he then confessed, with the good faith of the truly brave, that for a moment he felt his heart fail him. He did not wish to confront certain death, and as, at this moment, Philip de Savense, in executing his movement, took the Dauphinois in flank, he rushed to meet him. Philip perceived him coming, and placed his lance in rest; and, as Xaintrailles had no weapon but his sword, Philip directed the point of his lance against the chest of his adversary's horse. The iron penetrated its entire length, and the horse, mortally wounded, fell upon its rider, who, with his leg encumbered under him, yielded himself prisoner, declaring his name.

This attack of the Burgundians was decisive. The Dauphinois, thinking that Xaintrailles had fallen, never again to rise, turned their horses' heads, and fled. The Duke of Burgundy pursued them for nearly two leagues, and so frequently mingled with them, that they might have mistaken him for a fugitive also, had he not so roughly struck those who were about him.

The Lords de Longueval and Guy d'Erly followed him, at the distance of a lance's length.

The honour of the day remained with the Burgundians. They lost only thirty men, and had killed or wounded four or five hundred Dauphinois. Many more noblemen were taken with Xaintrailles. This combat was called the encounter of Mons en Vimeu; for, notwithstanding its importance and result, it did not receive the name of a battle, because there were no royal banners displayed in it.

In the meantime, the king of England had entered the town of Dreux by capitulation, and, after having caused all the instruments necessary for a siege to be fabricated at Lagny-sur-Marne, he proceeded, with twenty-four thousand men, to invest the town of Meaux, of which the Bastard of Vaurus was governor. Its garrison amounted to nearly a thousand men-at-arms.

It was during this siege, which lasted seven months, that Henry V. learned that his wife had given birth to a son. The child which she had just brought into the world was, eighteen months afterwards, to be proclaimed King of France, by the name of Henry VI.

Meaux made a noble resistance. The Bastard of Vaurus, who had shut himself up there, was cruel, but a man of proved courage. Nevertheless, a reinforcement which the lord of Offemont was to have brought him, having failed, the garrison could resist no longer, and the town was carried by assault. They defended street by street, and house by house; and being driven from one part of the town, they crossed the Marne, and established themselves on the other side of the river. The King of England pursued them fiercely, allowing them no relaxation, and granting them no repose, until all were either killed or taken. The streets were strewed with stumps of lances and fragments of arms.

Amongst the prisoners was the Bastard of Vaurus, who had defended the town so valiantly. The King of England had him conveyed to the foot of an elm, where he himself had ordered a number of executions, and which the peasants called the elm of Vaurus, and there, without trial, by the sole right of the strongest, by his privilege as conquerer, he ordered his head to be cut off, and had his body suspended from beneath the arms, planting his standard in his neck, and fixing his head on the top of the standard. Many, even in his own army, murmured at this extreme severity, and considered it a punishment unworthy of so brave a knight.

About the same time, the lord of Luxembourg, who had been re-taken by the Burgundians, in the route of Monsen-Vimeu, seized upon the fortresses of Quesnoy and De Hericourt; and at the news of these successes, the town of Crespy, in Valois, and the Chateaux of Pierrefond and d'Offemont, also surrendered.

In this manner victory declared itself on all sides for King Henry, when he fell ill at the Chateau of Vincennes.

The malady made rapid progress, and the King of England was himself the first to consider it mortal. He caused the Duke of Bedford, his uncle, to be called to him, together with the Earl of Warwick, and Messire Louis de Robert-Saert. He then told them that he saw plainly that it was the will of God that he should leave this world; and added—"My good brother John, I beseech you, by the loyalty and love you bear me, that you will be constantly loyal to my son Henry, your nephew; and I entreat you not to allow, during your life, any treaty to be made with our adversary, Charles of Valois, that may deprive us of our right free to the Duchy of Normandy. If my good brother of Burgundy should wish to undertake the regency of the kingdom, I advise you to give it up to him; otherwise, keep it yourself. And to you, fair uncle," he added, turning to the Duke of Exeter who had just entered, "I leave the sole government of the kingdom of England, for I know that you can govern well. Whatever may happen, do not return again to France. Be the governor of my son, and, for the love you bear me, visit him often. As for you, my fair cousin of Warwick, I wish you to be his master, living always with him, to direct him, and train him in the use of arms; for, in choosing you, I could not provide him with a better tutor. And, moreover, I entreat you most earnestly, to have no dispute with my good brother of Burgundy; defend him, also, on my part, from my brother-in-law, Humphrey; for, if there should be any ill feeling between you and him, the affairs of this kingdom, which are at present greatly in our favour, would be much endangered. And, lastly, do not, under any circumstances whatever, liberate from prison our fair cousin of Orleans, the Count d'Eu, the Lord of Gaucout, nor Guichard, or De Chisay, until my son be of age. As for the others, do what you please."

Each having then promised to obey his injunctions, the king directed them to leave him alone. When they had done so, he sent for the physicians, and commanded them to inform him how long he had to live. They at first wished to give him some hopes, saying that God was able to restore him to health; but the king smiled sadly, and required them to tell him the whole truth

promising that, whatever it might be, he would bear it like a king and a soldier. They retired to a corner, and after a short consultation, one of them, kneeling by the king's bed, said to him: "Sire, think of your soul; for it appears to us, unless it be by the especial favour of God, that it is impossible for you to live more than two hours."

He then sent for his confessor, and the clergy, and ordered them to recite to him the seven psalms. When they came to these words of the 20th verse, "*that the walls of Jerusalem may be built up,*" he stopped them, saying aloud, that had it not been for death, which was now impending over him, it had been his intention, after having tranquillized the Kingdom of France, to go and conquer the Holy Sepulchre; and that he would have done it, had it been God's will that he should have lived to his natural age. He then ordered them to continue; but, towards the end of the following verse a cry escaped him. The sacred chaunts were interrupted. The king heaved one more feeble sigh: it was his last.

His death took place on the 31st of August, 1422.

The next day the king's entrails were buried in the church of the Monastery of St. Maur, and his body embalmed, and placed in a leaden coffin.

On the 3rd of September, the funeral train set out for Calais. The coffin was deposited on a car drawn by four magnificent horses, and on it was laid an image of the king, of the natural size, and formed of dressed leather. Its face was turned towards heaven, and it held the sceptre in its right hand, and a golden ball in its left. The covering of this mortuary bed was of vermilion cloth, embroidered with gold. During the passage through each town, four men, at each corner of the car, held a rich canopy of silk over him, as, on the day of the consecrated host, it is the custom to carry one above the body of our Saviour. The procession was followed by the princes of the king's family, and by the chivalry and squirearchy of his household. On each side of the car, walked a great number of ecclesiastics, who incessantly chanted the office for the dead, and celebrated masses in the churches of all the towns through which they passed. And, besides all these, and as a belt around the car, ten men, clothed in white, constantly carried lighted torches of odoriferous wax.

At Rouen they were met by Madame Catherine, who

was returning to France to her husband. She had been ignorant of his death, and her despair on learning it was great. She would not quit his body, and placed herself in the train of the procession, which, on leaving Calais, embarked for Dover; and, there resuming its march immediately, arrived in London on the night of St. Martin, in winter.

Fifteen bishops, clothed in pontifical copes, many mitred abbots, a great number of ecclesiastics, and a numerous body of citizens, awaited the king's body outside the gate of the city. They immediately surrounded it, chaunting the service of the dead, and, passing over London-bridge, and through Lombard-street, acted as chief mourners, to the Cathedral of St. Paul's. The car that bore the king's body was drawn by four magnificent black horses; the first wore a collar, from which the arms of England were suspended; on the collar of the second, were the arms of France and England quartered, as, when living, the king wore them on his breast; from the collar of the third, hung the arms of France alone; and, from that of the fourth, those of King Arthur the invincible; these last being three golden crowns, on an azure ground. After the funeral service, the body was deposited in the Abbey of Westminster, near those of his predecessors, the Kings of England.

And thus, Henry of England, surnamed the Conqueror, disappeared from the world, where he had made so much noise. He had penetrated further into France than any of his predecessors, and had taken Paris, which no one ever took before. He left to his heirs the title of King of France, which they retained until, four centuries later, Napoleon, with the point of his sword, erased from the insular arms the three fleurs-de-lis. He died at half the age that God commonly allots to man. He was one of the most valiant and skilful knights of his time; but too flexible of purpose, and too haughty of will.

The Duke of Bedford had scarcely rendered him the funeral honours, before a message from Paris announced that he was expected there, for a second funeral. Charles VI., King of France, was dead.

It was on the 22nd day of October, 1422, that the poor lunatic surrendered his soul to God. His last hour was as sad and neglected as his life had been. He had near him, neither Madame Isabel, nor the Dauphin Charles,

nor any of the five children who still remained to him; no prince of his family;—the Duke of Berri was dead, and the Dukes of Orleans, of Bourbon and of Brittany, were prisoners;—while the Duke of Burgundy dared not receive the last sigh of him whose kingdom he had sold. No friends! The civil war had decimated them, or retained them near the dauphin. In that last hour of death, when the mind, before it leave us, recovers all its strength, as the flame of a lamp becomes more brilliant before it dies, the old king for an instant recovered his reason, his sight, and his speech; and raising himself on his elbow, pale and dying, he sought around him, through the gloomy old chamber, one on whom he might cast his last look—to whom he might bid his last farewell—but he encountered only the chilling countenances of his chancellor and his chamberlain, whom their offices near the king forced to be the courtiers of his death-bed. He fell back with a profound sigh, confining within his own bosom those last words that constitute the consolations of the dying. He closed his eyes; for only when they were shut could he see the rosy face of the young Charles, who, he knew, had never in his heart forsaken him, and the countenance of Odette, that young and devoted girl, whose caresses, if not her love, had shed some happiness over his life. Thus, although abandoned by men, God sent two angels to his pillow, that the poor old man might die without blaspheming or despairing.

As for those who were about him, their indifference was so great, that, although they perceived he was dead, they could not tell precisely at what hour the soul left the body, which, during thirty years, had suffered so much.

The reign of Charles VI.—a strange and peculiar one in our annals—a reign of madness, which passed between two supernatural apparitions—that of the old man of the forest of Maus, and that of the young shepherdess of Domremy—was one of the most unhappy for France: and yet this prince, of the entire monarchy, was among those who were most regretted. The name of *Well-beloved*, bestowed on him by the people, prevailed over the epithet of "*the Madman*," given him by the nobles. As his family became ungrateful, the fidelity of his people increased. In his youth he had gained the good opinion of all by his courage and affability; and in his old age his wretchedness and his misfortunes awakened for him uni-

versal sympathy. Whenever his madness left him a moment's repose, he had resumed the direction of affairs; and at these times, the people, by an amelioration of their condition, had felt his presence there: like a sun, which, from time to time, broke through the dark clouds, and whose rays, feeble as they were, gladdened the soul of France.

The day after his death, the pomp of royalty that had abandoned him when living, returned to claim him when dead. His body was deposited in a leaden coffin, and carried by squires and knights to the church of the Hotel de St. Paul, where it remained in state, in an illuminated chapel, till the return of the Duke of Bedford.

During the twenty days it thus remained, masses were chaunted and celebrated in the chapel, as was customary during the king's life. The four orders of mendicant friars of Paris came there daily to perform the service, and every one could freely enter and pray beside the body.

At last, on the 8th of November, the Duke of Bedford arrived. The parliament, to avoid further delay, had already taken one step for the obsequies of the king. This was the sale of the furniture of the Hotel de St. Paul: so great was the royal distress. On the 10th, the body was carried to the Church of Notre-Dame. Processions of all the churches and of the deputies of the university, preceded it; the prelates, clothed in their pontifical robes, took the right, and the doctors and orators, also in robes, walked on the left. The coffin was borne on the right side by the squires and stewards of the king's household, and on the left by the Provosts of Paris and of the merchants, and by the sergeants-at-arms. It was laid on a rich litter, covered by a canopy of cloth of gold on a silver ground, sprinkled with fleurs-de-lis; and, on the coffin lay an image of the king, perfectly resembling him, with a crown of gold on his head, and carrying in its hands, which were covered with white gloves, and loaded with rings, two crowns, one of gold, and the other of silver. This figure was clothed in a robe of cloth of gold on a vermilion ground, and wore a mantle of the same kind, richly lined with ermine; its stockings were black, and its shoes of azure coloured velvet, sprinkled with golden fleurs-de-lis. The pall that covered the mortal remains of the king, was carried by

the members of the parliament; after it, came the pages, and a short distance behind, dressed in black and alone, rode the Duke of Bedford, the regent of the kingdom. It was pitiful to see this poor king, betrayed during his life, thus abandoned after his death—no prince of the fleur-de-lis attending his funeral, and the chief-mourner of the King of France an Englishman. The storm of civil and foreign war, which for twelve years had raged so violently throughout the realm, had carried off and dispersed every leaf of the royal stem.

After the Duke of Bedford, came the Chancellor of France, on foot, the masters of requests, the auditors, notaries, and citizens; and, lastly, the common people of Paris, in greater numbers than had been ever seen at a royal funeral.

It was in this order that the body was borne to the church of Notre-Dame; but so great was the throng, that only the head of the procession could enter. The mass was there said by the Patriarch of Constantinople; and when the service was finished, the funeral procession resumed its way to St. Denis, passing over the Pont-au-Change, that of Notre-Dame being blocked up by the people.

Half-way to St. Denis, the salt-measurers of Paris, each wearing a golden fleur-de-lis on his breast, took the body from the hands of the squires and sergeants-at-arms, and, in virtue of an ancient privilege of their corporation, carried it to a cross situated near St. Denis. At this spot the abbot of St. Denis awaited them. He was attended by the monks, the clergy, citizens, and people, carrying a great number of torches, for the night had now fallen. In this manner they reached the church, where another mass was chaunted, and the body, which was not to be laid in the tomb until the next day, was placed in the middle of the choir. The offering was then made, and the Duke of Bedford alone went up to it.

The next day, another service was performed for the repose of the king's soul. During the whole night the church had been illuminated with such profusion, that twenty thousand pounds' worth of wax-lights were burnt; and alms were given with such liberality, that sixteen thousand persons had each three pieces of silver money of the royal coinage.

The service being finished, the vergers opened the gates

of the vault; and the coffin, preceded by torches, was carried down, and placed near the tombs of King Charles V. and the good constable. The Patriarch of Constantinople took a branch of the boxwood tree, dipped it into the holy water, and repeated the prayers of the dead.

The king's sergeants-at-arms then broke their white wands, and threw them into the tomb; turning downwards the tops of their maces, as the first shovel of earth sounded on the coffin, separating two dynasties and two reigns.

When the grave was filled up, Du Berry, the knight-at-arms, mounting it, said with a loud voice,

"May God have pity and mercy on the soul of the most high and excellent prince, Charles, King of France, sixth of his name, our natural and sovereign lord."

Sobs broke from all parts; and after a slight pause, he again cried out, "May God grant a long life to Henry, by the grace of God, King of France and England, our sovereign lord."

When these words were uttered, the sergeants-at-arms raised their maces with the fleur-de-lis upwards, calling out,—“Long live the king! long live the king!”

The crowd remained silent, none amongst them repeating this sacréligious cry, which, without an echo, was lost beneath the sombre and the sepulchral vaults of the Kings of France, startling there, with affright, the remains of three successive and departed monarchs.

On the next day, Henry VI. of England, aged eighteen months, was proclaimed King of France, under the regency of the Duke of Bedford.

*FINIS.*

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